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Naomi Strom-Avila, *Cultural Arts Specialist*

Date: June 4, 2013 Time: 2:30 – 4:30 pm

Location: 747 Market Street Room 248

Tacoma Arts Commission Community & Economic Development

SPECIAL MEETING:

De-Accession Review Panel

The Tacoma Arts Commission has directed the City of Tacoma to convene a special panel to review the Tacoma Totem Pole for possible deaccessioning from the City of Tacoma Municipal Art Collection, pursuant to the Tacoma Arts Commission Municipal Art Collection Deaccessioning Policy. The panel will meet at the time and location indicated above. Members of the public are invited to attend.

AGENDA

- I. Introductions
- II. Background
- III. Review of De-accession Policy
- IV. Review and discussion of Tacoma Totem Pole including:
 - a. Health and safety
 - b. Cultural significance
- V. De-accession review and discussion
- VI. Recommendation(s)
- VII. Next Steps

This agenda is for public notice purposes only. All meetings of the Tacoma Arts Commission are open to the public. Written comments are welcome.
747 Market Street, Room 900 · Tacoma, WA · 98402 · Phone (253) 591-5192 · Fax (253) 591-5232



To request this information in an alternative format or to request a reasonable accommodation, please contact the Arts Program at (253) 591-5191. TTY or speech to speech users please dial (253) 591-5820 to connect to Washington Relay Services.

Tacoma Totem Pole Deaccession Review Panel

June 4, 2013 2:30pm

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- I. De-accession Consideration Form
- II. De-accession Policy
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 - b. Sectional Photograph of Totem Pole and additional photographs from NW Room Archives
 - c. Terrill Condition Report 1999 and 2012 update
 - d. Taggert Condition Report 2009
- V. Structural Assessments
 - a. Dave Evans and Associates
 - b. PCS Memo
 - c. Scott Beard e-mail memo
- VI. PCS/BLRB Report on options to support/relocate pole
- VII. Background
 - a. Memos
 - i. April 12, 2013 Kingsolver to Broadnax
 - ii. May 8, 2013 McKnight to Broadnax
 - iii. May 22, 2013 McBride to McKnight
 - b. Articles
 - i. Conservation and Maintenance of NW Coast Totem Poles
 - 1. Rhyne, "Recent Approaches to the Conservation of Northwest Coast Totem Poles" 2000
 - 2. Rhyne "Changing Approaches to the Conservation of Northwest Coast Totem Poles" 2000
 - 3. Levitan "Totem Preservation in Southeast Alaska" 1999
 - 4. Carrlee, Totem Pole Maintenance, 2010(www.ellencarrlee.files.wordpress.com/2010)
 - ii. Local opinion/articles
 - 1. Kamb, Lewis "What to do with rotten, 110-year-old Tacoma Totem Pole" Tacoma News Tribune May 2, 2013
 - 2. Kamb, Lewis "Let Tacoma Totem Pole decay publicly committee says", Tacoma News Tribune , May 17, 2013
 - 3. Callaghan, Peter "Tacoma's totem: Sometimes a pole is just a pole" Tacoma News Tribune, May 19, 2013

4. Callaghan, Peter "When Tacoma's totem pole welcomed a president" Tacoma News Tribune, May 23, 2013
 5. Callaghan, Peter "Letting totem rot is not the only Native way" Tacoma News Tribune, June 2, 2013
 6. Brown, Candace "To let it rot or not – Tacoma totem pole controversy nearly ignores presidential history" Good Life Northwest, May 21, 2013
www.goodlifeww.blogspot.com/2013/05/to-let-it-rot-or-not-tacoma-totem.html
 7. Kelley, Peter "1909 exhibition's darker side explored in the Burke's 'A-Y-P: Indigenous Voices Reply', May, 28, 2009
www.washington.edu/news/2009/05/28/1909-exhibitions-darker-side-explored-in-the-burkes-a-y-p-indigenous-voices-reply
- iii. Citizen/Commissioner Comment
1. Echtle Considerations May 18, 2013
 2. Bjornson, Citizen Comment, Letter and Attachments, June 3, 2013

I. De-accession Consideration Form

TACMAC De-accession Review Form

WHAT ARE THE CONDITIONS THAT MERIT DE-ACCESSION CONSIDERATION?

<input type="checkbox"/> SECURITY	<input type="checkbox"/> LOSS OF SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXCESSIVE REPRESENTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> THEFT	<input type="checkbox"/> SITE ALTERATION	<input type="checkbox"/> AESTHETIC VALUE
<input type="checkbox"/> INAUTHENTIC	<input type="checkbox"/> TEMPORARY ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> PLEASE NOTE ANY OTHER CONCERNS
<input type="checkbox"/> DAMAGE BEYOND REPAIR	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SAFETY	

RECOMMENDATION:

Follow-up

II. De-accession Policy



**TACOMA ARTS COMMISSION
Municipal Art Collection**

DEACCESSION POLICY

PURPOSE

TO ESTABLISH A PROCESS FOR THE REMOVAL, SALE, RELOCATION, AND/OR DISPOSAL OF PUBLIC WORKS OF ART IN THE MUNICIPAL ART COLLECTION.

DEFINITION

DEACCESSION IS TO REMOVE AN OBJECT OF ART FROM THE MUNICIPAL ART COLLECTION INCLUDING REMOVAL OF THE ARTWORK FROM ITS PUBLIC SITE, THE MAINTENANCE CYCLE, AND TRANSFERRING RECORDS, BOTH HARD COPY AND ELECTRONIC, INTO A DEACCESSION COLLECTION FILE.

POLICY

1. AN ARTWORK MAY BE CONSIDERED FOR DEACCESSION UNDER THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS ONLY:
 - A. SECURITY - THE CONDITION OR SECURITY OF THE ARTWORK CAN NOT BE REASONABLY GUARANTEED.
 - B. THEFT - ALL STOLEN ARTWORKS WILL BE DOCUMENTED THROUGH AN OFFICIAL POLICE REPORT AND A REPORT PREPARED BY THE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SITE OF LOSS.
 - C. INAUTHENTIC - THE WORK IS DISCOVERED TO BE INAUTHENTIC, FRAUDULENT, OR STOLEN.
 - D. DAMAGE BEYOND REPAIR - THE WORK HAS BEEN DAMAGED BEYOND REPAIR, DAMAGED TO THE EXTENT THAT IT NO LONGER REPRESENTS THE ARTIST'S INTENT, OR DAMAGED TO THE EXTENT THAT THE EXPENSES OF RESTORATION AND REPAIR IS FOUND TO EXCEED CURRENT MARKET VALUE OF THE ARTWORK. IN THE EVENT THE ARTWORK IS DAMAGED, STAFF WILL PREPARE A REPORT THAT DOCUMENTS THE ORIGINAL COST OF THE ARTWORK, ESTIMATED MARKET VALUE, AND THE ESTIMATED COST OF REPAIR.
 - E. LOSS OF SITE - THE TACOMA ARTS COMMISSION WILL MAKE EVERY ATTEMPT TO FIND A SUITABLE LOCATION FOR EVERY ARTWORK IN THE MUNICIPAL ART COLLECTION; HOWEVER, LACK OF SITING OR PROPER STORAGE COULD MERIT DEACCESSIONING.
 - F. SITE ALTERATION - FOR SITE-INTEGRATED ARTWORK, IF THE SITE FOR WHICH A PIECE OF ARTWORK WAS SPECIFICALLY CREATED IS STRUCTURALLY DAMAGED OR OTHERWISE ALTERED SO THAT IT CAN NO LONGER ACCOMMODATE THE WORK, OR IF THE PIECE IS MADE PUBLICLY INACCESSIBLE BY A CHANGE IN ITS SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT SUCH AS NEW CONSTRUCTION OR DEMOLITION, THAT ARTWORK MAY BE CONSIDERED FOR DEACCESSION.
 - G. TEMPORARY ACQUISITION - THE ARTWORK WAS PURCHASED AS A SEMI-PERMANENT ACQUISITION AND THE CITY'S OBLIGATION IS TERMINATED.
 - H. SAFETY - THE ARTWORK ENDANGERS PUBLIC SAFETY.
 - I. EXCESSIVE REPRESENTATION - THE WORK IS DUPLICATIVE, OR EXCESSIVE IN A LARGE HOLDING OF WORK OF THAT TYPE OR OF THAT ARTIST.
 - J. AESTHETIC VALUE - THE WORK HAS NOT WITHSTOOD THE TEST OF TIME. IT HAS BEEN PROFESSIONALLY DETERMINED TO LACK AESTHETIC OR ARTISTIC VALUE TO JUSTIFY ITS CONTINUED UPKEEP AND STORAGE WITHIN THE MUNICIPAL ART COLLECTION.

- K. CONTENT - ONCE THE ARTWORK HAS BEEN ACCESSIONED INTO THE MUNICIPAL ART COLLECTION, IT MAY NOT BE DEACCESSIONED ON THE BASIS OF CONTENT.
2. AT THE CONCLUSION OF EACH BIENNIAL CYCLICAL MAINTENANCE SURVEY, IN THE EVENT THAT WORKS OF ART ARE THREATENED BY ANY OF THE ABOVE CRITERIA, STAFF WILL PREPARE A RECOMMENDATION FOR DEACCESSION OF ARTWORK FROM THE MUNICIPAL ART COLLECTION FOR REVIEW, EVALUATION, AND ACTION BY THE TACOMA ARTS COMMISSION.
 3. IT IS THE OBLIGATION OF THE TACOMA ARTS COMMISSION TO ENSURE THAT ALL DISPOSALS WITH REGARD TO THE MUNICIPAL ART COLLECTION BE FORMALLY AND PUBLICLY CONDUCTED AND ADEQUATELY DOCUMENTED.
 4. ARTISTS WHOSE WORK IS BEING CONSIDERED FOR DEACCESSION SHALL BE FORMALLY NOTIFIED BY MAIL USING THE CURRENT ADDRESS OF RECORD ORIGINALLY PROVIDED BY THE ARTIST.
 5. ALL ARTWORK UNDER CONSIDERATION FOR DEACCESSION WILL BE ACCOMPANIED BY A STAFF REPORT THAT INCLUDES:
 - A. REASONS FOR THE SUGGESTED DEACCESSION.
 - B. ACCESSION METHOD, COST, AND CURRENT MARKET VALUE.
 - C. DOCUMENTATION OF CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE ARTIST.
 - D. PHOTO DOCUMENTATION OF SITE CONDITIONS (IF APPLICABLE).
 - E. OFFICIAL POLICE REPORT (IF APPLICABLE).
 6. A PERMANENT RECORD OF THE ARTWORK'S INCLUSION IN MUNICIPAL ART COLLECTION, AND REASONS FOR ITS REMOVAL, SHALL BE MAINTAINED IN A DEACCESSIONED COLLECTION FILE, AND WILL BE KEPT AS A SEPARATE SECTION OF THE MUNICIPAL ART COLLECTION RECORDS.
 7. THE ARTWORK, OR ITS REMAINS, SHALL BE DISPOSED OF BY THE COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT STAFF OR ITS AGENTS UPON DEACCESSION ACTION. THE ARTIST WILL BE GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO PURCHASE THE ARTWORK, OR ITS PARTS, BEFORE DISPOSAL BY SALE, DONATION, TRADE, OR DESTRUCTION.
 8. THE CITY COUNCIL WILL DEACCESSION ARTWORK FROM THE MUNICIPAL ART COLLECTION BY ADOPTION OF A RESOLUTION; HOWEVER, THE CITY MANAGER IS AUTHORIZED TO REMOVE ARTWORK FROM THE COLLECTION IF THE VALUE OF THE ART IS EQUAL TO OR LESS THAN HIS PURCHASING AUTHORITY.
 9. THE TACOMA ARTS COMMISSION'S ACTION REGARDING DEACCESSIONED ARTWORK WILL BE TRANSMITTED TO THE ASSET MANAGEMENT DIVISION OF THE GENERAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT.
 10. DISTRIBUTION OF SALES FUNDS - IN THE EVENT THAT THE REMOVED ARTWORK IS SOLD, PURSUANT TO THE SUBSECTIONS ABOVE, THE PROCEEDS OF SUCH SALE SHALL BE DEPOSITED INTO THE MUNICIPAL ART FUND OF THE CITY OF TACOMA.
 11. NO CURRENT MEMBER OF THE TACOMA ARTS COMMISSION OR STAFF TO THE COMMISSION OR ANY MEMBER OR STAFF WHO HAS SERVED ON OR FOR THE COMMISSION WITHIN THE MOST RECENT TWO YEARS FROM THE DATE OF CONSIDERATION OF DEACCESSION SHALL BE ALLOWED TO BID AND/OR PURCHASE A DEACCESSIONED ARTWORK.

III. Resolution No. 23292



RESOLUTION NO. 23292

1
2 WHEREAS pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 1.42 of
3 the Official Code of the City of Tacoma, the Landmarks Preser-
4 vation Commission of the City has determined to designate the
5 First Presbyterian Church, Division and Tacoma Avenue; the Roxy
6 Theater-Jones Building, 9th and Broadway; the Titlow Mansion,
7 1605 Division; the Tacoma Totem Pole, 9th and 'A', and the
8 Blackwell Mansion, 401 Broadway, as historic landmarks, and
9 has transmitted its decision to the City Council for considera-
10 tion and recommended that the same be so designated by the
11 Council, and

12 WHEREAS it appears that said buildings and structures
13 reflect an outstanding example of the City's social, economic,
14 architectural and historic heritage; that it would foster civic
15 pride in the beauty and accomplishments of the past; that the
16 designation thereof would protect and enhance the City's
17 attraction to tourists and visitors; that it would promote the
18 use of these historical structures for the education, stimula-
19 tion and welfare of the people, and would promote and encourage
20 the continued utilization of said buildings, and

21 WHEREAS, based upon said findings, the Council
22 believes that it is in the best interests of the City of Tacoma
23 to so designate the First Presbyterian Church, the Roxy Theater-
24 Jones Building, the Titlow Mansion, the Tacoma Totem Pole, and
25 the Blackwell Mansion; Now, Therefore,

26 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TACOMA:

27 That pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 1.42 of the
28
29



1 Official Code of the City of Tacoma, the Council of the City of
 2 Tacoma does by this resolution designate as historic landmarks
 3 the buildings and structures known as the First Presbyterian
 4 Church, Division and Tacoma Avenue; the Roxy Theater-Jones
 5 Building, 9th and Broadway; the Titlow Mansion, 1605 Division;
 6 the Tacoma Totem Pole, 9th and 'A', and the Blackwell Mansion,
 7 401 Broadway, in the City of Tacoma.

8

9 Adopted APR 1 1975

10

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12

GORDON N. JOHNSTON
Mayor

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14

15

Attest H. B. BOND
City Clerk

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FHC:sp

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LANDMARK PRESERVATION COMMISSION

INVENTORY FORM OF HISTORIC PLACES

ORIGINAL
ORIGINAL
DOCUMENT

NAME				
COMMON: Tacoma Totem Pole				
AND/OR HISTORIC:				
LOCATION				
STREET AND NUMBER: Horizontal position, construction site, near 9th and A				
CITY OR TOWN: Tacoma			COUNTY: Pierce	
CLASSIFICATION				
CATEGORY (Check One)		OWNERSHIP		STATUS
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Object		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both		<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
		Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered		ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No (1975)
DESCRIPTION				
CONDITION	(Check One)			
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated		<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins <input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed	
	(Check One)		(Check One)	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered <input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Moved <input type="checkbox"/> Original Site	
DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE				
Describe briefly on the back; attach a small photo.				
SIGNIFICANCE				
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)				
<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian' <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century <input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EARLY 20th Century				
SPECIFIC DATES: (If Applicable and Known)				
AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)				
<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal <input type="checkbox"/> Education <input type="checkbox"/> Political <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Historic <input type="checkbox"/> Industry <input type="checkbox"/> Science <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> Invention <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sculpture <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Art <input type="checkbox"/> Literature <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Theater <input type="checkbox"/> Communications <input type="checkbox"/> Music <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation				
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE				
Briefly describe the significance on the back.				
FORM PREPARED BY				
NAME AND TITLE: Caroline Gallacci, Archivist				
ORGANIZATION: Washington State Historical Society				DATE: 1/21/75
STREET AND NUMBER: 315 North Stadium Way			CITY OR TOWN: Tacoma	

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE: The Tacoma Totem Pole was carved, ^{ERNEST} in Quartermaster Harbor, ^{OR UNKNOWN} from a cedar pole selected and prepared by the St. Paul Tacoma Lumber Company. A massive tree was chosen to permit deep carvings to assure adequate relief -- considered one of the pole's major assets. It was carved by two British Columbian ^(OR ALASKAN) Indians whose identity was kept secret for in making the pole for white civilization they violated the traditions of the tribe. Part of the Totem Pole's uniqueness stems from its height: (reported to be anywhere from 67 to 105 feet high), and the fact that it ~~was~~ originally carved for the city, and not acquired from another source. In comparing this pole to the one located in Seattle at the time of its raising in 1903 the factors most often emphasized were, its deep relief, that Tacoma acquired it honestly, and that Indians were actually commissioned to carve the pole.

When the pole was raised, 18 electric lights circled the head of the eagle on top and there were volunteers who offered to climb the pole barefooted to change any lights which burned out. The pole has been moved three times: when it was raised in 1903; upon construction of the 11th street off ramp to 10th, when it was moved from 10th and A to 9th and A, in 1954; and upon construction of the Tacoma Spur when it was placed in its present horizontal position, in 1974. It is currently located near the construction site at 9th and A, and after restoration will be relocated about 150 feet from its former location.

One of the most difficult parts of the Totem pole to reconstruct is the original colors. Early records indicate that natural colors were used, but the only actual one uncovered was a yellow which appeared gild through the sun shining on the deep relief. But between 1903 and 1969 many paintings and cleanings have been undertaken. In 1938, one individual indicated that such changes in the colors meant a change in the meaning of the symbols carved into the pole. The most recent re-paintings of the pole occurred in 1959 and 1969. The earlier was done after complaints over the pastel pinks and blues. At that time an Indian Totem pole expert from Alaska was consulted. In 1969 the pole was repainted through the assistance of a member of the Squamish tribe in British Columbia. Doubt still remains as to whether or not the current colors are the original. The 1959 re-painting changed pastel colors to russet, brown, green, black and white; no mention of the originally discussed yellow. Because ten years later another expert had to be called in to get the proper colors suggests a continual doubt. Since color is related to meaning, it seems important to find out what the original ones were.

The meaning of the symbols of the pole are outlined as follows:

- (1) Eagle at top - Skanskwin - clan crest of the Nexa'da people
- (2) Killer whale - Kit-wusu - shown by a dorsal fin; the round block is the whale's head; fins on the side; a round painted spot is the whale's blow hole
- (3) Composite figure representing the raven - fins on the ~~block~~ block above, if attached to the raven would make it a wolf, which could be explained by the tribes theory of dual personality on the part of both men and animals. The two small figures on the side are human and connect the crest with the legend of children who disobeyed their mothers and were turned into ravens.
- (4) Great raven woman - Its-tads-doh - mother of the Haida Indians
- (5) Symbol of a hat worn by a chief - Tadu-skillik - used to indicate relationship between Its-tads-doh, mother of Haida and her daughter, Hoh-hok, who is credited with creating the earth
- (6) Daughter of the great raven - hoh-hok (lok) - similar to the third symbol from the top; grasped in the hand is a cylinder-like object representing the container out of which she carried the magic which caused the land to rise out of the great expanse of water which is supposed to have covered the globe.
- (7) [next to bottom] grizzly bear - Horts - paws of a wolf; composite crest, boasting of the powers of the bear clan
- (8) [bottom] Qo-tc - wolf - family crest of the man for whom the pole was carved

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE: At the cost of \$3,000, William Sheard and Chester Thorne commissioned the ^{carving} building of a Totem Pole which would rival that of Seattle's. Sheard had become irritated by articles describing Seattle's Totem Pole, which he claimed had been stolen from Alaskan Indians. Sheard was an explorer, seller of furs, and later established an Alaska curio shop at 10th and A. Thorne was active in Tacoma banking and civic interests. The pole, immediately became one of the major tourist attractions to the city, and one wonders whether or not it was intentional that it should be raised the day before Theodore Roosevelt arrived in the city to assist in

the laying of the cornerstone for the Masonic Temple. In an early article on the pole, a reporter assessed the importance of the pole by saying that "it will probably never be again duplicated, but for hundreds of years give Tacoma the distinction of having seized on a dying custom from a race rapidly becoming extinct and perpetuating their unique workmanship and learning and art for the edification and gratification of unborn generations."

That which is represented in the Totem Pole is family history - genealogy; and the belief that man originated from man-like beasts, forerunners of today's animals. Indian totem poles are not part of the culture of Washington Indians, but rather those of British Columbia and Alaska, and is one of their sacred institutions. They will not willingly part with their family tree. It is their belief that each tribe is descended from some form of animal and the pole represents each successive marriage and intermarriage between the tribes, each being represented by the animal after which it is named. Some Indian families can trace their family history back 30 or 40 generations through the carvings on their tribal poles.

Owner: City of Tacoma

Marker inscription: Tacoma totem pole largest totem pole in the world. Made and carved by Alaska Indians. Presented to the City of Tacoma by W.F. Sheard and Chester Thorne. 1903.



TACOMA TOTEM POLE, 1903 (Firemen's Park)

Tacoma's Totem Pole was carved by Alaska Indians who were brought to Quartermaster Harbor, on Vashon Island, expressly for that purpose. The enterprise was funded by Chester Thorne and William F. Sheard. Its restored height of 82 feet, 6 inches makes it still one of the tallest in the country. The original Tacoma Totem Pole was dedicated in May of 1903. (Tacoma and State Registers)

IV. Condition Reports

- a. TACMAC Condition Report and Annual Survey 2007, 11**
- b. Sectional Photograph of Totem Pole and additional photographs from NW Room Archives**
- c. Terrill Condition Report 1999 and 2012 update**
- d. Taggert Condition Report 2009**

TACMAC CONDITION REPORT (3-D)

TACMAC NO.: 18800203

DATE OF EXAMINATION: 10.24.07/10.30.2007

ARTIST: TWO UNAMED CARVERS FROM SITKA, ALASKA, CARVED IN HAIDA TRIBAL STYLE.
Last Name First Name Middle Initial

COLLABORATING ARTIST: _____
Name Company

TITLE OF ARTWORK: COMMONLY KNOWN AS "TACOMA Totem Pole" DATE EXECUTED: 1903

SITE OF ARTWORK: FIREMAN'S PARK 875 A STREET, TACOMA, WA

LOCATION OF SIGNATURE AND COPYRIGHT: NONE FOUND

MATERIALS: RED CEDAR / POLE WAS ORIGINALLY 105 FT / 80' ABOVE GROUND / 25' BELOW GROUND.

CATEGORY: Sculpture (outdoor) _____ Sculpture (indoor) _____ Site integrated _____ Other: _____

EDITION SIZE / NUMBER: _____

DIMENSIONS:

Artwork: Height: 80' includes 24" base Width: 32" Depth: 32"

Base: Height: 24" Width: 32" Depth: 32" Material: RED CEDAR WITH PLAQUE

CONDITION ANALYSIS - OVERALL (Entire condition analysis based on ground-level visual examination):

_____ Excellent _____ Good Fair _____ Poor _____ Unstable _____ Pests

STRUCTURAL CONDITION:

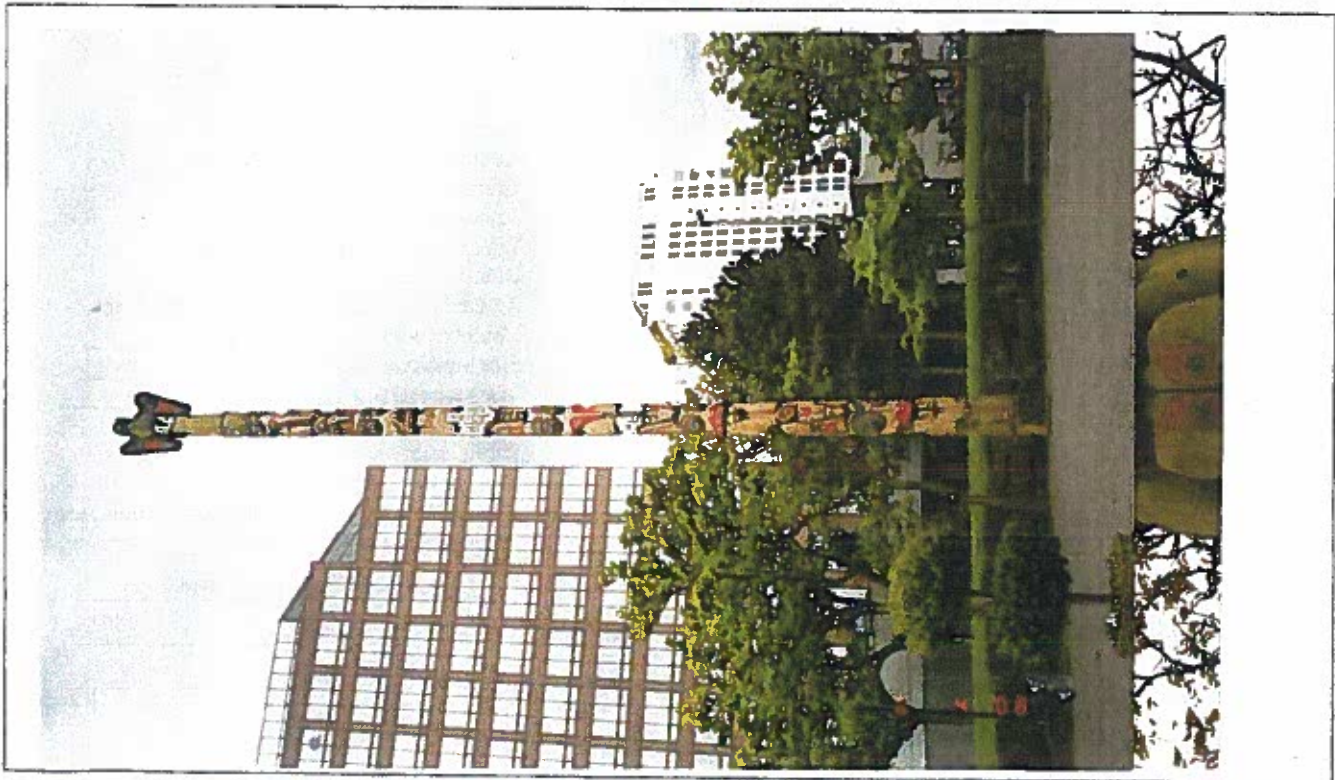
_____ Excellent _____ Good Fair _____ Poor _____ Unstable _____ Pests

SURFACE CONDITION:

_____ Excellent _____ Good _____ Fair Poor _____ Unstable _____ Pests

BASE CONDITION:

_____ Excellent _____ Good _____ Fair Poor _____ Unstable _____ Pests



STRUCTURE

- Cracks / Fractures / Faults / CHECKS
- Dislocation (Tilt / Fallen / Sunken)
- Fragmentation:
 - Number of pieces
 - Losses / Missing parts
- Sound repairs / Fills Unsound repairs / Fills
- Bronze disease
- Vandalism: CARVING / MARKERS
- Wear from climbing / Human contact
- Work unstable: _____
- Water retention / Collection
- Electrical / Technical components
- Missing / Rusty bolts
- Welding joints
- Caulk / Mortar joints: _____

COMMENTS: SEVERE VERTICAL CHECKING - 1/8" TO 3/4" SEE PHOTOS. ALL LEAD CAPS WILL NEED TO BE REPLACED.

FOUNDATION / BASE

- Consult Engineer on:
 - Structure Seismic protection
- Foundation unstable: UNDERGROUND
 - Unable to access Tilting
 - Missing hardware Sunken
- Exposed armature / Oxidation / Water seepage
- Weathering / Spalling / Eroding
- Stain:
 - Copper Iron
 - Black crust Biological growth
- Poor water drainage / Mortar leaching / Caulk joints
- Cracks / Fractures / Faults / Losses
- Sound repairs / Fills Unsound repairs / Fills
- Foundation design:
 - Good Fair Poor

COMMENTS: 1. CONSULT STRUCTURAL ENGINEER ON UNDERGROUND POLE CONDITION, SITE EXCAVATION TO EXAMINE STRUCTURE.

SURFACE

- Graffiti: CARVING - MARKERS
- Microbial growth (algae / fungus / lichen)
- Chalking / Eroding / Sugary / Cracks (stone)
- Flaking / Splitting / Chips (stone)
- Efflorescence / Mortar leaching (stone / brick)
- Patina loss / Oxidizing (metal) ON PLAQUE
- Corrosion / Pitting / Etching (metal)
- Surface coating faded
- Mechanical abrasion / Scratches
- Loss of surface sealer / paint / powder coating / gilded
- Insect infestation / Rot / Dry rot (wood) TOP EDGE OF 24" BASE
- Wicking of tannins (wood)

COMMENTS: SEVERE GRAFFITI ON BOTTOM 7'-9" OF POLE. SEVERE PAINT LOSS. SEVERE SECTION LOSSES.

CONSERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS

- Priority:
 - High Low
 - Medium Deaccession
- Full restoration
- Stabilization
- Basic maintenance (preventive care):
 - Graffiti removal
 - Annual water wash (basic)
 - Wax / Paint / Apply surface sealer
 - Dust / vacuum
 - Re-caulk / Grout / Reset / Add weep holes
 - Minor repairs: _____
 - Site location / Landscape: TRIM TREE BRANCHES THAT TOUCH POLE
 - Previously restored: SEE PG. 3 (Year)
 - Public safety hazard
 - Consult Engineer / Conservator
 - Consult Conservation / Technician contractor
 - ID plaque onsite: Yes No

COMMENTS: BRONZE PLAQUE 19" X 30" NEEDS FULL RESTORATION.

BASIC MAINTENANCE CONSIDERATIONS:

	<u>Each Year</u>	<u>Every Two Years</u>	<u>TEN</u> <u>Every Five Years</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wash surface: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hand <input type="checkbox"/> Power (low psi)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Graffiti removal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Apply anti-graffiti coating	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Apply wax	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Apply wood preservative	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Apply sealer / Water proofing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Apply touch-up primer and paint	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ENTIRE POLE
<input type="checkbox"/> Maintain environment - grass, trees, shrubs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Remove microbial growth	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minor repairs / Consolidation: _____	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>EACH YEAR TO POLE AT BASE UP TO GRAFFITI LEVEL.</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- Number of people to perform basic maintenance: 1 TO CLEAN & REPAINT LOWER SECTION
- Will ladders and/or scaffolding be required? Yes No. 4'-5'
- Water near work site? Yes No 200 # of feet away.
- Power near work site? Yes No 10 # of feet away.
- Safety equipment required: Cones Tape Signs.
- Power equipment required: Generator Washer Lift.

COMMENTS: THE POLE WAS PAINTED IN 1928, 1935, 1940, 1959. SEE ATTACHED HISTORY.

The following estimate is based on brief visual survey and may not reflect the full extent of required conservation treatment.

Rough estimate for basic maintenance: _____ (# of hours) x \$ _____ .00 (hourly rate) = \$ _____
 Rough estimate for stabilization work: _____ (# of hours) x \$ _____ .00 (hourly rate) = \$ _____
 Rough estimate for restoration work: 160 (# of hours) x \$ 120 .00 (hourly rate) = \$ 19,200
" " " " " MATERIALS / EQUIPMENT / ENGINEER \$ 15,800

\$ 35,000 TOTAL

CONDITION DESCRIPTIONS:

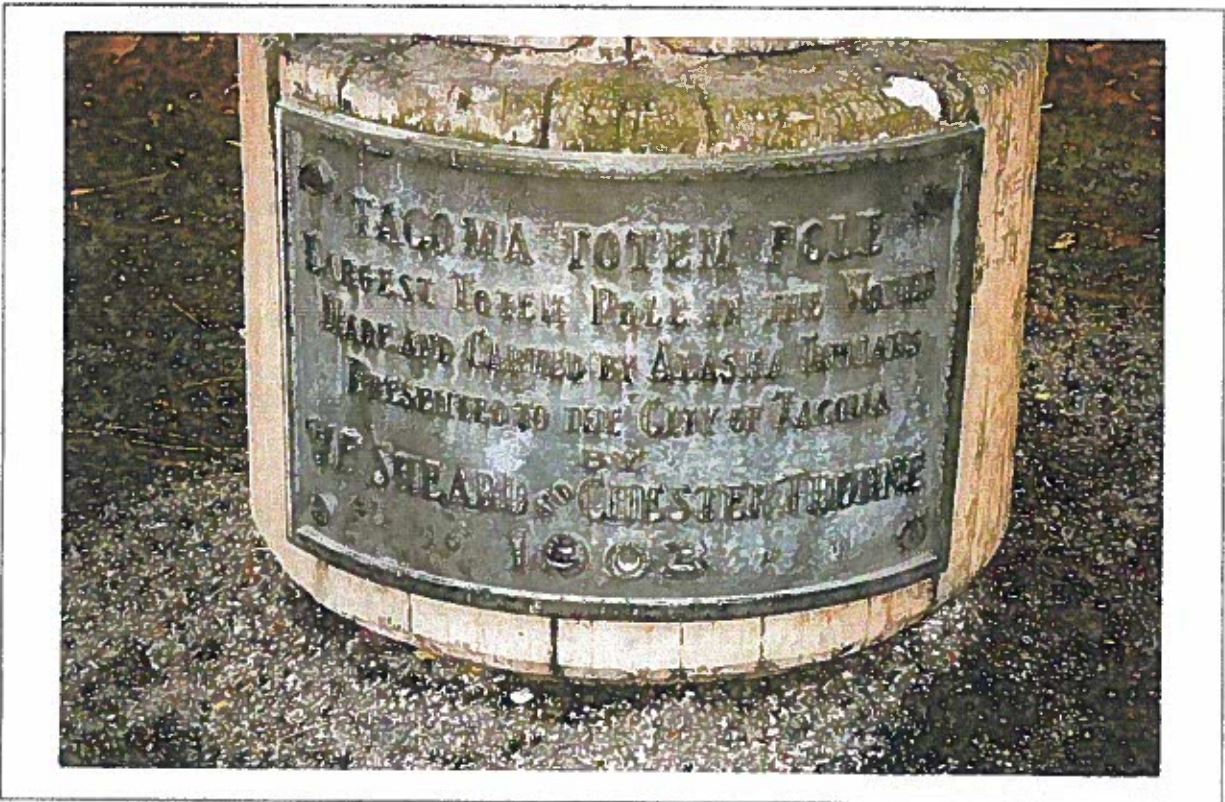
Excellent: Pristine condition, no damage. Requires annual examination by registrar.
Good: Little damage other than normal aging, visually acceptable minor surface scratches, abrasions. Structurally stable. Requires annual examination by registrar.
Fair: Borderline visually or structurally damaged. Remedial work should be scheduled within a reasonable period. Conservator or specialist should be consulted.
Poor: Cannot be exhibited due to serious structural or visual damage. Conservator or specialist should be consulted.
Unstable: Either surface or structure has deteriorated to the extent that the object should not be exhibited or poses an immediate hazard to the public. Specialist should be consulted.
Pests: Active infestation or evidence of repeated pest usage.

Appraiser: _____ Date of Appraisal: _____ Appraisal Amount: \$ _____

Condition Report photographic documentation provided: 1-FULL 6-DETAIL 35 mm color print 28 Digital images

Conservation Consultant: L. K. Rockwood, Rockwood Enterprises LLC

Signature: [Signature] Date of Condition Report: 11/16/2007



PHOTOGRAPHS OF SPECIFIC TECHNICAL CONCERNS



PHOTOGRAPHS OF SPECIFIC TECHNICAL CONCERNS



PHOTOGRAPHS OF SPECIFIC TECHNICAL CONCERNS

TACMAC ANNUAL CONDITION SURVEY: 2-D & 3-D

TACMAC NO.: 19030207

DATE OF EXAMINATION: 8/12/09

August 24, 2011

ARTIST: Alaska Indians

Last Name
First Name
Middle Initial

TITLE OF ARTWORK: Totem Pole Date: 1903

LOCATION / SITE OF ARTWORK: 875 A Street, Fireman's Park

DIMENSIONS: ARTWORK: Height ~~72"~~^{105"} Width 39" Depth 34"
 FRAME: Height _____ Width _____ Depth _____
 BASE: Height _____ Width _____ Depth _____

MATERIALS: Red cedar

CLASSIFICATION: Drawing Painting Photography Printmaking Textiles Glass Ceramic
 Sculpture Mixed media Site integrated Conceptual Video Special project

PLEASE CHECK ALL OF THE FOLLOWING BOXES THAT APPLY TO THE CONDITION OF THE ARTWORK:

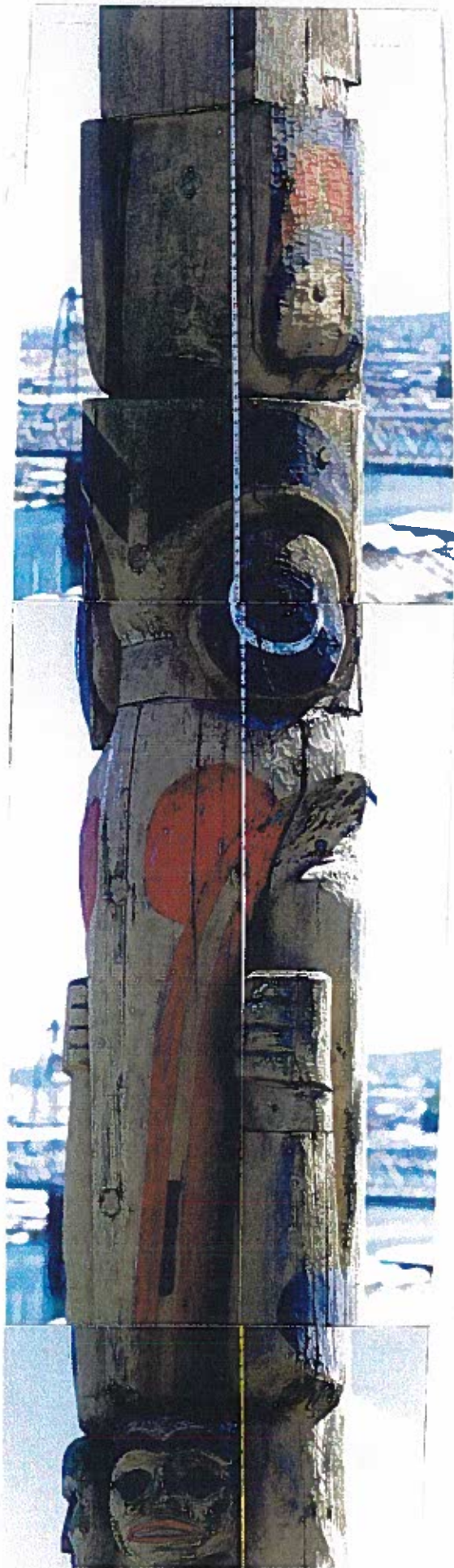
TACMAC Identification:	Site:	Presentation:
Label <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	Inaccessible	Obscure
Plaque <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Under construction	Intrusive
Copyright symbol <u>NDM</u>	Relocation necessary	Obstructed
Signature location: <u>NDM</u>	Lighting upgrade needed	Work at risk due to site conditions
	Storage upgrade needed	Public at risk / unstable installation

Surface:		
Tears	Scratches	Image losses
Warps	Abrasions	Cleavage
Splits	Opacity	Crackles / Creases
Flaking	Dullness / Discoloration	Organic decay
Graffiti	Stains / Grime	No UV protection
Vandalism	Fading	Other:

Framing:	Hardware:
Glass cracked	Theft risk
Plexiglas scratched	Loose / Missing
Dusty	Inadequate
Scratches on frame surface	Obtrusive
Seal / Liner damaged	Security hardware upgrade needed
Mat damaged	Other:

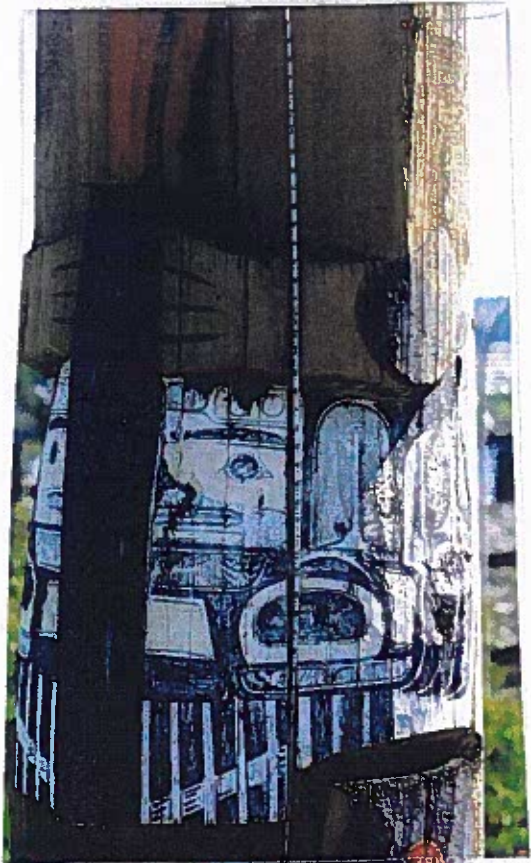
Sculpture / Site integrated / Mixed media:	Conservation / Restoration:
Structure:	Recommendations:
Losses / Missing pieces	Consult Conservator:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cracks / Fractures	<input type="checkbox"/> ASAP <input type="checkbox"/> 6-12 months
Caulk / Mortar joints	Beyond repair / Deaccession
Bronze disease	Maintenance - preventative care
Exposed armature	Annual water wash
Water retention	Graffiti removal
Work unstable	Touch-up Wax / Sealer / Paint
Vandalism	Select new installation site
Other:	Other:

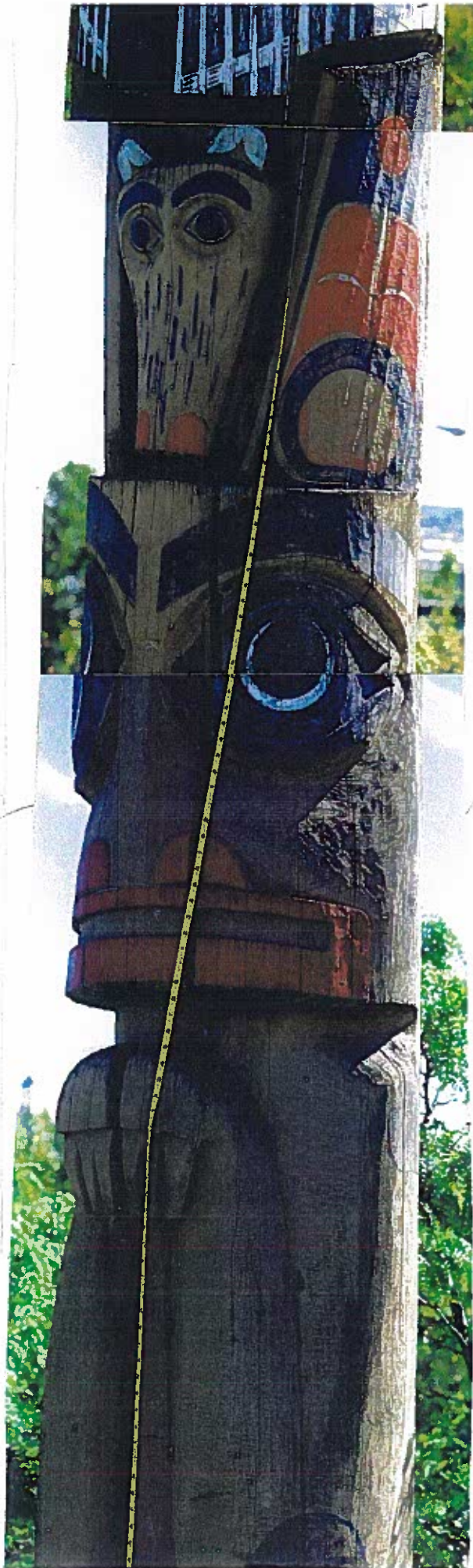
















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SERIES: D32837- 14

DATE: 04-11-1948

DESCRIPTION:

Tacoma's totem pole in Fireman's Park was commis W.F. Sheard and Chester Thorne. It was carved by Americans from Sitka, Alaska in the Haida tribal styl was presented to the city in 1903, it stood 103 feet t

totem pole represents the history of the Eagle Tribe
The top most figure of a totem pole would be the spirit
god (eagle, seal, salmon or bear or even the sun) from
the tribe claimed descent and a particular protection
on top of Tacomas pole is "Skanskwin", the crest of
Nexa'da people. (Tacoma Ledger, 12/14/1924; TNT
Hosmer, 3/16/1946; TNT, 12/6/1953)

IMAGETYPE: Black & White

SUBJECTS: Tacoma Totem Pole (Tacoma); Totem poles--Tacoma
Skanskwin; Eagles; Sculpture--Tacoma;

COLLECTION: Richards Studio Collection

PRINTTYPE: Fiber base-Glossy

PRINTFORMAT: 8x10"

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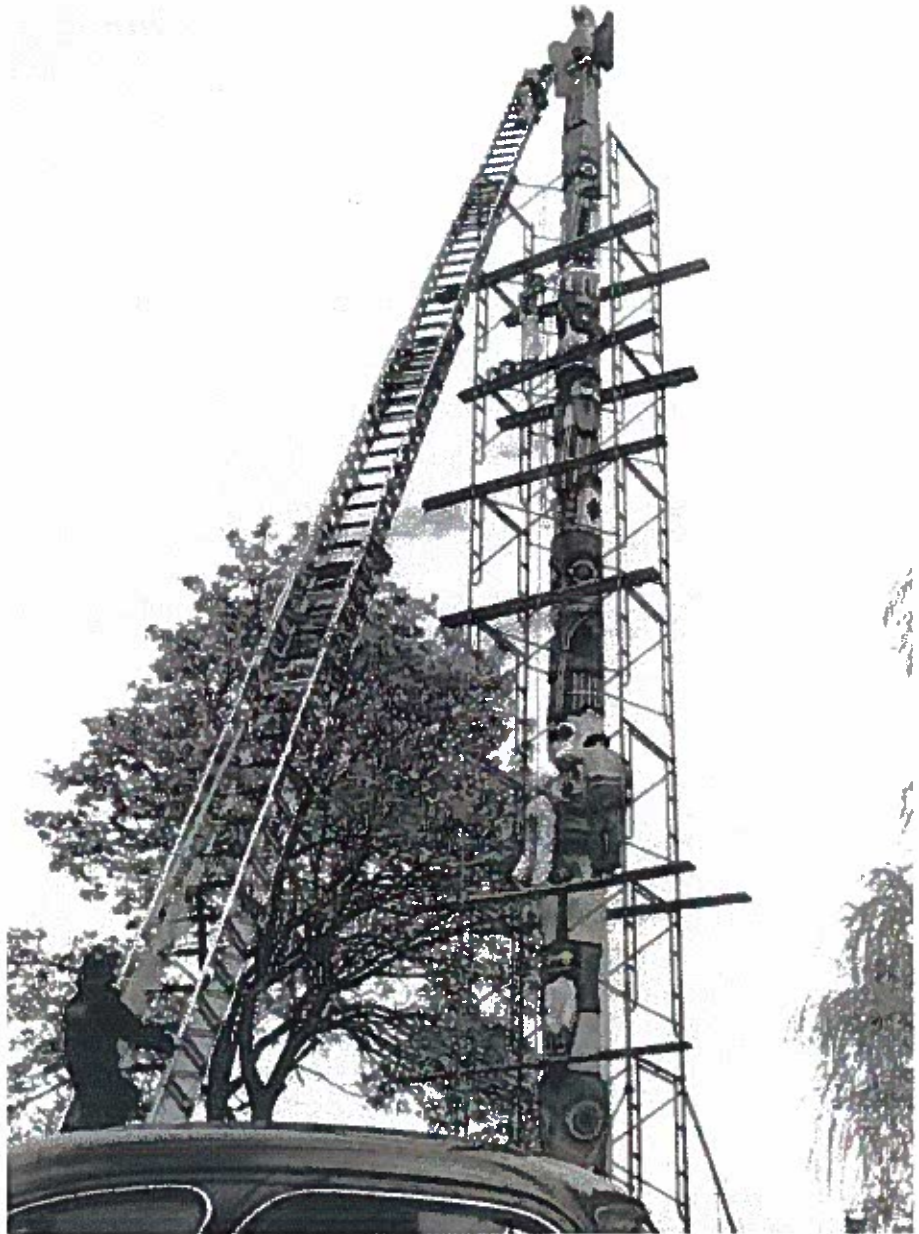
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◀	October 2007							▶
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SERIES: D90574- 1

DATE: 05-07-1955

DESCRIPTION: The Tacoma Fire Department provided ladders and Safeway stores supplied scaffolding when members Painters Union, local # 64 and members of the Tacc

Chamber of Commerce took on the project of painting Tacoma's totem pole at South 9th & A Street in 1955. A proclamation, Mayor Harold M. Tollefson had declared April 14, 1955 "Clean up, fix up, paint up" week in Tacoma. The annual event encouraged citizens to clean out their attics and yards and dispose of excess items. The repainting of the totem pole was the project chosen to kick off the campaign. Local # 64 had already painted the totem pole before in April of 1948.

IMAGETYPE: Black & White

SUBJECTS: Totem poles--Tacoma; Painting--Tacoma; Community--Tacoma--1950-1960; Laborers--Tacoma; Painters Local No. 64 (Tacoma); Labor unions--Tacoma; Urban beautification--Tacoma--1950-1960; Scaffolding--Tacoma; Fire equipment;

COLLECTION: Richards Studio Collection

PRINTTYPE: Fiber base-Glossy

PRINTFORMAT: 8x10"

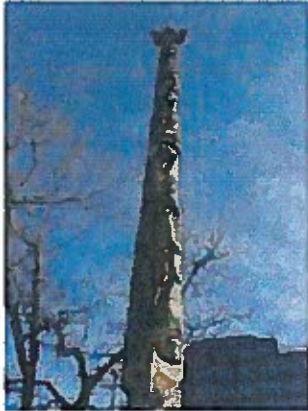
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TITLE OF ARTWORK: Totem Pole

PHOTOGRAPH OF ARTWORK CONDITION (and/or DRAWING, if applicable):

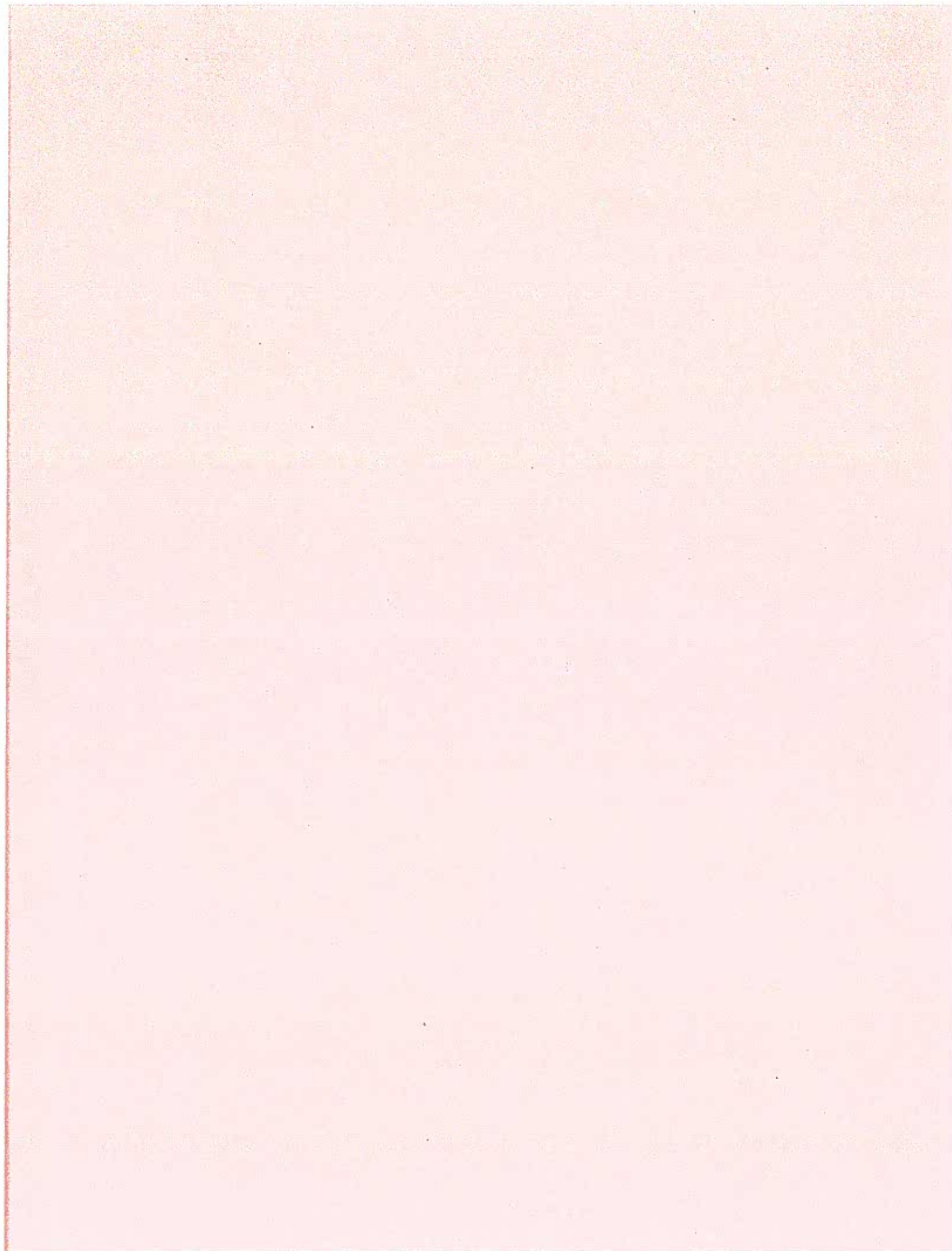


DESCRIPTION OF ARTWORK: This totem pole was the 'tallest in the northwest' rivaling Seattle's. It is carved with a deep relief; it shows stylistic influence of the Indians of Vancouver Island" (Metro Parks Website).

DESCRIPTION OF DAMAGE: Graffiti (mostly carved some pen) all along base. Paint wearing off. Large fractures. 15G 8/11

COMMENTS / RECOMMENDATIONS: None. ~~Damage~~ by ✓

Survey conducted by (please print): Ivan Golovkin 8/24/2011 Ivan Golovkin
Signature: [Signature] Title: Intern
Rebecca Solverson Date: 8/12/09



Copy

EXTRA

Fireman's Park Totem Project

Contract, Assessment & Condition Report



Frank Terrill Company
2711 North 30th Street
Tacoma, Washington 98407-6331
Tel: 253-752-7493
Fax: 253-759-2394

Condition Report
CR 9922
Fireman's Park Totem Pole
Survey date: September 3, 1999

Condition report:

Carved memorial pole by unknown native Americans, completed under commission by Tacoma businessmen W.F. Sheard and Chester Thorne, dedicated in 1903. Current height of pole above grade: 72'5" , with a circumference at the base of 8' , 10-5/8". The pole is embedded into a below grade well. Depth below grade unknown. Location: Northeast corner of South Ninth and A Streets in Tacoma, Washington.

In 1976 The pole was temporarily removed from the site for restoration work. Sculptor Doug Granum laid the pole horizontal and replaced the top of the pole using a tendon system which extends downward to the 58.5 foot level. The bolts used to anchor the tendon are tight.

The inspection of this pole was done using sharp probes and mallet soundings. The most severe deterioration was noted at the 58' and 30' levels where a metal probe inserted into a crack or other orifice, passed through the center line and emerged through the opposite face of the pole. The implication is that beginning beneath replacement top, the interior of the pole may be hollow for some substantial length. The author spoke with Mr. Granum on 9/7/99. Mr. Granum stated that while in a horizontal position in 1976, extensive rot in the center of the pole was scooped out, then Cuprinol and/or linseed oil was used to saturate the cavity. He stated that it was a conscious decision to leave the large cracks from 59' to 45' to allow the hollow to breathe. The decision appears to have been a good one. The only apparent active dry rot on the pole is on the East side at 58.5', at 54' on top of the watchman's head, between 35' and 36', and on the West side at 45.5', and 27.5' .

The surface coatings are failing. The pole has not been painted for twenty three years and the coatings are reaching the limits of their life expectancy. Horizontal top surfaces coatings are in many cases non-existent.

A Carpenter ant infestation is evident. At grade at the 3 O'clock position (front being 12) is a 10mm hole currently in use. Six other holes are evident around the base of the pole. The average depth of probe penetration into these holes is six inches. In general, probing and sounding indicated sound wood at the pole's intersection with adjacent grade.

The back of the pole is sound. No deterioration noted. No probe penetration above grade. Minor vandal damage below 6'.

Treatment report:

On September 3, 1999 the following treatments were affected:

EAST SIDE:

(1) Thunderbird head and shoulders were cleaned of mosses and lichen. (2) The back of the thunderbird wing was cleaned of lichen and mosses. (3) The juncture of the wing to the body of the pole was caulked* on the rear (upper) side. (4) A 2" vertical split from the top copper cap to the top of the east eyebrow of the thunderbird was caulked. (5) The shoulders of the thunderbird at 70', 11" were caulked. (6) An Impel** rod was inserted at 65', 4" on the east side. (7) An Impel rod was inserted at 62', 10". (8) Horizontal end grain cracks were caulked at 62', 3". (9) An Impel rod was inserted at 54'. (10) An impel rod was inserted at 53', 8" into the forehead of the watchman. (11) An Impel rod was inserted at 44' 5". (12) The top edge of the copper flashing at 36', 6" was caulked. (13) An Impel rod was inserted at 36', 4" just below the copper cap. (14) An impel rod was inserted at 15'. (15) An Impel rod was inserted at 11', 6".

WEST SIDE:

(1) Back of wing, shoulder and head of thunderbird were cleaned of mosses and lichen. (2) The back of the wing was caulked to the body of the thunderbird. (3) Vertical caulking performed between 65.5' to 65'. (4) Impel rod inserted at 65', 5". (5) Caulked horizontal crack at 64'. (6) Caulked horizontal cracks at 36', 6". (7) An Impel rod was inserted at 23', 5". (8) Impel rod installed at 17' behind head. (9) Straighten and secured disturbed flashing at 14', 4". (10) Caulked rectangular wooden plugs at 13'.

BACK OF POLE: Vegetation in contact with the pole was cut back to a 2' separation. Note: carpenter ant activity in the vicinity of the pole is evident. Spoke With Vito Iacobazzi (Metropolitan Parks Maintenance Supervisor) who stated he had sprayed the base of the pole with Noxout (micro encapsulated slow release diazinon) in August, 1999. It appears that the ants currently on the pole may have been using the adjacent tree foliage in contact with the pole at +-12' above grade to bypass the treated pole base as a means of gaining access to the pole. This access route is now interrupted.

*CAULK: Alex Plus 35 year Cedar Tan Acrylic Latex/silicone... Dap Inc. Dayton, Ohio 45401 Paintable.

**IMPEL : Anhydrous Disodium Octaborate (Na₂B₈O₁₃) for prevention and control of wood decay fungi...Moisture activated Chem.Specialties Inc. Charlotte, NC 28217... 1/2"X2" size.

Terrill Assessment

Corresponds to Photograph

72' 6" HIGH
COPPER CAP OVER CROWN
LT. SIDE VER. CRACK 72.6-70.5
LEVEL
CROWN TO SHOULDER AT
INTERSECTION W. WING
NOT COVERED BY COPPER CAP
REC. TWO COPPER CAPS AT
CROWN & SHOULDER WEST SIDE
5/8" WIDE CRACK
12" PEN. AT SHOULDER
VER. CRACK DEAD CENTER
CHEST OF EMBLE PLANS
FROM 67.5 TO 70.7 FT.
CHRP. ANTS AT 19' A.D.C. FROM
TREE / CUTTING BRANCH

CAULK JOINT AT LINK.
BETWEEN BOTH WINGS AT
THUNDERBIRD — RE GAULKING
SO WON'T LEAK WATER.
CLEANING UP IN OFF BACK
OF WING.

SURFACE W/TS HAVE REACHED
LIMIT

CAULKING E. SIDE COPPER
GAP TO TOP OF EYEBROW
2" IN LENGTH

CAULKING FROM 70' 11" TO
TOP OF SHOULDER (NECK OF
THUNDERBIRD TO EACH SHOULDER

~~OPEN~~ PEN. E. SIDE BETWEEN
69' LEVEL TO TOP OF ROLE

VER. SPLIT FROM 64.7 - 67.8
NO EVIDENCE OF ROOF

HEAVY ^{1/2" SPERM} LICKIN GROWTH BACK
SIDE OF WINGS

CAULKING INTERSECTION OF
WINGS BOTH SIDES

~~VER. CRACK~~
SPRINKLE CRACKS BACK
OF THUNDERBIRD (NORMAL)

THE WHITE SPOTTING - BACK OF POLE
BETWEEN 62-4 60.5 RES.
OF OLD GAULK. COSM. ONLY

4" PEN. VER. CRACK E. SIDE
BETWEEN 65, 4 - 65.8 WHICH
INTERSECTS CHAIN SAW SCURE
DONG BEANMAN WORK
INPER STICK

65.6 INTERSECTION BETWEEN
~~CRACK POLE AND~~ ~~CRACK~~ ~~CRACK~~
VER. CRACK

BEANMAN BOULDS TIE IN
~~CRACK~~ E SIDE OPEN VER. CRACK
65.4 TO 65.4

9/4/99

Carpenier and Webster
Remains. entry Points:
9' level 1" P. hole behind
West show floor
at grade + Undercut 3"
above grade

Vik Metro Parks
279 5826

E. SIDE

IMPAI ROD AT 62.10 YET, CRACK
CAULKED HOR. EVIDENCE IN CRACK
AT 62.3

VEEF. CRACK FROM 62.3 DOWN TO
6-4

58.4 SERV. POI TWO IMPAI RODS
CAN'T BE CAULKED
PUNIKIENESS

POD GOES THE 1 POLE 5' OR
BELOW GRANARY TWO IMPAI
RODS 6" ABOVE THAT POINT

ON SIDE OF BEER BETWEEN
54" & 56" BOT. 1 1/2" TO 1"
WITH CRACK TRENCHES WAS
THEIR AT TIME GRANARY DID
WORK. IMPAI ROD AT 54'

W. SIDE

39.1 EXT. DEG. ON HOEL.
SURFACE HAS BEEN PLUGGED
WITH TAR NEED TO BE SERVED
UP

CAULK TOP EDGE OF FLASHING
AT 36.6 UNKNTURE

E. SIDE

CARPT. ANTS. AT 30'
3 BEE HOLES FT. @ 27.6
DEEP ROT 27.6 WEST SIDE
ABOVE EHR 27.9 - 25

W. SIDE

CAULKING TOP OF WING
70, 71

CARPT. ANTS AT 68'

WING CAULKING AT 65, 6 TO 65

CAULKING HORZ. SURFACE 64
INPAC ROD 65, 4

45.5 W. SHOULDER RUCKY
HORZ. SURFACE NEEDS
SEAMING

TAR PATCH NEED TO BE
REPLACED

6

44 TO 45 TAR PATCH (NEED
TO BE REPLACED)

TAR PATCH AT 39'

W. SIDE

30" COPPER (THIN)
CANK PLUG 2" X 5" AT
13' 4" EAST OF ϕ CANK TOP
PLUG 12" WEST OF ϕ AT 13'
3 1/2" X 5" CANK TOP

CANKING AT 36.6 BN
HORIZ. SURFACE

VERT. ROT AT 27, 4

ROD THEN AT 30'

SOUNDS HOLLOW 24.6 - 25
WEST OF ϕ
EMERAL ROD AT 23.5 - 6"
RIGHT OF ϕ

FACE BETWEEN 17-18 IS

REPLACEMENT PERIOD ON

DEEP SPACE AROUND

CANKED JOINTS AT ELBOWS
NEED TO COME OUT AT

IS. 1 BOTH SIDES

FLASHING AT 14.7 NEEDS TO
BE REPLACED

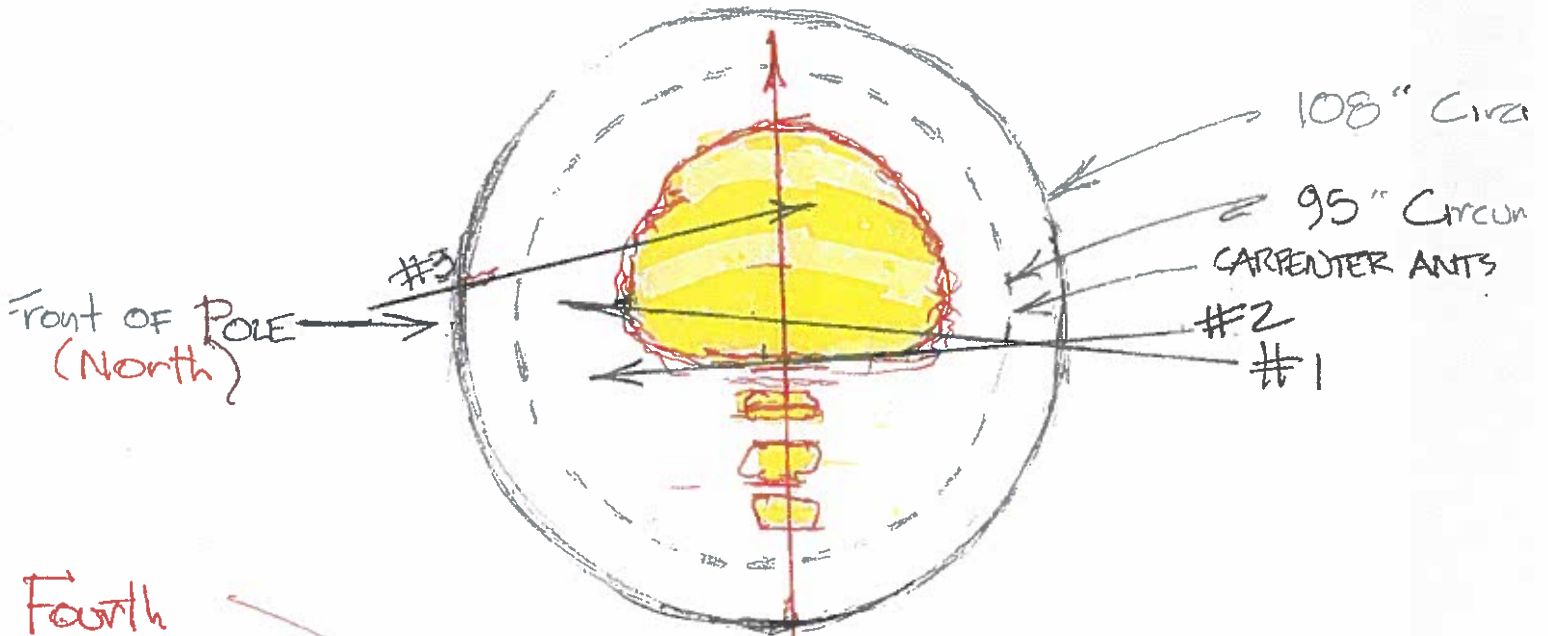
RE-FLASH BEAR TOP AT 14.6

POT UNDER FLASHING

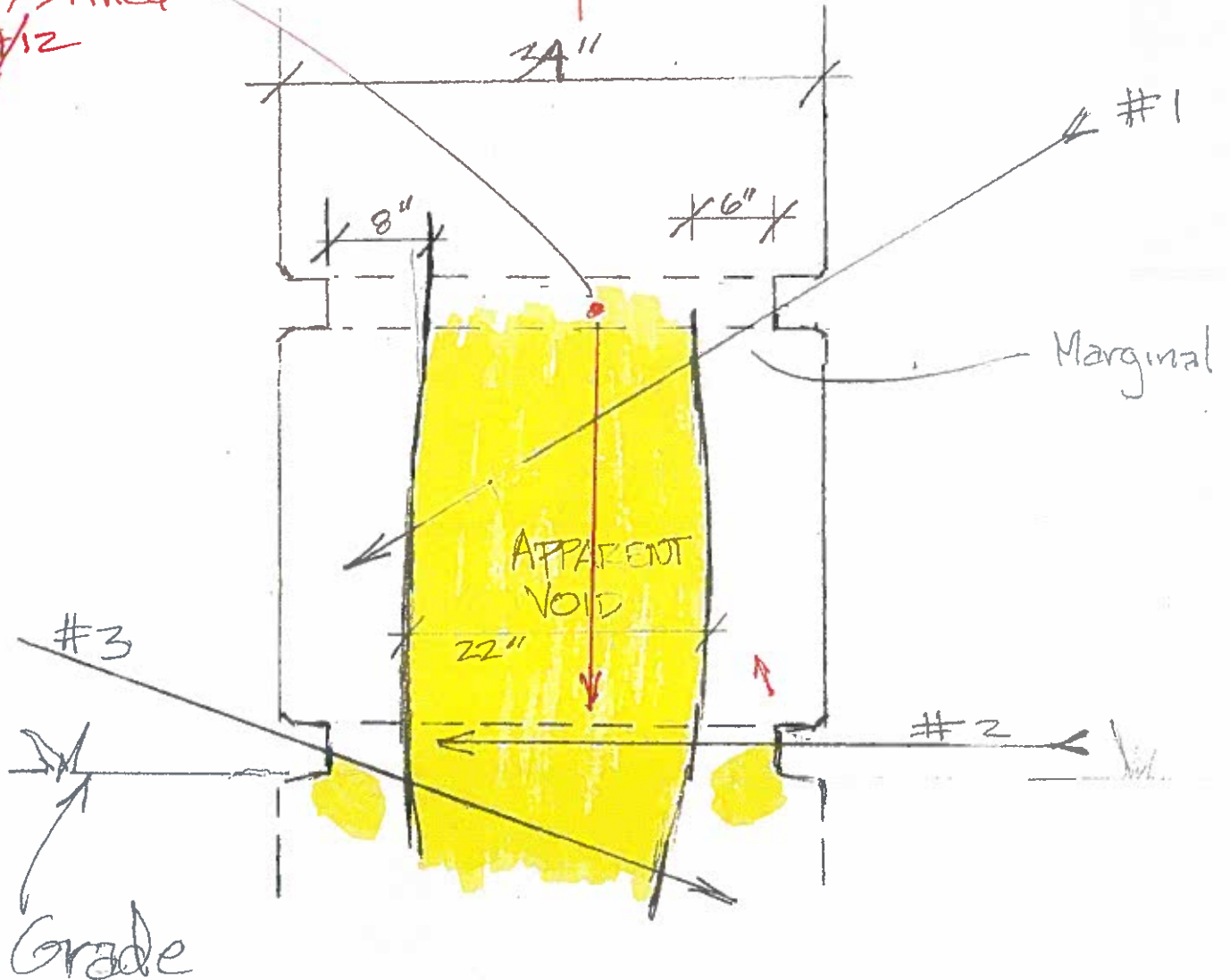
* PULL UNDER FLASHING TO
INSERT EMERAL RODS

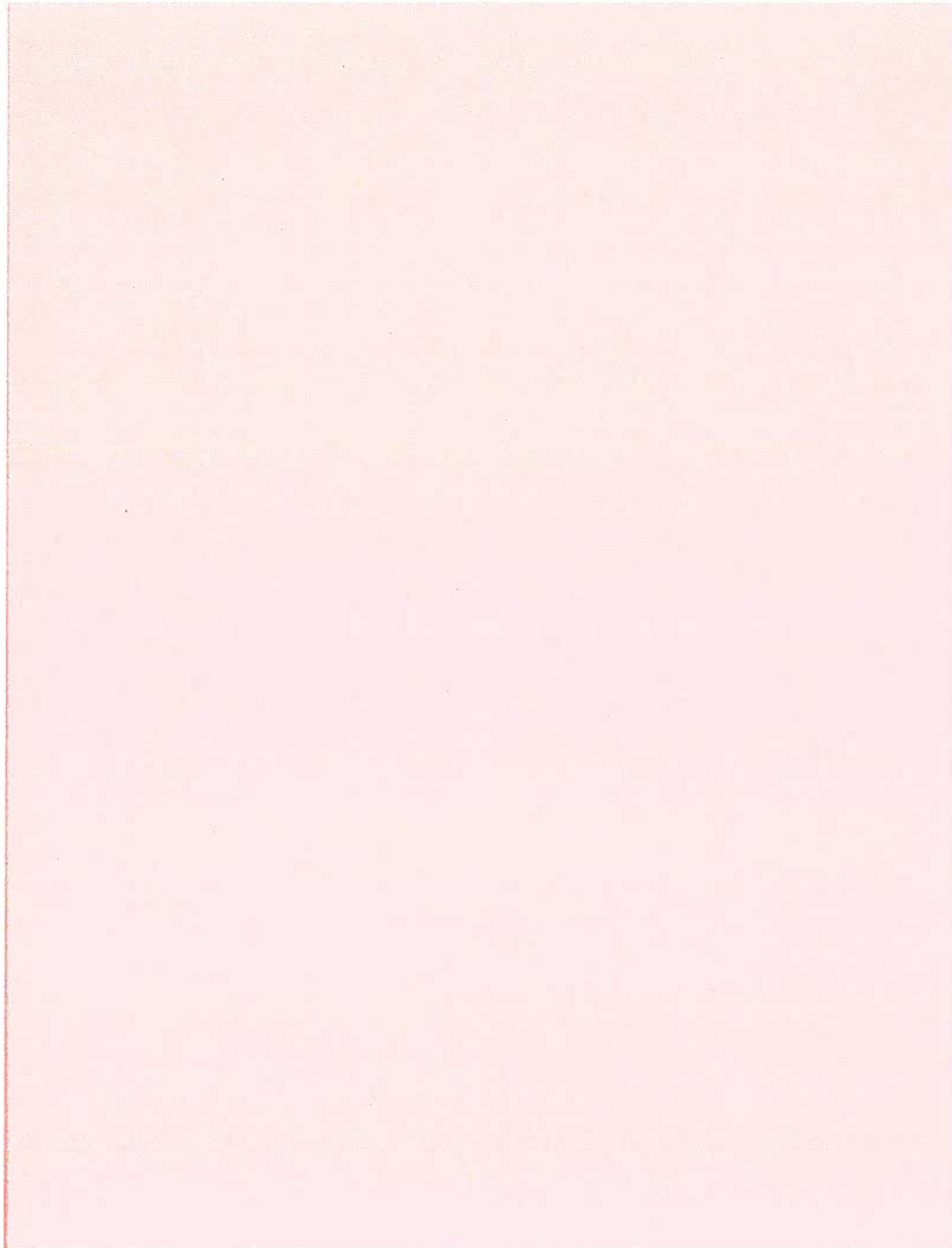
HST KUN LUN

DIAGONAL SECTION 24'-30" ABOVE GRADE



Fourth hole, Drilled 5/4/12





JONATHAN TAGGART
Taggart Objects Conservation
644 Five Islands Road
Georgetown, Maine 04530
Phone: (207) 371-2099; cell: 207-522-9435
Email: jtaggart@gwi.net

November 26, 2008

Amy McBride
City of Tacoma Arts Administrator
747 Market Street, Room 9000
Tacoma, WA 98402-3793
(253) 591-5192
(253) 591-5232
amcbride@cityoftacoma.org
www.tacomaculture.org / www.cityofdestiny.com

Dear Amy,

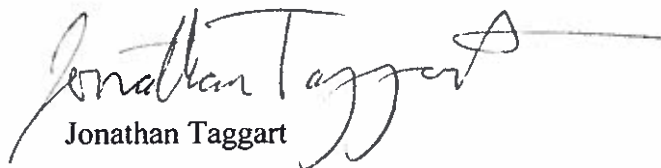
Enclosed are two copies of a treatment proposal for the conservation of the Tacoma Totem Pole. For this treatment I am proposing working with the Washington Conservator Dana Senge to help keep the costs reasonable and to increase the knowledge of totem pole conservation within the state.

I am quite concerned about the over all stability of the pole. We were able to detect substantial rot within the base of the pole as can be seen in the supporting photograph. I feel that an engineering evaluation of the structural stability of the pole is essential. This is not part of our proposed treatment. Ideally, the work of the engineer and any modification that might be needed should be coordinated with the conservator you plan to have work on the pole.

I have sent you two signed copies of the treatment proposal. If you would like to proceed with the treatment, please sign both proposals, and return one to me for my records. I also assume that the Cities contracting office may have some considerations as well.

I look forward to the possibility of working with you on this project.

Sincerely,


Jonathan Taggart

**TACOMA ARTS COMMISSION
MUNICIPAL ARTS COLLECTION**

**TACOMA TOTEM POLE
TACMAC 18800207**

TREATMENT PROPOSAL

JONATHAN TAGGART
Taggart Objects Conservation
644 Five Islands Road
Georgetown, ME 04548
(207) 371-2099, cell (207)522-9435
E-mail: jtaggart@gwi.net

TREATMENT PROPOSAL

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II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A. CLIENT INFORMATION

OWNER: City of Tacoma

AUTHORIZED

AGENT: Amy McBride, Linda Rockwood

ADDRESS: 747 Market Street, Room 9000
Tacoma, WA 98402-3793

TELEPHONE: (253) 591-5192

FAX: (253)591-5232

EMAIL: amcbride@cityoftacoma.org

WEB: www.tacomaculture.org / www.cityofdestiny.com

B. OBJECT INFORMATION

ARTIST: 2 unnamed carvers from Alaska

LOCATION: Fireman's Park, 875 A St., Tacoma, WA

DATE MADE: 1902

SCULPTURE MEDIA: Carved cedar, paint

BASE MEDIA: Cedar pole buried in concrete

DIMENSIONS: 403" x 60" x 60"

INVENTORY NUMBER: TACMAC 18800207

C. CLIENT'S EXPECTATIONS

The client has requested a preservation treatment for the Totem pole in Fireman's Park, known as Tacoma Totem Pole. The desired preservation treatment includes stabilization of the wooden structure and restoration of the painted surface. The treatment will extend the visual and useful life of the artwork.

Structural evaluation of the below ground structures is beyond the scope of this proposal. Every reasonable effort will be made to facilitate and coordinate with the necessary engineering evaluation. If structural mitigation of below ground structures is recommended, every reasonable effort will be made to coordinate with this work.

III. CONDITION REPORTS

A. FABRICATION TECHNIQUES

The pole is carved from a single cedar log. The pole is a solid log and not hollowed out in the traditional fashion of some tribes. After carving and finishing with an adz, the pole was painted. Historic records indicate that the pole has been repainted in 1928, 1935, 1948, 1959 and 1976. While the pole was examined in 1999, it was not fully treated and repainted at that time. Thirty-two years have passed since the last stabilization and repainting.

During the 1976 restoration the pole was de-installed and treated horizontally. Reinstallation after this treatment appears to have been to bury the base of the pole in cement. Voices in the lower wood structure were filled with the cement. The top edge of the cement surround was angled away from the pole to facilitate the movement of moisture away from the wood.

B. NOTES ON CONDITION

Evaluation of the condition was completed by the conservation team from the ground level only. It is assumed that the extensive condition report developed by Frank Terrill in 1999 is still essentially correct with some anticipated general deterioration. Only deterioration which is drastically different from those in this report would cause a reevaluation of the recommendations and budget included in this proposal.

C. SITE CONDITIONS

The site seemed generally well maintained. Fine gravel had accumulated around the base of the pole causing the contact area between wood, air and concrete to remain wet long after other areas had dried. These damp wood areas are the site of accelerated wood deterioration.

In addition, there is a tree located too close to the pole. The tree has been trimmed in the past to get it away from the pole, and should be removed. Its branches have abraded the surface of the pole, causing greater and more rapid deterioration in those areas. The tree was planted too close to the pole in the first place. It now needs a major trim which would leave it with a lopsided appearance. In addition, shading by the leaves prevents drying of the poles surface and encourages biological growth.

If the pole is treated in its current upright position, much of the tree will have to be removed so that a personnel lift can provide access to all surfaces of the pole. If scaffolding is used, it is likely that the tree will have to be removed. Over time, the tree will only get larger and be more of a problem for maintenance of the pole. It would be best to remove the tree now while it is still relatively small. A replacement tree could be planted in another location on this site to make up for the loss. The new tree should not be planted near the pole.

D. STRUCTURAL CONDITION

Overall stability of the pole is a life safety issue. The base of the pole at the ground interface layer exhibits rot and loss of material. The largest areas of deterioration are located on the back side (south) of the pole at or below the level of the concrete. Deterioration at the bottom of the pole is further advanced because of increased exposure to wet conditions caused by accumulations of organic matter dirt and gravel next to the pole at ground level. As recommended by Lynda Rockwood, examination of the underground pole condition by a structural engineer is essential prior to treatment and is not included in this proposal. If the pole needs to be lowered for structural stabilization, the conservation treatment proposed can occur while the pole is horizontal at a savings of the cost of scaffolding/bucket lift.

The surface of the pole is typical of totem poles exhibited in an outdoor environment with checking in the structure, exposed deteriorating end-grain, exposed holes in the pole caused by knots, and biological growth throughout.

E. SURFACE CONDITION

The surface of the pole is typical of exposed outdoor wood which was painted and has remained unmaintained for many years. There is thinning of paint layers throughout exposing wood which has grayed with time. This is typical of the weathering of paint. Areas of exposed wood end grain tend to hold more water than other surfaces and provide sites for biological growth which further deteriorates the wood.

IV. RESEARCH

A. ENGINEERING

It is essential that the base and below ground portions of this pole be evaluated for structural stability. Wood rot was found in the base of this pole and could lead to catastrophic failure with possible life threatening consequences. Examination, evaluation and the possible design structural stabilization should be undertaken by engineers. The installation of structural mitigation, if needed should be undertaken in coordination with the proposed conservation treatment, but is beyond the scope of this proposal.

B. TREATMENT CONSIDERATIONS

The proposed treatment is one that was developed by the National Parks Service and has many years of proven success to its credit. However, there are potentially beneficial developments with some of the borate wood preservative products that are proposed. Because this treatment is proposed for late summer in 2010, the exact products that will be used will not be specified, though they will be similar, or exactly the same as the ones mentioned in this proposal. Decisions will be made closer to the time of treatment based on product evaluation and availability. Paint stability and adhesion when used with these products needs to be evaluated in collaboration with the product manufacturer's technical departments. Final product selection will be based on the conservator's research.

V. PROPOSED TREATMENT

A. TREATMENT SUMMARY

Engineering studies should be completed and structural recommendations completed by others before the surface of the pole is treated. Access to the pole will be either by scaffold or personnel lift. The tree closest to pole should be removed.

The pole will be cleaned and the biological growth removed. All former structural repairs will be inspected and replaced as necessary. Broken and cracked structural areas will be mended and/or reinforced as needed. A wood preservative and possibly a water repellent will be applied. The pole will be repainted in keeping with its long tradition. The upper exposed end-grain surfaces of the pole will be protected using a lead-sheeting cap. Photo documentation and a conservation treatment report, including maintenance recommendations, will be provided.

B. RECOMMENDED TREATMENT

1. Engineering Study

NOTE: this work is not included in the conservator's scope of work, but should be performed by the county engineers or others in coordination with the conservators.

It is essential that an engineering study be undertaken to assess the structural stability of the below ground structure. Recommendations of this study should be completed before the above ground section is treated. The study and mitigation is to be completed by others. Assistance in finding appropriate engineers and collaboration with them to facilitate and coordinate with their recommendations for stabilization and mitigation could be undertaken. All of this work is beyond the scope of this treatment proposal.

2. Site Preparation

NOTE: this work is not included in the conservator's scope of work, but should be performed by the county engineers or others in coordination with the conservators.

The tree closest to the pole should be removed and not replanted close to the pole. It might be possible to use a tree spade to relocate it to another location. This work is beyond the scope of this proposal. The removal of the tree will facilitate the engineering study, possible structural mitigation, and treatment of the pole as well as reducing possible further damage caused by its proximity.

3. Structural Repair

NOTE: this work is not included in the conservator's scope of work, but should be performed by the county engineers or others in coordination with the conservators.

Structural repairs to the below ground portion of the pole as recommended by the engineers are beyond the scope of this proposal, but should be undertaken prior to treatment of the above ground sections. Any structural repairs to the upper portions of the pole as outlined in the Terrill condition report, or could be reasonable expected in a pole of this age and condition will be addressed as part of this treatment. Major structural damage or deterioration not reasonable anticipated would call for a reevaluation and negotiation.

4. Conservation Team

The plan is to complete the proposed treatment with a team composed of a senior conservator and an assistant conservator, both with formal conservation training and substantial experience. Other skilled technicians may be employed as needed at the discretion of the senior conservator.

5. Proposed Timing

The preferred timing for the treatment of the pole is around the month of September because of weather considerations. Working at other times may require the use of scaffolding which is more expensive. September of 2010 is anticipated if the engineering study and subsequent structural modifications can be completed if needed.

6. Surface Cleaning

The surfaces will be cleaned to remove biological growth and accumulated surface dirt and pollution. The poles will be tested to see what effect dry cleaning using natural bristle brushes, and wet cleaning using tap water and/or a 50/50 mixture of solvent alcohol and water, would have. The use of a low pressure power washer will be assessed. After evaluation, the most appropriate method will be used to reduce the biological growth, soiling and loose paint. Paint loss is anticipated due to this surface cleaning. The existing paint is not considered to be original to the pole. Retaining the paint patterns and colors is considered to be important.

7. Wood Preservative

The poles will be treated with Bora-care, (similar or more advanced products will be evaluated) a proprietary mixture (a glycol borate solution) made by the Nisus Corporation, Cherokee Place, 101 Concord St. N., Knoxville, TN 37919. This product was recommended by Ron Sheetz, formerly with the National Park Service, who wrote the Preservation Tech Notes on Exterior Woodwork (No. 4, NPS). Mr. Sheetz has worked extensively on the preservation of totem poles in Sitka, Alaska. This concentrated solution will be diluted with water to a 1:1 ratio. This solution will then be spray-applied. If necessary, the pole will be wrapped in polyethylene overnight to prevent foggy or wet weather from condensing moisture on the surface. The pole would then be unwrapped in the daytime to facilitate the required 48 hours drying time.

8. Water Repellent

Borate wood preservatives are water soluble and must have protection from condensation and rain to retain their effectiveness. Non soluble borates are in the process of development but are not yet ready for use. They may be available by 2010. Both paint and/or water repellants are appropriate to protect the borated. It is essential that the wood preservative, water repellent and paint system are compatible to insure adhesion and durability of the paint coatings. The exact products used will be determined by the conservators depend on availability and compatibility.

The traditional water repellent to use for this purpose is a clear wood preservative (X-100 Natural Seal Wood Preservative from American Building Restoration Products, Inc., 9720 South 60th St., Franklin, WI 53132, 800-346-7532) following the recommendations of Ron Sheetz. This is a proprietary oil-based product which contains borates as a wood preservative.

9. Paint Loss Compensation

It is anticipated that the entire pole will be painted in keeping with its long maintenance tradition. Colors will be chosen to match the existing colors. The brand of paint will be determined by the conservators to be compatible with the other products chosen for this treatment.

10. End-grain Capping

Caps will be installed to protect most of the exposed-end grain on the totem pole. Lead sheeting is preferred for this purpose and will be formed to fit over deteriorated areas, and fastened on with silicon-bronze ring shank boat nails. The lead sheeting will be painted to match surrounding areas and improve its aesthetic appearance. The upper areas of any large cracks in the pole would be treated similarly, in order to reduce water migration into the center of the pole.

11. Maintenance Plan

A maintenance plan will be provided along with the written and photographic documentation. A condition monitoring program, along with future wood preservative and water repellent treatment will be discussed.

VI. COMPANY POLICIES

A. STANDARDS

All work will conform to the code of ethics and standards of practice of The International Institute for Conservation of Historic & Artistic Works (I.I.C.) and The American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (A.I.C.).

B. DOCUMENTATION

In keeping with both the international and national standards of practice, both written and photographic documentation will be undertaken. Before, during and after photographs will be taken. A treatment report and maintenance recommendations will be written, to be included with the attached condition report in a final report. This final documentation will be submitted to the client within a reasonable amount of time after the treatment is completed.

C. QUALIFICATIONS OF WORKERS

1. Senior Conservator, Jonathan Taggart

Jonathan Taggart has a Master of Science degree in Art Conservation. He will be the primary person involved in the treatment. All standards, materials, techniques and workmanship will be as directed by him. He will be present or available at all times when work is in progress. He has many years experience as an objects conservator, and with artistic and architectural monuments.

2. Assisting Conservator, Dana Senge

Dana K. Senge holds a Master of Arts in Art Conservation from Buffalo State College in Buffalo, New York. She is the principal objects conservator at DKS Conservation Services, LLC, and works with museums and private clients throughout the Pacific Northwest. One of her current ongoing projects is with the Hilibulb Cultural Center of the Tulalip Tribe. Together they are preparing several story poles and house poles for indoor exhibition. In the Tacoma Totem Pole Project she will be assisting in the preservation treatment, following the lead conservator's instructions and techniques.

3. Technicians

Technicians may be employed to assist the conservator in set-up of equipment, handling of material, daytime site security and as needed in preparation, break-down and in the process of the treatment. The technicians will be skilled in the use of tools and will have some conservation experience.

D. BUSINESS POLICIES

It is the policy of Taggart Objects Conservation to work cooperatively with the client to preserve our cultural patrimony. This proposal includes an estimate of the cost to complete the proposed

work described above. The estimated costs of this proposal are based on estimated time charged at the rate of \$100 per hour for the lead conservator, \$85 per hour for the assisting conservator and estimated costs of materials and expenses. Additional costs of changes approved by the client, made after the contract, will be charged at the rate of \$100 per hour for the lead conservator, \$85 per hour for the assisting conservator and actual expenses.

E. CONTRACT CONDITIONS

1. The Owner/ Authorized Agent agree that he/she is the owner or the authorized agent of the owner of the work(s) of art.
2. All conservation work will be performed consistent with the Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Practice set forth by the American Institute for Conservation of Historic & Artistic Works.
3. Taggart Objects Conservation makes no warranties of any kind, whether actual or implied, respecting the work performed hereunder.
4. A service charge of 1.5% or \$50 per month, whichever is greater, will be made on charges not paid within 30 days after notice of completion of services performed in the signed agreement.
5. The Owner / Authorized Agent agrees that Taggart Objects Conservation may use photographs, drawings and written documents made in the performance of the proposed services for educational purposes.
6. The provisions hereof shall be binding upon the institution or other owner, legal representatives, and assigns.

VII. COST ESTIMATES

LABOR; Treatment, two conservators, 13 days @ \$1600 per day	\$20,800
Site evaluation, proposal and research	\$2,400
EQUIPMENT; Bucket Lift/Scaffolding	\$4,500-7,500
MATERIALS; Wood preservative, water repellent, and paint	\$1,500
TRAVEL AND RELATED EXPENSES	
Per Diem; out of town conservator; 20 days @ \$50 per day	\$1,000
local conservator; 13 days @ \$20 per day	\$260
Mileage: Seattle to Tacoma roundtrip, 13 trips; 67 mi. @ \$0.585 per mi.	\$509
Hotel; 20 days @ \$100 per day	\$2,000
Flight; out of town conservator	\$800
Travel time; out of town conservator: 16 hrs @ \$50 per hr.	\$800
DOCUMENTATION; Reports, layout, photography and printing	\$550
INSURANCE	\$150
<hr/>	
ESTIMATED TREATMENT COST	\$33,469-40,969
Washington State Sales Tax @ 8.8%	\$2,945-3,605
TOTAL ESTIMATED TREATMENT COST	\$36,414-44,574

VII. AUTHORIZATION TO PERFORM TREATMENT

It is understood that a treatment may be halted or modified should new problems arise. After consultation with the Owner or Authorized Agent, a new estimate may be given if the problems are more complex and the treatment more time-consuming than originally estimated.

In accordance with these listed contract conditions, the above proposal is accepted and the Conservator is authorized to carry out the proposed treatment. Two copies of this signed proposal have been provided. Please sign both copies. Retain one for your records and return the other signed copy to Taggart Objects Conservation.

Submitted by Jonathan Taggart Date 11/26/2008
Jonathan Taggart

Approved by _____ Date _____

This cost estimate is valid until the end of the year 2010.

- V. Structural Assessments**
 - a. Dave Evans and Associates**
 - b. PCS Memo**
 - c. Scott Beard e-mail memo**

CITY OF TACOMA
TOTEM POLE
BELOW GROUND STRUCTURAL STABILITY
REPORT

FIREMAN'S PARK 9TH AND A STREET
TACOMA, WASHINGTON



Prepared for:
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COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
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February 2009

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INTRODUCTION

The City of Tacoma retained David Evans and Associates (DEA) to provide structural analysis of the totem pole, located in Fireman's Park, to assess its stability. The totem pole was surveyed by Linda Rockwood, an art conservator, in the fall of 2007 as part of the overall review of the Municipal Art Collection. Her report identified concerns with the totem pole's base and questioned whether it would hold up to the loads applied, especially during restoration work.

SITE CONDITIONS

The existing totem pole has a plaque stating (as noted below) that it was carved in 1903 and was the largest totem pole in the world, reportedly 103 feet tall and was carved by two unknown artists from Sitka Alaska in Haida tribal style. It has been variously reported that the pole is 80 feet from the base to the top of the totem. These dimensions indicate that as much as 20 feet might extend below the existing ground surface. According to a recent survey performed by Linda Rockwell, the pole was originally 125 feet tall which would indicate there are 45 or more feet of pole in the ground. It was also reported that the totem pole is located in a concrete pipe extending approximately 25 feet into the ground. The information as it appears on the plaque is provided below.

Tacoma Totem Pole
Largest Totem Pole In The World
Made & Carved By Alaska Indians
Presented To The City Of Tacoma
By
W.F. Sheard and Chester Thorne
1903

Concrete surrounding the base of the totem was evident in the ground; however, we were unable to determine its depth. The site soils appear stable with no movement and nearby buildings and elevated roads appear to be stable. A geotechnical/geologic analysis of the site soils is outside the scope of this report and has not been performed; however, based on our visual inspection and the lack of obvious settlement, it appears the soils are stable and would support the totem pole without issue.

INSPECTION APPROACH AND RESULTS

The following paragraphs list DEA's inspection approach and results. The totem pole was observed in relationship to existing nearby traffic poles and a slight tilt was noted. This was confirmed during field measurements by placing a 3 foot level in the four cardinal directions and measuring the amount of deflection. Using the face of the totem as cardinal north for the purposes of this study, the various measurements confirmed a slight tilt in the southwest direction. Please refer to Appendix A for photographs and additional information regarding our inspection approach.

DEA probed around the base of the totem pole, at ground surface, with a screw driver noting the following:

- A hole was noted in the north portion of the base approximately 6½ inches deep, approximately 4 inches long and 2 inches wide.
- A second hole was noted in the south portion of the base approximately 4 inches deep, approximately 3 inches wide and 1 inch long.
- A third hole was noted in the southeast portion of the base approximately 6½ inches deep and was associated with several adjacent holes approximately ½ inch to 1 inch in diameter.

After probing the base of the pole, DEA bore some holes along the base to determine the condition of the base wood. The first hole was drilled in the northwest quadrant; the bore was advanced approximately 2 inches with several ½ inch jumps indicating no wood with any resistance. Less than ¼ inch of material was recovered from the wood and it was extremely wet and deteriorated. To seal the hole back, we treated wood dowels and inserted them into the hole. We were able to place 4½ inches of dowel in the 2 inch hole indicating more wood loss. The second bore was placed in the southeast quadrant with the bore being advanced 4 ½ inches recovering less than 2 inches of very wet and rotted wood. Treated dowels were placed in the hole and we were able to place 6 inches of dowel into the 4½ inch hole. Both of these bores showed that the perimeter of the pole could be compressed if the pole started to tilt in any direction, offering little to no resistance.

The next step in the evaluation was to determine the moisture content of the sample. It was weighed then heated to remove water and reweighted revealing over 20 percent moisture content. The final step was to review the pole during a wind storm, with a hand held wind gage reading steady winds approaching 20 mph at approximately 8' above the ground. No movement of the pole was noted.

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Based upon our observations at the site and the condition of the wood along the outside of the base of the pole, our conclusions and recommendations are as follows:

- The forces that affect the totem pole's stability are wind and earthquake, with the wind being reduced by shape factor (because the totem is round it has a good shape factor) and location near higher buildings. Earthquake loading would depend upon the frequency of the event and the length of time of the vibrations.
- The pole is currently stable and has withstood both wind and earthquake loads; however, the length of time it will remain stable is in question. In order for the foundation soils to resist the wind and earthquake loads, some movement of the totem is required. Due to the poor condition of the wood at the totem's base, it will begin to crush as a result of this movement. This will increase the tilt and in turn, increase the lateral forces. Eventually, the base wood will not sufficiently resist the forces required of it and the pole will fail.
- The totem pole should be taken down to allow detailed evaluation of the existing conditions and to determine the best repair method as discussed below.
- The totem pole should be restored without the use of scaffolding to prevent the transfer of lateral loads to the base of the pole.
- If the City decides to leave the pole in its current location without repairs to the base, it should be monitored for increasing tilt and should be taken down when the tilt becomes pronounced. It can be temporarily secured using guy wires or other bracing if necessary.
- If the City decides to rehabilitate the totem in place, the scaffolding or lift that is used to conduct the rehabilitation should not touch the totem or rely on any lateral load sharing with the totem.

ALTERNATIVE REPAIR METHODS

The following are alternative methods of repair for the base of the totem to ensure its continued display in Fireman's Park:

1. When damage to the totem is severe, the totem can be shown in the horizontal position usually within a case to prevent/postpone further deterioration. However, the totem must be taken down to assess if the existing damage would necessitate this method of display.

2. Since the damage appears to be limited to the base, a new concrete foundation can be constructed with a connection to the totem itself using any one of the various methods as follow:
 - a) A hole (or several) is bored longitudinally into the base of the totem and steel pipe of appropriate diameter is embedded into the holes to secure the totem. These pipes are then secured to a concrete foundation to allow the totem to again be shown in the vertical position.
 - b) The back of the totem is removed (for a length of approximately 10-15 percent of the height) and a larger diameter pipe or other steel shape is connected to the totem and then the pipe or steel shape is connected to the concrete foundation. A shell of wood is then placed over the removed section to cover the pipe.
 - c) A timber pile is placed into the ground and the totem is connected to and supported by the new timber pile.
 - d) Take down the totem and if thorough examination of the base reveals that sufficient good wood remains, fill the voids and retain remaining good wood. Guy wires may be necessary as augmentation to secure the pole, with each guy wire being connected to a foundation to take any horizontal loads.
3. The totem can utilize guy wires in its existing condition to take any horizontal loads, but this solution does not allow a review of the base to insure that the base can withstand the increased downward loads of the guy wires and weight of the totem.

COST ESTIMATES

Table 1 – Cost Estimate Alternative 1

Description	Unit Cost	Unit	Quantity	Subtotal
Alternative 1 – Horizontal Display				
Mobilization/Demobilization Crane to Remove Totem	\$13,000	EA	1	\$13,000
Set up Permanent Stand to hold Totem in Horizontal Position w/Concrete base	\$6,500	EA	1	\$ 6,500
Alternative 1 Remove Deteriorated Existing Totem Base	\$600	EA	1	\$ 600
Alternative 1 Construct Permanent Display Case w/Removable Panels to Facilitate Restoration	\$32,000	EA	1	\$32,000
Subtotal Alternative 1				\$52,100
Contingencies @ 20%				\$10,420
Total Alternative 1*				\$62,520

Table 2 –Cost Estimate Alternative 2a

Description	Unit Cost	Unit	Quantity	Subtotal
Alternative 2a – Repair w/Embedded Steel Pipe				
Mobilization/Demobilization Crane to Remove Totem	\$13,000	EA	1	\$13,000
Set up Temporary Stand to hold Totem in Horizontal Position	\$6,500	EA	1	\$ 6,500
Remove Deteriorated Existing Totem Base	\$600	EA	1	\$ 600
Bore Holes Into Existing Totem	\$5,800	LS	1	\$ 5,800
Modify Existing Base to connect Pipe from inside Totem to Base	\$8,200	EA	1	\$ 8,200
Mobilize/Demobilization Crane to Replace Totem	\$13,000	EA	1	\$13,000
Subtotal Alternative 2a				\$47,100
Contingencies @ 20%				\$ 9,420
Total Alternative 2a*				\$56,520

Table 3 –Cost Estimate Alternative 2b

Description	Unit Cost	Unit	Quantity	Subtotal
Alternative 2b – Repair w/Capped Steel Support				
Mobilization/Demobilization Crane to Remove Totem	\$13,000	EA	1	\$13,000
Set up Temporary Stand to hold Totem in Horizontal Position	\$6,500	EA	1	\$ 6,500
Remove Deteriorated Existing Totem Base	\$600	EA	1	\$ 600
Remove Back of Totem, Constructing or Saving a Shell Piece to place over the repairs	\$6,200	EA	1	\$ 6,200
Modify Existing Base to connect Pipe from inside Totem to Base	\$8,200	EA	1	\$ 8,200
Mobilize/Demobilization Crane to Replace Totem	\$13,000	EA	1	\$13,000
Subtotal Alternative 2b				\$47,500
Contingencies @ 20%				\$ 9,500
Total Alternative 2b*				\$57,000

Table 4 – Cost Estimate Alternative 2c

Description	Unit Cost	Unit	Quantity	Subtotal
Alternative 2c – Repair w/Timber Pile				
Mobilization/Demobilization Crane to Remove Totem	\$13,000	EA	1	\$13,000
Set up Temporary Stand to hold Totem in Horizontal Position	\$6,500	EA	1	\$ 6,500
Remove Deteriorated Existing Totem Base	\$600	EA	1	\$ 600
Mobilize/Demobilize Crane to Place Pile & Replace Totem	\$15,000	EA	1	\$15,000
Modify Existing Base to Place Timber Pile	\$4,800	EA	1	\$ 4,800
Provide Connection Between Pile and Totem	\$2,800	EA	1	\$ 2,800
Subtotal Alternative 2c				\$42,700
Contingencies @ 20%				\$ 8,540
Total Alternative 2c*				\$51,240

Table 5 – Estimated Costs Alternative 2d (No Guy Wire Required)

Description	Unit Cost	Unit	Quantity	Subtotal
Alternative 2d – Repair w/Filled Voids				
Mobilization/Demobilization Crane to Remove Totem	\$13,000	EA	1	\$13,000
Set up Temporary Stand to hold Totem in Horizontal Position	\$6,500	EA	1	\$ 6,500
Remove Deteriorated Portions of the Totem Base	\$2,800	EA	1	\$ 2,800
Fill voids in Existing Base w/ Good Portions of Wood Retained	\$5,000	EA	1	\$ 5,000
Subtotal Alternative 2d w/o Guyed Wires				\$27,300
Contingencies @ 20%				\$ 5,460
Total Alternative 2d No Guy Wire Required*				\$32,760

Table 6 – Estimated Costs Alternative 2e (Guy Wire Required)

Description	Unit Cost	Unit	Quantity	Subtotal
Alternative 2d – Repair w/Filled Voids (Guyed if Needed)				
Mobilization/Demobilization Crane to Remove Totem	\$13,000	EA	1	\$13,000
Set up Temporary Stand to hold Totem in Horizontal Position	\$6,500	EA	1	\$ 6,500
Remove Deteriorated Portions of the Totem Base	\$2,800	EA	1	\$ 2,800
Fill voids in Existing Base w/ Good Portions of Wood Retained	\$5,000	EA	1	\$ 5,000
Provide Base Connection Points for Guy Wires (4 Locations)	\$10,000	EA	1	\$10,000
Mobilize/Demobilize Crane to Replace Totem and Connect Guy wires	\$15,000	EA	1	\$15,000
Subtotal Alternative 2d with Guyed Wires				\$52,300
Contingencies @ 20%				\$10,460
Total Alternative 2d Guy Wire Required*				\$62,760

Table 7 – Estimated Costs Alternative 3

Description	Unit Cost	Unit	Quantity	Subtotal
Alternative 3 – Guy Wire in Place in Existing Condition				
Provide Base Connection Points for Guy Wires (4 Locations)	\$10,000	EA	1	\$10,000
Mobilize/Demobilize Crane to Place Guy Wires and Connect to Bases	\$15,000	EA	1	\$15,000
Subtotal Alternative 3				\$25,000
Contingencies @ 20%				\$ 5,000
Total Alternative 3**				\$30,000

*Note that Alternatives 1-2d would require an in-depth engineering review prior to a final decision on repair methodology

**Note that Alternative 3 would require a review of the existing pole's base to accommodate the vertical base load. This review is difficult in the vertical position and may require removal and detailed assessment.

Table 8 – Estimated Costs Summary

Alternative No.	Description	Cost
1	Horizontal Display	\$62,520
2a	Repair w/Embedded Steel Pipe	\$56,520
2b	Repair w/Capped Steel Support	\$57,000
2c	Repair w/Timber Pile	\$51,240
2d	Repair w/Filled Voids (No Guy Wire Required)	\$32,760
2e	Repair w/Filled Voids (Guy Wire Required)	\$62,760
3	Guy Wire in Place in Existing Condition	\$31,250

APPENDIX A
INSPECTION APPROACH PHOTOGRAPHS AND FIELD NOTES

Totem Pole



Base of Totem Pole

BASIC INFORMATION

The following provides information regarding the size of the pole and the distance between each directional point.

Base: 9' circumference, 2.86' diameter

Face: Pole North (0', 9')

East (2.25')

South (4.5')

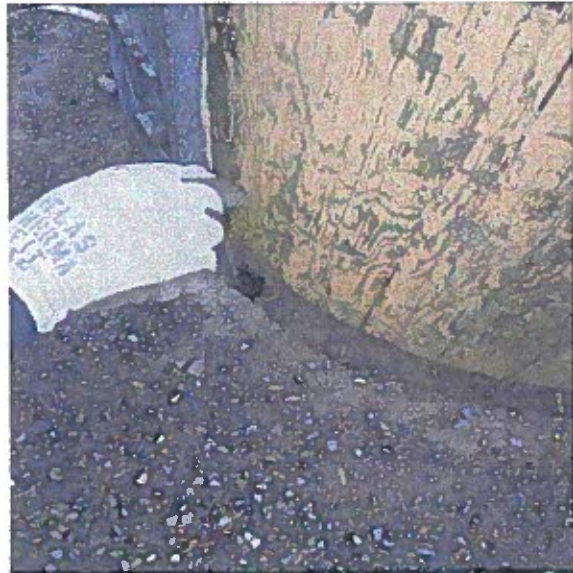
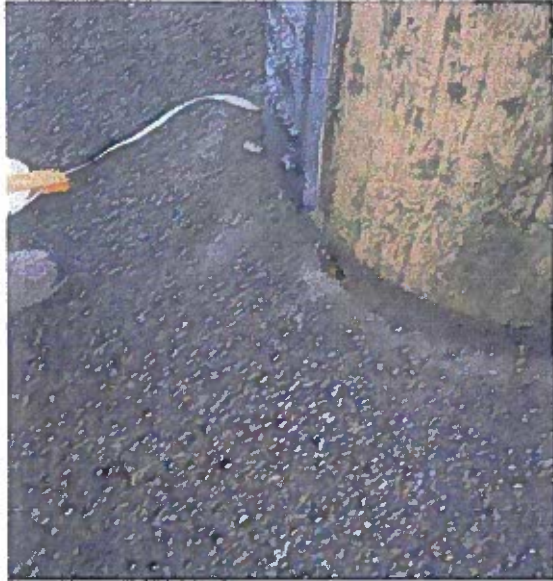
West (6.75')

INSPECTION RESULTS

The following provides our inspection results for each directional point, North, South, East and West.

North West:

- Found a hole in the base, about 6 ½” deep.
- Above the hole there was a split in the base of the pole about 1” deep.



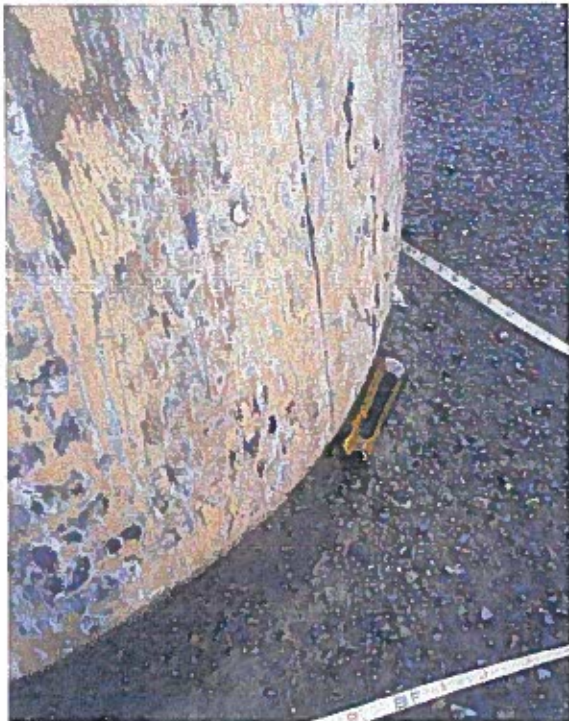
South:

- Found a hole in the base of the pole, 4" deep x 3" wide x 1" high

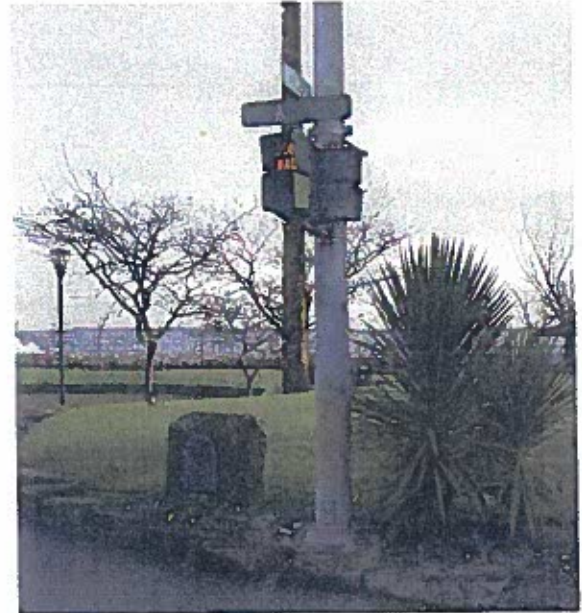


South East:

- Found a hole in the base, about 6 1/2" deep.
- Found various splits along the base of the pole with the largest being 1" deep.



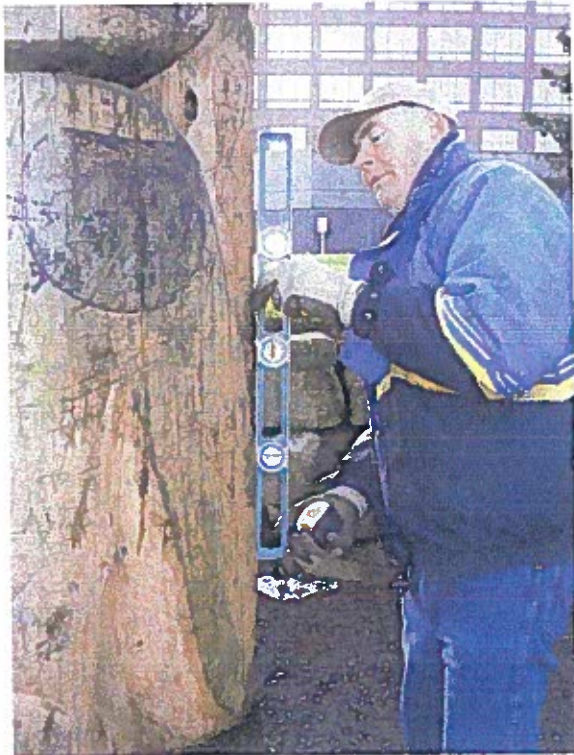
Level/ Alignment:



Totem Pole Alignment with Signal Pole

W = ½" over 3' (length of level), delta = .167

S = ¾" over 3' (length of level), delta = .25



E = ¼" over 3' (length of level), delta = .083

N = ½" over 3' (length of level), delta = .167



Drill Samples:

North West: Drilled 2" and recovered 1" of really rotted wood. Put back 4 ½" of dowel.

South East: Drilled 4.5" and recovered 2" of very wet and rotted wood. Put back 6" of dowel.



Weighted samples = 0.38 lbs.

Heated and reweighted samples = 0.30 lbs

% moisture = $\frac{0.38 - 0.30}{0.38} = 0.21$ or 21%

0.38

April 15, 2013

MEMO

TO: Tacoma Public Works

ATTN: Darius Thompson

FROM: Jim Collins
Gary Beckner

RE: *Significant Deterioration Concerns
Tacoma Totem Pole
Fireman's Park, Tacoma*

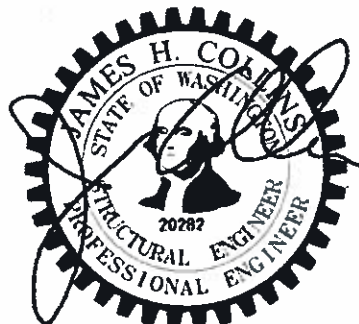
This memo follows up our discussions on Friday April 12, 2013. We went to the pole April 12 to probe the base area using simple visual and rod probe techniques. At ground elevation, we easily opened up the wood face and found 4" to 8" deep very soft wet deteriorated wood in 4" to 6" wide pockets that we created in 3 of the 4 quadrants of the base using a 12" long screwdriver. The base of the pole is 32" diameter but it is carved to about 25" diameter by about 2" high right at grade. The probing depths occurred horizontally at the 25" diameter reduced area.

Based on these observations, the cross section has been compromised by at least 50%, which would translate to a capacity of about 15% of the code for wind load requirements. Seismic stability is significantly compromised, but to a lesser extent than wind which controls the code design loads on the pole. In addition, the eccentric load from the pole's dead load weight over the remaining core is also a significant concern for overall stability. It is generally understood that wood loses about 50% of its flexural strength before softness can be detected in the wood. This discovery of significant deterioration occurs at the location of maximum stress for the pole's overall stability.

It is our opinion that deterioration was discovered to be much more advanced than the surface would indicate. Therefore it should be viewed that the deterioration presents a significant liability for the pole's stability, and the pole should be considered unreliable or unstable and a falling hazard. We recommend that the pole be lowered to the ground or shored as a precaution.

GEBmao
13-128

cc: Jim Kuhlman, BLRB Architects



McBride, Amy

From: Thompson, Darius
Sent: Monday, June 03, 2013 8:31 AM
To: McBride, Amy
Cc: O'Neill, Sue
Subject: Totem Pole
Attachments: 13128 mem 04-15-13 geb.pdf

Amy,

Here's the email from Scott Beard and from PCS.

Darius Thompson

From: Kingsolver, Kurtis
Sent: Friday, April 19, 2013 2:25 PM
To: O'Neill, Sue
Subject: Fwd: Totem Pole

Kurtis D. Kingsolver, P.E.
Interim Public Works Director/City Engineer
Office: 253-591-5269
Cell: 253-606-0402

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Beard, Scott" <SBEARD@ci.tacoma.wa.us>
Date: April 19, 2013, 10:36:08 AM PDT
To: "Kingsolver, Kurtis" <KKingsol@ci.tacoma.wa.us>
Subject: Totem Pole

Kurtis,

I have been peripherally involved in the totem pole problem.
Thought I should chime in on a few thoughts about it.
Hopefully, another viewpoint might be helpful in sorting through your options.

I view the luck of getting the telecommunications pole as a real game-changer.
The totem poles in front of the BC Museum in Victoria have the same type of double steel pole bracing that we are considering for this totem pole.
You paint the poles black, and they are like the black figures in Japanese puppetry. The mind tunes them out.
It's like when you take a picture of Mt Rainier, and after getting it developed, you finally notice the telephone pole in the middle of the picture that your mind tuned out.
I've seen them in place, up at the Victoria museum. It works well.

The game changer part comes because it gives us the option to not remove the pole.

Ordinarily, we would have to remove the pole to strengthen it. In this case with the added steel poles, we will not need additional strengthening.

We will need treatment for rot and bugs, but this can be done on the standing pole. (Borate salts for the rot, other chemicals for the bugs.)

I think the money and time savings involved with not removing the pole will be substantial.

An additional comment about pole strength:

While the letter from the engineer talked about the great loss of strength, you have to remember that the pole is a substantial section.

You can lose a LOT of strength, and still have capacity.

In this case, we don't know exactly how much strength we have, but thanks to several quite large wind storms this last year,

we know that there is currently adequate strength to handle them.

(The problem is serious, but maybe not quite as the letter would lead one to believe on first reading.)

The problem is that without the additional steel poles, we may currently have the strength we need, but not an adequate factor of safety.

With the steel poles, we reduce the load taken by the wood pole, and increase our factor of safety to very good levels.

(We raise it to long term durability levels, provided that we put the rot and bug treatment on routine maintenance.)

The borate salts are a neat product. It is non-toxic, so it nice to work with and have around a park.

It is water soluble, so you put it near the top of what you want to protect, and the rain water carries it into the wood protecting it.

They sometimes treat telephone poles this way. They drill a big hole in the top of the pole, and pack it with borate salts.

The rain wash then protects a substantial portion of the pole. Because it soluble, they need to schedule re-packing every 3-5 years depending on rain exposure (usually 5 years).

I am not as familiar with bug chemicals. But, it isn't rocket science. There is an established industry out there that can keep it bug free with some regularly scheduled treatment.

Anyway,

I wanted you to understand that from a long term structural and durability aspect, leaving the totem pole in place, bracing it with steel poles, and putting it on a regularly scheduled rot and bug treatment, is a viable option.

This gives you another option for comparing cost and hassle factors.

Let me know if there is any other info about this that would be helpful.

Scott Beard, PE, SE

Structural Engineer

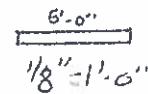
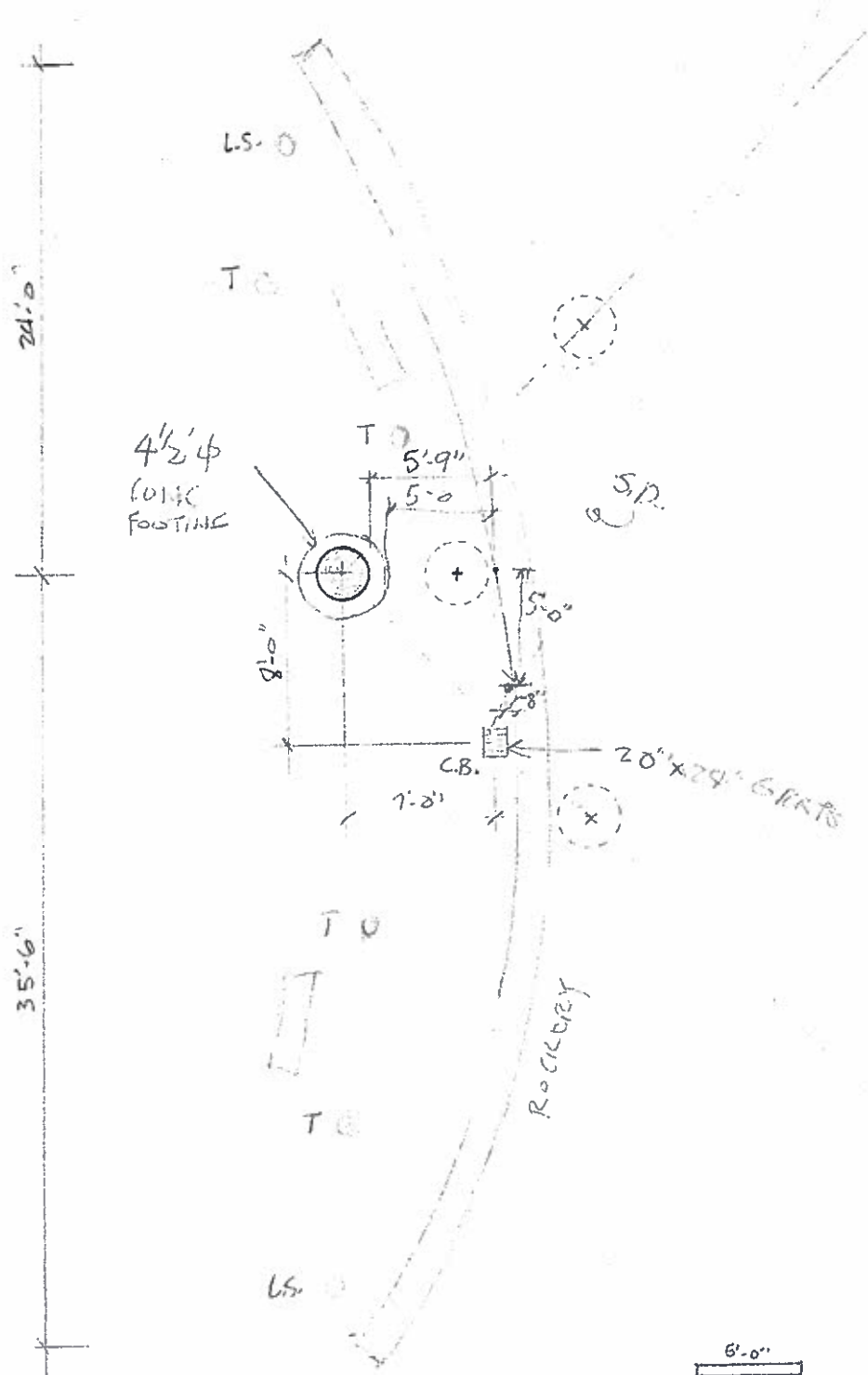
Planning and Development Services, City of Tacoma

253-591-5542

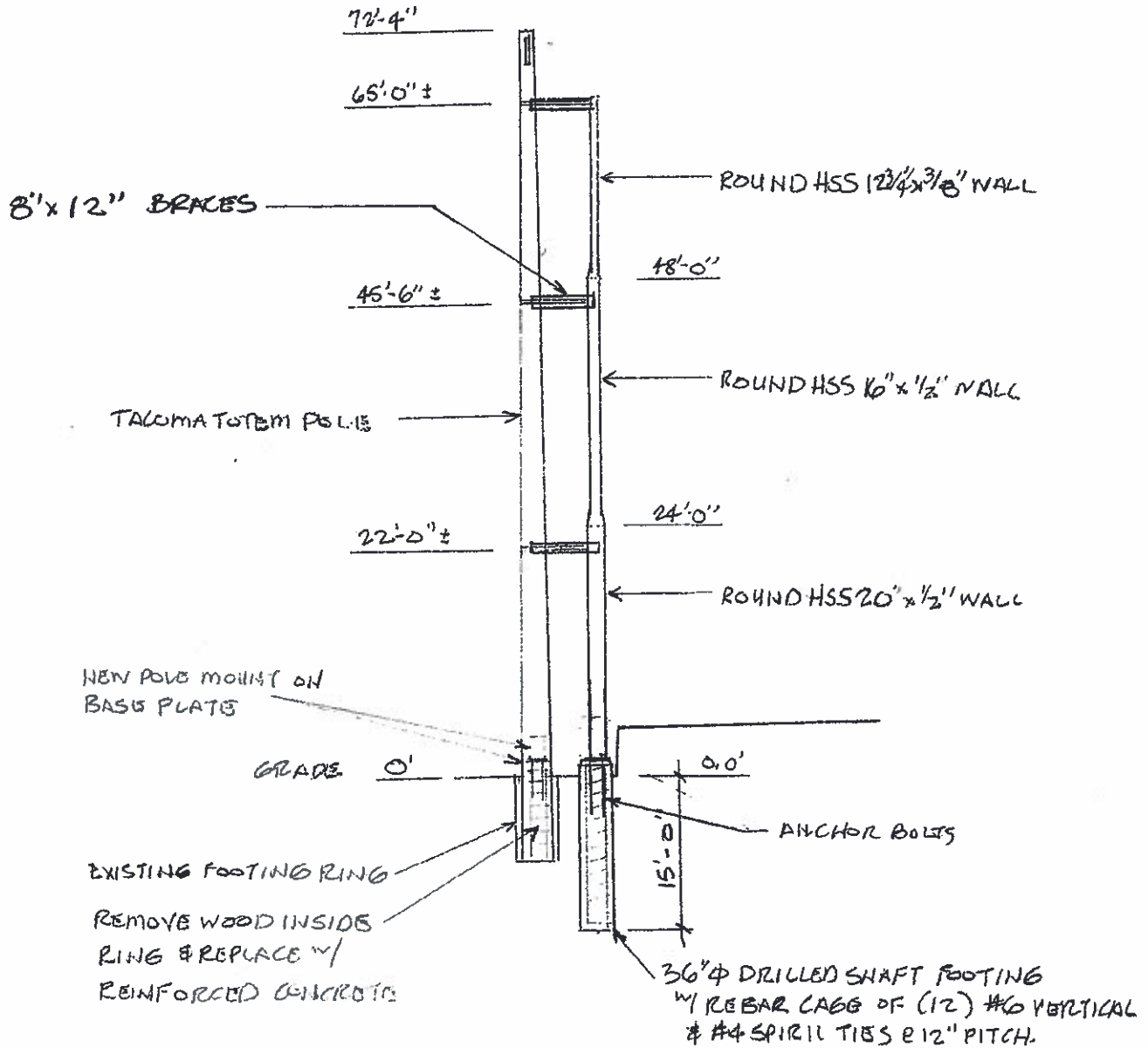
sbeard@cityoftacoma.org

VI. PCS/BLRB Report on options to support/relocate pole

AS BUILT DATA

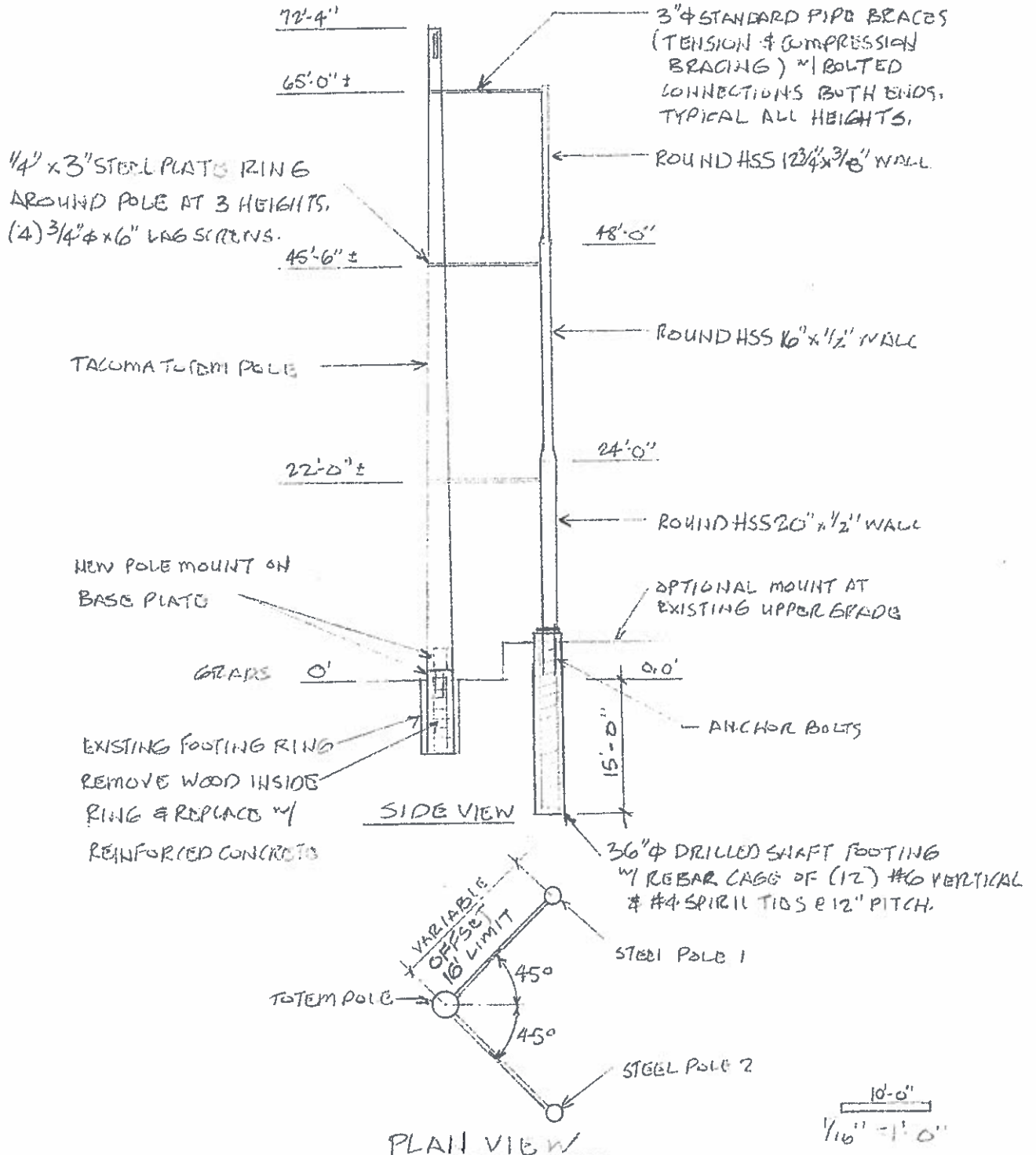


STEEL POLE BRACE CONCEPT - SINGLE POLE



$\frac{10'-0''}{1/16''} = 1'-0''$

STEEL POLE BRACE CONCEPT - DOUBLE POLES FOR AXIAL BRACING





Project: TTP Job No: 13128
Subject: _____ Sheet _____ Name: LB
Originating Office: Seattle Tacoma Date: 9/17/13

(1) 65' NEW POLE ~ / SHAFT FOOTING

FOOTING	LY	BCY	=	\$2000
	REBAR	450 #		\$500
	DRILLING	5CY		\$2000
	MOB			\$9000
				<u>\$14,500</u>
POLES	5400 #			\$11,000
CRANE				\$5,000
BRACES	400 #			\$1,000
				<u>\$31,500</u>
GEOTECH				\$5,000
				<u>\$36,500</u>
CONTINGENCY	20%			\$7,500
				<u>\$44,000</u>
TOTAL				\$44,000



Project: T7P Job No: 13128
 Subject: _____ Sheet _____ Name: GB
 Originating Office: Seattle Tacoma Date: 4/11/13

(2) 66' NEW POLES W/ SHAFT FOOTING

3' ϕ x 15' FOOTING

$.28(72') = 14.4$

$CY = \frac{\pi}{4} (3')^2 \frac{(15+4)}{27} = 5 CY \times 2 \times \$400/CY = \$4000$

REBAR = $12(1.5\#/\text{ft})(15' \times 4)(2) + 0.7\#/\text{ft}(\pi)(2.5')(20)(2) = 900\# \times \$1/\# = \$900$

DRILLING AND DRILLING SETUP $10 CY \times \$400/CY = \$4,000$

DRILLING MOBILIZATION

$\frac{19000}{10} = \$1900/CY$

SUB $\frac{\sim \$10,000}{\$19,000}$

POLES = $104\#/\text{ft}(24') + 83\#/\text{ft}(24') + 50\#/\text{ft}(18') = 5400\# \times 2 \times \$2/\# = \$22,000$

CRANE

$\$5,000$

BRACE CONNECTIONS $8\#/\text{ft} \times 15' \times 6 \times 2 = 1500\# \times \$2/\# = \$3,000$

\$49,000

GEOTECH

\$5,000

\$54,000

CONTINGENCY 20%

\$10,000

TOTAL

\$64,000

BLRB architects 1250 Pacific Avenue, Suite 700 Tacoma, WA, 98402-3519 P: 253.627.5599 F: 253.572.5167	Project	TACOMA TOTEM POLE	By	Sheet No.
	Location		Date	
	Job No.		Checked	Project No.
		PRESERVATION	Date	

ESTIMATED COSTS TO RELOCATE POLE TO INDOOR DISPLAY LOCATION

REMOVE ADJACENT TREE \$1,500

REMOVE TOTEM POLE

- MOBILIZE SNORKEL LIFT ON SITE FOR RIGGING \$1,500
 - STRAP STEEL CHANNEL TO BACK OF POLE
 - * • HARNESS POLE AT 3 OR 4 LIFT POINTS
 - CRANE IS LOCATED ON FREEWAY ENTRANCE RAMP
 - MOVING TRAILER LOCATED ON "A" STREET
 - MOVE TO ANALYSIS AND TREATMENT LOCATION (ENCLOSED?)
 - UNLOAD (IF NECESSARY)
- \$8,500

MOVE TOTEM TO FINAL INDOOR DISPLAY LOCATION \$8,500

PREPARE LOCATION FOR DISPLAY OF TOTEM POLE (UNDETERMINED)

	\$20,000
20% CONTINGENCY	4,000
TOTAL	\$24,000

VII. Background

a. Memos

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| i. April 12, 2013 | Kingsolver to Broadnax |
| ii. May 8, 2013 | McKnight to Broadnax |
| iii. May 22, 2013 | McBride to McKnight |

McBride, Amy

Subject: FW: Emergency stabilization of Fireman's Park Totem Pole

From: "Broadnax, T.C." <tc.broadnax@cityoftacoma.org>
Date: April 12, 2013, 8:33:03 PM PDT
To: "Strickland, Marilyn" <Marilyn.Strickland@ci.tacoma.wa.us>, "Woodards, Victoria" <victoria.woodards@cityoftacoma.org>, "Boe, David" <david.boe@cityoftacoma.org>, "Mello, Ryan" <ryan.mello@cityoftacoma.org>, "Ibsen, Anders" <anders.ibsen@cityoftacoma.org>, "Walker, Lauren" <lauren.walker@ci.tacoma.wa.us>, "Campbell, Marty" <marty.campbell@cityoftacoma.org>, "Lonergan, Joe" <joe.lonergan@cityoftacoma.org>, "Thoms, Robert" <robert.thoms@cityoftacoma.org>
Cc: "Gallagher, Anita" <Anita.Gallagher@cityoftacoma.org>, "Stoltman, Julie" <Julie.Stoltman@cityoftacoma.org>, "White, Carmen" <Carmen.White@cityoftacoma.org>, "Chandler Hardy, Nadia" <nadia.chandlerhardy@cityoftacoma.org>, "Schuler, Gwen" <Gwendolyn.Schuler@cityoftacoma.org>, "Hayward, Tansy" <THayward@ci.tacoma.wa.us>
Subject: Emergency stabilization of Fireman's Park Totem Pole

Mayor & Council,

Please find below an embedded memorandum from Kurtis Kingsolver related to the above-mentioned subject.

TO: T.C. Broadnax, City Manager

FROM: Kurtis Kingsolver, Interim Public Works Director/City Engineer

SUBJECT: Emergency stabilization of Fireman's Park Totem Pole

This memorandum is to inform you that I have ordered the Tacoma Totem Pole located in Fireman's Park to be stabilized immediately, due to the imminent risk of structural failure. As a result of this emergency stabilization, it will be necessary to fence off portions of Fireman's Park to protect public safety. This decision is based upon information furnished to me this afternoon by the engineering consultant, PCS Structural Solutions, which has been under contract with the City of Tacoma to perform a condition analysis of the pole. Due to the expected number of people congregating this weekend in the vicinity of Fireman's Park, immediate action is deemed necessary.

I have taken this action with the full awareness that the Totem Pole is a City Landmark as well as an accessioned piece in the City's Municipal Art Collection. Every effort will be taken to protect human safety while minimizing damage to the piece, and in coordination with the Arts Administrator and the Historic

Preservation Officer. The totem pole, once stabilized, will be assessed to determine if the pole can be permanently repaired in place, and what the costs and risks associated with that course of action are. Once that analysis is completed and recommendations are presented, a decision will need to be made regarding the long term status of the pole.

The information received today comes as part of an active assessment of the pole that was commissioned January 7th, 2013, in order to assess structural integrity and to make recommendations for the repair and stabilization of the Totem Pole. City staff, including the Arts Administrator, Historic Preservation Officer, and City Engineers, has been working to develop a plan to repair the pole. It was during this assessment that the consulting engineer notified the project team that the condition of the base of the pole is much worse than previously thought.

The Tacoma Totem Pole has been relocated at least three times in its 110 year history but has been in its current location since 1974. It was commissioned in 1903 to be the "world's tallest totem pole" at a cost of \$3000. The log was provided by the St. Paul and Tacoma Lumber Company and the carving was done on Vashon Island by two Native Alaskan artists.

T.C. Broadnax



TO: T.C. Broadnax, City Manager
FROM: Reuben McKnight, Historic Preservation Officer *RM*
SUBJECT: Totem Pole
DATE: May 8, 2013

This memorandum is provided as an update on the current status of the Fireman's Park Totem Pole, and the active discussions occurring regarding the next steps to be taken. This will be a discussion item tonight at the Landmarks Preservation Commission.

On April 24, 2013, City staff provided a status report to the Commission on the condition of the Totem Pole and the tentative plans to stabilize the pole with a permanent external bracing system, to replace a temporary "pole holder" that was installed on April 12. During the discussion, several Commissioners raised questions whether this approach was culturally sensitive. Concerns included the fact that the pole is not regionally appropriate (the Haida style of the pole is from Alaska) and that, traditionally, totem poles are considered to have a finite lifespan – intervention to prolong this lifespan is not proper. The Commission directed staff to conduct additional research into the origins and cultural practices of Alaskan totem poles.

As a result of this guidance, the Arts Administrator and Historic Preservation Officer convened a working group that included Public Works staff, Landmarks and Arts Commissioners, and Shaun Peterson, a Native Puyallup artist with extensive knowledge of traditional wood carving methods and iconography.

The consensus of this group is that the pole should be removed for cultural and safety reasons. Traditionally, totem poles that are at the end of their lifespans are allowed to "return to the earth" – that is, to decompose in a natural setting. The feeling of the group is that an appropriate site should be identified where this can occur. Mr. Peterson has consulted with experts on Native Alaskan art and history, and will be preparing a summary report in the coming weeks.

However, there is a broad and deep historical context to the Totem Pole that provides an opportunity to tell the story of the Alaskan Gold Rush, civic boosterism, and its effect on the Coast Salish peoples. In addition, this may also be an opportunity to commission a new piece that is regionally appropriate.

Because the Totem Pole is a City Landmark and part of the Municipal Art Collection, both the Landmarks Preservation Commission and the Arts Commission will have to formally review any proposal to remove, and deaccession, the pole prior to any action being taken. In both cases, there will be opportunity for public comment.



May 22, 2013

To: Reuben McKnight, Historic Preservation Officer

From: Amy McBride, Tacoma Arts Administrator

Re: Tacoma Totem Pole Deaccession Review recommendation

On May 13, 2013, the Tacoma Arts Commission received an update on the current state of the Tacoma Totem Pole including concerns about stability and cultural context. Please inform the Landmarks Preservation Commission that the Tacoma Arts Commission recommended the Tacoma Totem Pole for deaccession review based on TMC 1.28 and our Deaccession Policy.

This panel is scheduled to occur on June 4, 2013 at 2:30. A panel of experts in the fields of Native American Art, culture, and cultural resource management have been invited to participate on the review panel as well as Commissioners Elquist and Echte.

Considering that the Tacoma Totem Pole is both a Historic Landmark and in the Municipal Art Collection, I request that the panel be facilitated by both of us. As background to the consideration of deaccession, this panel will review the cultural context, historical significance, and artistic caliber of the pole.

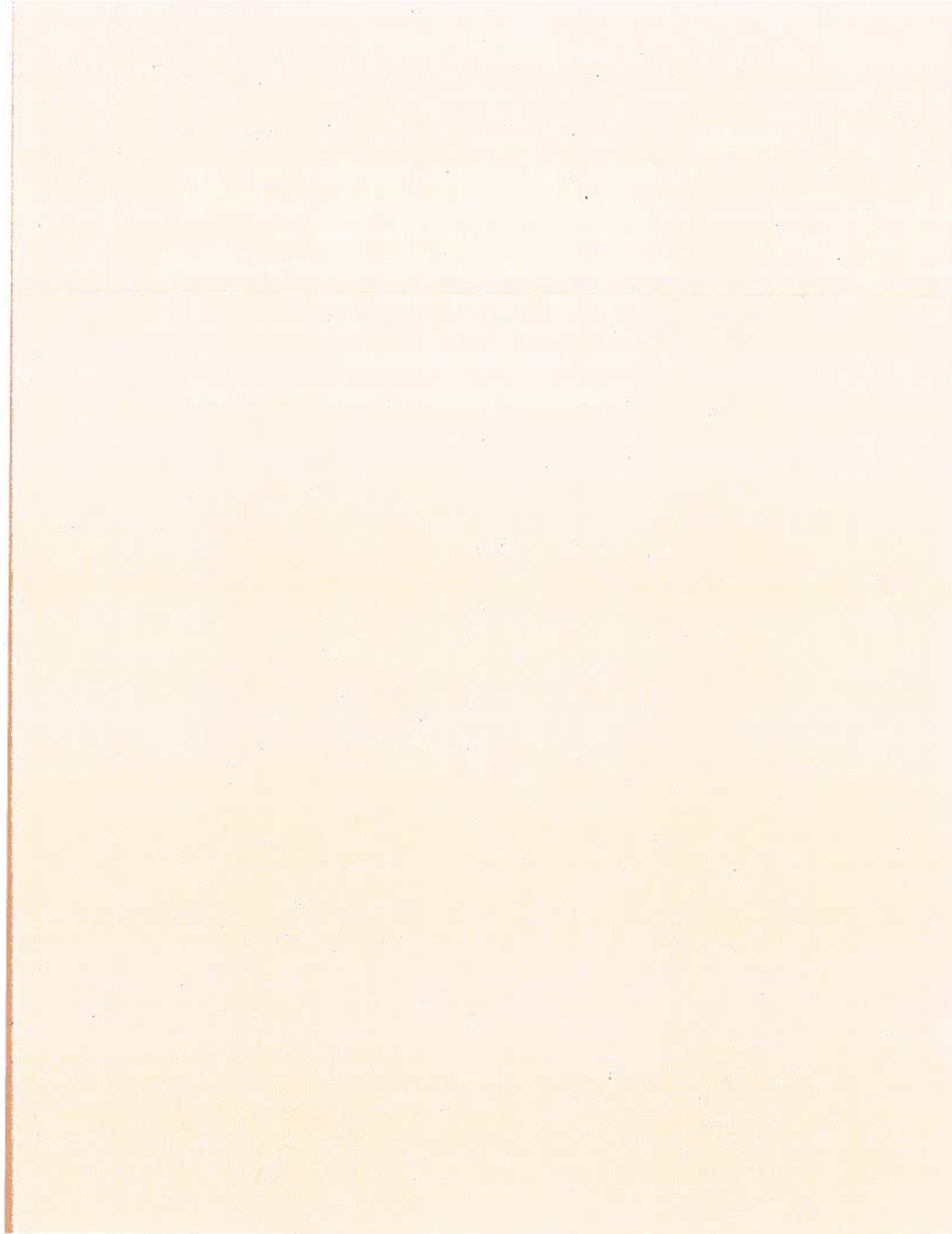
The information and recommendations that evolve from this meeting will be public record and will be conveyed to the Tacoma Arts Commission and to the Landmarks Commission to inform future decision making. A public notice will be shared about this meeting, but I wanted to be sure that the Landmarks Commission and the Arts Commission continue to be in close communication about this issue as we perform due diligence and take this through the appropriate public process.

Cc: Robin Echte, Chair, Tacoma Arts Commission

b. Articles

i. Conservation and Maintenance of NW Coast Totem Poles

- 1. Rhyne, "Recent Approaches to the Conservation of Northwest Coast Totem Poles" 2000**
- 2. Rhyne "Changing Approaches to the Conservation of Northwest Coast Totem Poles" 2000**
- 3. Levitan "Totem Preservation in Southeast Alaska" 1999**
- 4. Carrlee, Totem Pole Maintenance, 2010(www.ellencarrlee.files.wordpress.com/2010)**



return to list of Recent Publications and Lectures

Recent Approaches to the Conservation of Northwest Coast Totem Poles

Charles S. Rhyne
Reed College

a paper given at the Thirtieth International Congress
of the History of Art, London, 3-8 September, 2000

published in *Zeitschrift für Kunsttechnologie und Konservierung*
17 Jahrgang 2003, Heft 1, pp.179-184

Although this paper deals specifically with Northwest Coast totem poles, I hope to show that a serious look at the recent history of these remarkable monuments can help us to rethink the conservation of art worldwide. All of the issues involved in the conservation of totem poles exist for every work of art. Let us take totem poles as a case study, to see what they can teach us about our changing approaches to culture worldwide; the recent physical history of totem poles as an interdisciplinary study.¹

I am convinced that an intimate, in-depth understanding of specific case studies, such as this, is our best hope for comprehending one of the great cultural transformations of our time: the revitalization of traditional cultures at the same time that there is increased interplay among cultures and the threat of an increasingly uniform society. Hopefully, we are coming to recognize that this increasingly worldwide society must include respect, indeed active support for cultural diversity.

Why Totem Poles?

Why are totem poles especially instructive for such a study? First, because they are recognized as one of the great monumental forms in the history of art, comparable in stature and in the intensity of meaning to Egyptian cenotaphs, Roman triumphal columns, and Mayan stele. As a major art form, with parallels in other cultures, other periods, they provide broad historical relevance. Secondly, totem poles were major carriers of memory. In a verbal, non-literate society, memory was passed down primarily through the retelling and reenacting of stories, but these stories were recalled on a daily basis by the pervasive imagery woven, carved and painted on physical objects, of which totem poles were one of the preeminent forms. Third, the material of totem poles, even the hardy red cedar of the Northwest Coast, is itself much more transitory than the stone monuments with which they are sometimes compared, especially in the extraordinarily moist conditions of the North Pacific Coast.²

This art form originated in the narrow strip of land, islands, and a few inland rivers, along the north Pacific coast of the North American continent, the area between the Pacific Ocean and the formidable coastal mountain barrier. In addition to rapid physical changes, these poles have been subject to unusually

changeable cultural conditions, most violently during the past two centuries of reasonably well-recorded history; during which they were carved and raised in increasing numbers and size, supported by the sudden wealth of the fur trade, then abandoned as native populations were decimated by small pox and other foreign diseases, then cut down and destroyed at the urging of colonial missionaries, then urgently salvaged and collected by Euro-American museums, then the focus of major recarving and conservation programs. Finally, totem poles are participating in the impressive revitalization of Northwest culture, and are again being carved in significant numbers by a growing body of talented, well-trained native carvers. Today, they are increasingly commissioned and installed by non-native businesses and governments around the world. They provide rich evidence for understanding the complex interplay of the values and approaches to the conservation of all historical and artistic works.

Traditional Contrast

Given the number of totem poles of different types, carved for different purposes over more than two centuries by carvers from different tribal groups, some with distinctive traits, and given the complexity of their physical histories, it is impossible in a short presentation to deal with more than a small sampling of examples. Let us focus on a few recent examples and on one issue only, the interplay of the traditional American Indian approaches with traditional Euro-American approaches to conservation.

The contrast between what is often referred to as "the traditional native point of view" and what is frequently thought to be the standard Euro-American approach has been put most clearly by Gloria Cranmer Webster, Kwakwaka'wakw, a member of one of the most respected families on the Northwest Coast, one of the founders of the U'mista Cultural Centre at Alert Bay, and a frequent consultant for major exhibitions of Northwest Coast art. At the Canadian Conservation Institute's 1986 symposium on "The Care and Preservation of Ethnographic Materials," she stated:

. . . we know what conservators do or try to do; that is, preserve objects for as long as possible. But, diametrically opposed to this is the general Indian view as I know it, which is that objects are created to be used and when those objects are damaged or worn out, they are thrown away and new ones are made. This applies to everything from small masks to large totem poles. For example, many Indian people feel that once a pole has served its purpose it should be allowed to go back into the ground. I think this attitude has a lot to do with the way Indian people look at the objects. The objects themselves are not important; what matters is what the objects represent. They represent the right to own that thing, and that right remains even if the object decays or is otherwise lost.³

There are indeed many examples to support this traditional contrast of approaches. An important Nuu-chah-nulth pole, the so-called "Lord Willingdon's Pole", was raised at Yu-quot in 1877 to mark an important marriage merging two bands on Vancouver Island, but has been allowed to deteriorate. As

documented by Heather Richardson,⁴ one of the two families wished to have the pole preserved. This family regularly sought the assistance of the Royal British Columbia Museum in Victoria, whose conservators then examined the pole over a period of two decades and provided simple, practical proposals for preserving the pole in situ. However, their proposals were each time blocked by the band. Seven years ago the pole finally fell and is now probably beyond repair. The band (part owner of the pole because of a mistake by Lord Willingdon) felt that the pole should be allowed to deteriorate.

Other Indigenous Approaches

But this traditional contrast between the approach of indigenous Northwest Coast peoples and Euro-Americans is too often seen as a defining contrast between two different world views, monolithic and unchanging.⁵ In the Nuuchah-nulth example just cited, there were not only different approaches favored by an indigenous band and a major Canadian museum, but also between different owners within the band.

Looked at carefully, other examples suggest that we have overemphasized this theoretical contrast, overlooking the extent to which many conservation practices respond to practical expedients. Traditionally, the treatment of totem poles seems to have been not so much a matter of theory as of social practice.

The Nimpkish Burial Grounds at the village of Alert Bay, just off the east coast of massive Vancouver Island, holds one of the largest groups of exterior totem poles mostly in their original locations. In spite of the traditional indigenous point of view, we can see that most of the poles are supported by metal posts at their backs and rest on concrete bases (fig.1).

Moreover, Gloria Cranmer Webster, herself a resident of Alert Bay, has recently commented on the memorial to Billie Moon, an especially renowned pole, carved at Ba'a's (Blunden Harbor) in 1931 by Willie Seaweed, one of the most respected carvers on the Northwest Coast (fig.2).

Traditionally, when something wore out somebody replaced it. When a pole fell down that was the end of it. You didn't replace it, it had served its purpose. But I think that because of contact with museums and conservators and people like that, we began to look at things in a different way. You know, there's a pole by Willie Seaweed. We know there's never going to be another by Willie Seaweed, and maybe its not right if we allow that to fall down and rot away. I think people have developed a different way of looking at these objects, and as I said I think it has something to do with how we now know something about museums and conservation and history.⁶

Euro-American Practices

Turning now to recent conservation and restoration practices in Euro-American collections, we find an extraordinary range of approaches. The Canadian Museum of Civilization in Hull, which houses one of the largest and most varied displays of Northwest Coast poles, has conducted the most extensive

restoration campaign of any museum (fig.3). The aim of the Museum has been to restore its varied collection of poles as part of a dramatic display representing the indigenous groups of British Columbia. Because their physical histories were so different before entering the Museum, this has required different treatments for different poles.⁷

The Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, has a different type of totem pole collection, most notably a group of magnificent early nineteenth century poles, salvaged in 1957 from deserted villages on Haida Gwaii (fig.4). In contrast to the Museum of Civilization, the UBC Museum has followed a hands-off policy in the treatment of these poles, retaining them in the sections into which they were cut when removed and avoiding the usual application of consolidants. Miriam Clavir, the conservator in charge, has tested all the usual consolidants on the back of one of their poles, noting that every one alters the appearance of the surface. The accepted trade-off is that the raw wood occasionally sloughs off tiny particles, sometimes visible around the bases of the poles.⁸

Contemporary totem poles present different problems and opportunities for Euro-American collections. Four poles by guud san glans, Robert Davidson, have received the most meticulous treatment of any exterior poles. The ideals of modern conservation closely parallel those for modern medicine, with careful monitoring and preventive conservation preeminent. The conservation treatment for *Breaking the Totem Barrier* and for *Three Variations on Killer Whale Myths*, raised in 1989 and 1986 respectively, equals that for the finest sculpture in leading museums internationally.⁹

Euro-American conservators have also led in the application of advanced scientific techniques. At the Liverpool Museum (part of the National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside), laser cleaning has recently been used in the restoration of a major nineteenth century Haida house front pole from Haina (New Gold Harbor), on Haida Gwaii (Queen Charlotte Islands), accessioned in 1901.¹⁰ In Vancouver, BC, Andrew Todd (AT Conservation Systems Ltd.) has been developing conservation management computer software for monitoring the condition of exterior totem poles; using dataloggers, Global Positioning System, digital camera and video recording equipment, portable digital measuring equipment, handheld laser range finder and tilt sensors.¹¹

Collaborative Treatments

Let us turn now to recent collaborative treatments, where First Nations councils, experts, and artist-carvers, and Euro-American government agencies, museum administrators, curators and conservators, have combined to decide on and carry out treatments for poles.¹²

In only a few cases has detailed information regarding the conservation and restoration of totem poles been made available even to the professional conservation community. A notable exception is Leslie Williamson's highly informative 1999 article on the restoration of a major Kaigani Haida pole carved about 1875 for Chief Eagle of Old Kasaan, Prince of Wales Island, Alaska, now in the collection of the National Museum of the American Indian, Washington, DC. This article describes the recommendations for treatment by James Hay,

based on his extensive experience at the Canadian Museum of Civilization, and explains the curator's and conservator's rationale for various planning decisions. Most uniquely, however, the article includes an invaluable account of consultations with one of the leading Haida carvers. For this the Museum hired Jim Hart from Masset, now Chief Edenshaw, who brought extensive experience, skill, and authority to the project. This exemplary account, which includes brief explanations of Hart's rationale for several detailed choices, should be studied by anyone involved in the conservation of Northwest Coast totem poles.¹³

New Carvings, New Poles

Perhaps of most lasting significance will be the recent carving and raising of new poles, not on commission from Euro-American collectors and institutions, but by individual Northwest Coast families and bands for their local communities. Somewhat off the tourist path, in the Gitksan village of Gitsegukla, on the Upper Skeena River, BC, families are again raising memorial poles in their front yards (fig.5).

Very much on the tourist route, at Second Beach (Qay'llnagaay; Sea Lion Town), just west of Skidegate, on Haida Gwaii, six new totem poles were raised during six extraordinary days in June 2001 by the Skidegate Band Council (fig.6). These six poles, representing six of the southern Haida villages, were commissioned from six Haida artist-carvers, Jim Boyko, Giitsxaa, Guujaw, Jim Hart, Garner Moody, and Norman Price, carved with assistants and apprentices, and raised with full traditional ceremony (fig.7). In the installation, we may note especially the return to the traditional practice of installing poles, not with metal supports, but with the bottom section of the poles embedded in the ground, now coated however with wood preservative.¹⁴ These six poles are the first manifestations of an ambitious project to create a grouping of longhouses facing the water, fronted by totem poles, as in traditional Haida villages.¹⁵ The houses and poles are to join an enlarged structure for the Haida Gwaii Museum at Qay'llnagaay, making additional repatriation possible. Together they will form the Qay'llnagaay Heritage Centre. The total concept includes offices, teaching and interpretive centers, theatre, canoe shed, gift shop, and a tourist lodge. Here we will see totem poles as part of a living indigenous community, joining the display and practice of traditional culture with the development of contemporary Haida life.¹⁶

What I want to stress is that this is a deep commitment to conservation. However, it is not necessarily conservation of the original material object. It is conservation of a traditional practice, in which the totem poles are part of a larger, richer cultural whole. Newly carved poles of this type have various relationships to one or more traditional poles and to the crests and privileges of the commissioning family or tribal group. In recent years organizations such as UNESCO have begun to recognize "intangible heritage", significantly expanding Euro-American concepts of cultural heritage and giving voice to previously marginalized peoples.¹⁷ Yet this term seems insubstantial and continues the dichotomy between Euro-American and Indigenous approaches. I find it clearest to think of the specific values involved in each case. It is a question of what each of us most values and therefore what we wish to preserve. As we know dramatically from Japanese practice with wooded structures,¹⁸ and as

can be seen equally in Northwest Coast practice, one of the most highly valued aspects is the preservation, the continuation, the constant renewal of traditional practices, not just of carving skills and the use of traditional tools, but of the full cultural context and of a deep understanding of why and how things are done.

Author

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Footnotes

1. I have written a closely related paper on this subject, though discussing different examples: Charles S. Rhyne, "Changing approaches to the conservation of Northwest Coast totem poles," in *Tradition and Innovation: Advances in Conservation*, ed. Ashok Roy and Perry Smith (London: International Institute for the Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works, 2000), pp.155-160, color plates 7.1-7.4. In both papers I use the term "conservation" to refer to the entire field of conservation, preservation, and restoration.

2. The scholarly literature on totem poles is extensive, including a few excellent studies on the conservation of individual and groups of poles. The only other broad-ranging publication on the conservation of totem poles is Andrew Todd, "Painted memory, painted totems," in *Painted Wood: History and Conservation*, ed. V. Dorge and F.C. Howlett (Los Angeles: Getty Conservation Institute, 1998), pp.400-411.

3. Gloria Cranmer-Webster, "Conservation and cultural centres: U'Mista Cultural Centre, Alert Bay, Canada," in *Symposium 86: The Care and Preservation of Ethnographic Materials*, ed. R. Barclay, M. Gilberg, J.C. McCawley and T. Stone (Ottawa: Canadian Conservation Institute, 1986) 77-79.

4. Heather Richardson, *Totem Poles: Treatments and Ethical Considerations Involved in Their Conservation*; B.A. thesis for the Department of Conservation, DeMontfort University, Lincoln, UK, 1988.

5. A thoughtful, indepth study of the relationship between the conservation values of museum conservators and First Nations individuals has been written by Miriam Clavir, based largely on her experiences as conservator at the Museum of Anthropology, the University of British Columbia, and on invaluable interviews with other conservators and First Nations individuals: *Preserving What is Valued; Museums, Conservation, and First Nations* (Vancouver, BC: UBC Press, 2002). Although totem poles are mentioned on only a few pages, most of the issues discussed apply.

6. Gloria Cranmer-Webster, in interview with Miriam Clavir in *Preserving What is Valued*, op.cit., p.156.

7. In the only extensive analysis of the Great Hall at the Canadian Museum of Civilization, Judith Ostrowitz examines the Museum's collaging of poles and houses from different Northwest Coast groups into an artificial museum display. Especially revealing is her discussion of the lack of specific family and village coherency within the display for each tribal group. Her chapter is based on interviews with senior museum staff and First Nations artist-carvers who worked on the Great Hall project, most of whom she reports found this collaging suitable for the CMC museum display. Judith Ostrowitz, *Privileging the Past: Reconstructing History in Northwest Coast Art* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999), chapter 2.

8. Totem poles at the UBC Museum are illustrated in *Totem Poles: An Illustrated Guide* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1981), by Marjorie M. Halprin, until her recent death Curator of Ethnography at the Museum. Although this book does not discuss conservation or restoration, it is perhaps the best single introduction to totem poles.

9. I have published a detailed description of the conservation program for these poles in *Expanding the Circle: The Art of guud san glans, Robert Davidson* (Portland, Oregon: Douglas F. Cooley Memorial Art Gallery, Reed College, 1998), pp.19, and in "Changing approaches," *op.cit.*, pp.157-158. Both publications include color details of the well-preserved surface of these poles after twelve years exposure out-of-doors in New York State.

10. An account of this laser cleaning is forthcoming in M. Cooper, M. Solajic, G. Usher and J. Ostapkowicz, "The Application of Laser Technology to the Conservation of a Haida Totem Pole," *Journal of Cultural Heritage*, due in 2003. This special edition is devoted to the papers at the fourth international conference on Lasers in the Conservation of Artworks (LACONA IV), held in Paris, September 2001.

11. Described in "Valadier: Pilot Project: Northwest Coast Totem Poles," on the web at <http://www.atconservator.com/ATCSvaladierchart.htm>.

12. In a longer article, it would be important to examine other forms of collaboration, such as the repatriation of poles from Euro-American museums to their original Northwest Coast communities.

13. Leslie Williamson, "The treatment of a Haida totem pole: all things considered?," in *Objects Specialty Group Postprints*, vol. 6, ed. Virginia Greene and Emily Kaplan (Washington, DC: American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works, 1999), pp.2-10.

14. In a personal letter of 31 Oct. 1998 to the author, Philip Ward writes: ". . . one of the things I hate most about almost all modern poles. That is the practice of carving the whole length of the log, so that it has to be supported by a hideous steel I-beam set into the lower five or six feet of the back, with corresponding bolt heads (sometimes concealed and sometime not) at the front. For years I tried to persuade our carvers at the BCPM (now RBCM) to leave an uncarved foot so that the pole could be erected in the traditional way, but they always swore that cedar was too expensive to "waste" any on a buried foot. My point was that today we could design the pit and treat the foot so that it would

not rot."

15. For a list of previous attempts to create a composite Northwest Coast village and museum models see Rhyne, "Changing approaches," *op.cit.*, pp.158-159.

16. The Qay'lnagaay Heritage Centre project and the six poles raised in June 2001 are fully described in the press book prepared by the Skidegate Band Council for the pole raising.

17. See the UNESCO web sites: "Preserving and revitalizing our Intangible Heritage

http://firewall.unesco.org/culture/heritage/intangible/html_eng/index_en.htm and "Some considerations on the protection of the intangible heritage: claims and remedies" <http://www.folklife.si.edu/unesco/prott.htm>.

18. See Knut Einar Larsen, *Architectural Preservation in Japan* (Paris: ICOMOS International Wood Committee, 1994; available from Tapir Publishers, Trondheim, Norway).

Captions

Fig. 1. Totem poles, most in their original locations, in the Nimpkish Burial Grounds at the village of Alert Bay, BC; showing that most of the poles are supported by metal posts at their backs and rest on concrete bases. *Photo: author, Aug. 1994.*

Fig. 2. The 1931 memorial to Billie Moon, by the revered carver Willie Seaweed, in the Nimpkish Burial Grounds at the village of Alert Bay, BC; showing the left arm of the giant Dzunukwa reattached slightly too high and her right arm resting on the ground. *Photo: author, Aug. 1994.*

Fig. 3. Totem poles in the Great Hall of the Canadian Museum of Civilization, Hull, Quebec; showing poles from different Northwest Coast villages, tribal groups and families, restored and reconstructed in various ways, one newly carved, for an impressive museum display. *Photo: author, Aug. 1994.*

Fig. 4. Totem poles in the Great Hall of the Museum of Anthropology, University of British Columbia, Vancouver; showing poles salvaged from the deserted villages of K'uuna 'lnagaay (Skedans), Sgang Gwaay 'lnagaay (Ninstints), and T'anuu 'lnagaay (Tanu), Haida Gwaii, displayed in the sections into which they were cut, unrestored and untreated with consolidants. *Photo: author, Oct. 1995.*

Fig. 5. The Gitksan village of Gitsegukia, on the Upper Skeena River, BC, showing family memorial poles in front of houses, the right pole newly carved, painted and raised. *Photo: author, Sept. 1994.*

Fig. 6. Totem pole by Garner Moody, representing the village of Ts'aahl 'lnagaay (Chaatl), resting in excavated pit and on cradle, with local people and visitors ready to pull the ropes that will raise the pole. To the right are the four poles raised the previous four days; at Second Beach, just west of the village of Skidegate, Haida Gwaii (Queen Charlotte Islands) as part of the projected Qay'lnagaay Heritage Centre. *Photo: author, 8th June 2001.*

Fig. 7. Top of totem pole by Jim Hart, representing the village of K'uuna 'Inagaay (Skedans), part of the projected Qay'Inagaay Heritage Centre; showing the high quality surface of a contemporary pole by a master artist-carver. Cormorant is surmounted by three watchmen with moon in front. *Photo: author, 6th June 2001* .

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Changing Approaches to the Conservation of Northwest Coast Totem Poles

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Abstract

This paper examines the widely varying approaches to the physical treatment of Northwest Coast Native American Indian totem poles during the past century-and-a-half, exploring what these indicate of evolving cultural attitudes both within and without the originating society. A few examples are discussed to demonstrate that Native American Indian and Euro-American approaches have both been evolving, often in response to each other, so that a wider range of alternative approaches is now available when dealing with individual situations. By opening up a range of approaches to one of the world's great monumental forms, this paper attempts to contribute to the rethinking of conservation theory and practice worldwide.

Introduction

This paper is part of a larger study tracing the ways in which totem poles have been treated over the past century-and-a-half, the physical history of totem poles conceived as an interdisciplinary study. The central theme is the interplay between Northwest Coast Native American and Euro-American conservation practices. In this paper I present an historical overview, looking at a few examples that help us to explore this evolving interplay of concepts and practice [1].

Native Point of View

The inescapable starting point in discussing the conservation of Northwest Coast Native American Indian art is what is usually referred to as "the native point of view." The contrast between this point of view and the standard Euro-American approach is put most clearly by Gloria Cranmer Webster, Kwakwaka'wakw and a member of one of the most respected families on the

Northwest Coast, for over a decade curator of the U'mista Cultural Centre at Alert Bay, British Columbia, and a frequent consultant for major exhibitions of Northwest Coast art. At the Canadian Conservation Institute's 1986 symposium on "The Care and Preservation of Ethnographic Materials," she stated:

. . . we know what conservators do or try to do; that is, preserve objects for as long as possible. But, diametrically opposed to this is the general Indian view as I know it, which is that objects are created to be used and when those objects are damaged or worn out, they are thrown away and new ones are made. This applies to everything from small masks to large totem poles. For example, many Indian people feel that once a pole has served its purpose it should be allowed to go back into the ground. I think this attitude has a lot to do with the way Indian people look at the objects. The objects themselves are not important; what matters is what the objects represent. They represent the right to own that thing, and that right remains even if the object decays or is otherwise lost [2, p. 77].

In considering how the conservation--or not--of totem poles should be approached, this essential distinction between the objects themselves and what they represent must underlie every example we consider. But there are additional distinctions that make the situation more complicated, especially when considering totem poles. As one would expect and as ethnographic collections testify, objects of daily use were repaired when needed as were the functional necessities of masks and other ceremonial objects. Moreover, ceremonial objects were highly prized and stored for later ceremonies in woven cedarbark slipcovers and boxes. However, most totem poles, once erected, did not have any hands-on use and therefore did not require repair. Most importantly, the preservation and restoration of totem poles, even if it had been desired, was largely precluded by social custom, which dictated that once erected, a pole could not be repaired without an expensive ceremony for which the owner would obtain no new honors.

Edward Keithahn, who beginning about 1926 taught school for fifteen years in Alaskan villages and then, for many years, was curator of the Alaska Historical Library and Museum in Juneau, describes the situation in detail: 'Once he had acquitted himself of all obligations attendant to the raising of a memorial, the chief was not required or even expected to repair the pole. If he did desire to repaint, move, reset or otherwise alter a memorial once erected he could not do so except through the medium of a potlatch and at the same expense as though he were erecting a new pole. All the work would have to be done by the members of the opposite phratry who would be paid for their work. Guests would attend the alteration ceremony out of courtesy and would receive presents from the host. It is manifestly clear that even in earlier times there was little, if any, incentive for the preservation of totem poles since anything done was done at great expense and added nothing to the prestige of the owner. To do something to restore the totem pole of a predecessor would likewise in no way enhance the reputation of the individual interested in preserving the

monument' [3, pp. 118-119].

The traditional Indian approach to the preservation of totem poles is thus not simply a matter of a point of view but is deeply embedded in social practice. Accordingly, in the larger study I have undertaken and in this paper, I have attempted to ground each example in actual practice.

There were several different types of totem poles, some attached to houses, a few even structural. One freestanding exterior type, mortuary poles, held the remains of chiefs and other notables, buried in boxes or holes at the top. For these, the trees were inverted, with the larger section at the top. If we include carved interior house posts, we must note that they decayed much less rapidly than exterior poles. Generalizations also fail to account for significant differences among Northwest Coast tribal groups, with not only many different languages, but even several different linguistic families. Moreover, the Haida were carving totem poles before European contact, whereas the earliest of the important poles at the Kwakwaka'wakw village of Alert Bay, British Columbia, were carved in the 1890s. Differences among villages and kinship groups also affect conservation choices. It is instructive, therefore, to look at individual examples, and to note especially differences in approach and practice.

Decimation: 1879-1925

The story of the decimation of Northwest Coast culture, initially through smallpox and other diseases that reduced native populations to a small fraction of their former size, then through religious and government suppression of native language and social practice, has been told in various publications [5]. Often overlooked in this story is the ability of Northwest peoples to adapt to such a devastating attack on their culture, learning the ways of a foreign culture while in various ways continuing and adapting their traditional practices. In spite of what seems to have been the traditional Northwest Coast practice, a variety of cases have been documented in which individual owners and Native communities altered totem poles in various ways, sometimes in order to preserve them. By 1875, the missionary in Fort Simpson, British Columbia, "had persuaded many to remove poles from outside their houses, and, though some of these had been burned, others were collected 'in a sort of museum'" [6, pp. 22-23]. It may be that the act of moving a pole within one's own village or to a new village did not always require an accompanying ceremony; at least a few cases of this type have been recorded without a ceremony being mentioned [7]. Steven Brown, Curator for Native American Art at the Seattle Art Museum and a distinguished restorer and carver of poles, who lived and worked in Alaska for many years, writes that "in the Wrangell area--Wrangell, southeast Alaska--there was a long history which can be documented photographically, going back over 100 years, of the replacement of certain significant large monument--totem poles, if you will--that had deteriorated or for some other reason been damaged over time and were replaced within the traditional cultural context" [8].

Collecting by European and American Museums: 1875-1930

The story of the ambitious campaigns undertaken by museums in Europe, Canada, and especially the United States for collecting Northwest Coast artifacts has been most comprehensively told by Douglas Cole (until his recent death Professor of History at Simon Fraser University, British Columbia) in his book *Captured Heritage: The Scramble for Northwest Coast Artifacts* [9]. This first great period of collecting Northwest Coast material flourished from 1875 until the great depression of the early 1930s. While the intensity of this collecting was undoubtedly driven by competition among the newly founded national museums of anthropology, there was also a genuine sense of urgency based on the recognition that "primitive" cultures everywhere were fast disappearing and with them the possibility of collecting their artifacts while used by living cultures. As seen by the scientific community, the act of collecting was primarily an act of preservation. Totem poles were prized centerpieces of any such collection.

Serious museum collecting began in the 1870s and was given sudden momentum when in 1875 the United States government undertook an exhibition of Indian life as part of its Centennial Exposition, to be held the 5 next year in Philadelphia, celebrating the one-hundredth anniversary of United States independence. Two thirty foot totem poles from that exhibition deserve special attention as unique documents, showing what the carved and painted surface of high quality poles looked like at the time. In the conservation of paintings, those few works that retains their original surface, without the intrusion of overcleaning and later restoration, are highly prized and studied carefully by anyone undertaking professional treatment of similar works by the same artist. For anyone charged with the care of high quality nineteenth century totem poles, these two exemplars deserve the same careful study.

Following the 1876 Centennial, these two poles became the property of the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., and are now part of the collections of the National Museum of Natural History. For some years they have been displayed back-to-back, with a third taller pole, from Tanu, in the north lobby stairwell of the museum, providing excellent conditions for close study. One, a Tsimshian pole was purchased at Fort Simpson, British Columbia, and seems from its condition to have been carved soon before its purchase (cat. no. 23,550) [10]. The other pole was specially commissioned for the exposition from a Haida carver at Kasaan, on Prince of Wales Island, Alaska (cat. no. 54,298) (*Colour Plates 1 and 2*). Cole notes that James Swan, the Northwest Coast agent in charge of purchasing works for the exposition, thought especially highly of the Haida pole, for which he had initiated the arrangements in Kasaan. "For shipping to Philadelphia, Swan cut the Tsimshian pole in two [the standard practice when shipping tall poles east] . . . but he insisted on sending the new Kasaan pole whole" [11, p. 30]. Although the Kasaan pole may seem a bit domestic in comparison with the great Tanu pole, it is an impressive pole and, as far as I can tell, the only large, freestanding nineteenth century pole never erected or stored out of doors, as the lack of any serious cracking indicates. Even its top is superbly preserved. This pole provides the best evidence for what the surface and color of a first rate totem pole from the nineteenth century looked like and rewards careful study.

Smithsonian conservation records show that both poles were cleaned with minor repairs in 1969 [12].

Although there are only occasional references in notes and letters, it seems likely that many poles would have been cleaned, repaired, sometimes repainted before being sold and shipped to museums. Indeed, given the standard practice at that time even for Renaissance paintings, it would be surprising if they had not been restored for sale. About the Tsimshian pole, based on Swan's letters to the Smithsonian, Cole records that "They arranged for some Tsimshian to clean and repaint it though the back was left with 'some of the moss, which indicates its age'" [13, p. 29].

Given the conditions under which totem poles were stolen and purchased from Northwest Coast villages, First Nations have serious ambivalence about the possession of so many of these poles by Euro-American museums. An increasing number of First Nations cultural centers have been constructed, with museum facilities, and a number of poles that were removed from villages without authorization have been repatriated to the Haida Gwaii Museum at Qay'llnagaay (Sea Lion Town) near Skidegate, the largest city on Haida Gwaii (the Queen Charlotte Islands) and elsewhere. Others have noted the importance of museum collections in preserving their art form for the future. The distinguished Haida artist, Robert Davidson, a leading spokesperson for Native American Indian culture, has written: 'There was, and to an extent still is, a viewpoint shared by many artists and other people on the coast that the collection of Indian art and artifacts was wrong - another example of exploitation. My feeling about that is the opposite; if it wasn't for the museums and if it wasn't for the anthropologists, I feel the art form would have died completely if nothing had been collected and saved' [14, p. 3].

Salvage: 1925-1970

The salvage of totem poles actually started well before 1925, most notably when the poles gathered for display at the 1904 Louisiana Purchase World Exposition in St. Louis, Missouri and the 1905 Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition in Portland, Oregon, were then moved to Sitka and erected as the Sitka Totem Park (now Sitka National Historical Park). Of course the salvage process continues even today. A few salvage operations attempted to re-erect poles near their original sites, but most moved poles to outdoor sculpture parks, where they were either grouped or distributed in parks throughout a city. Apart from their desire to collect, a few museums were also active in salvaging poles. Where the poles still existed in native communities, the standard practice was to carve replicas to replace the originals, otherwise usually not. Along with a genuine interest in preserving the impressive evidence of Native American culture, these operations were inspired and funded by commercial interests anxious to attract tourists. The number of salvage operations was large and many of them have been well published, pointing out the poor quality of replicas in the early years and the indiscriminate repainting of totem poles by highway work crews. The great glory of this story, often told, was the creation of totem pole carving projects first at the University of British Columbia,

Vancouver, then at the British Columbia Provincial Museum (now Royal British Columbia Museum), Victoria. These two institutions hired Mungo Martin, Southern Kwakwaka'wakw from Fort Rupert, who had learned carving from his stepfather, Charlie James. Initially he was asked to restore poles but soon, at his request, to devote his energies to carving replicas, new poles, and to training apprentices [15]. When the British Columbia Provincial Museum purchased deteriorating poles from owners, two copies were sometimes made, always one to replace the original, but occasionally also one to be installed in Thunderbird Park, Victoria, near the Parliament Building and museum. Martin's astonishing production of high quality replicas and original poles and central role in training many of the most important carvers of the next generation has long been recognized as the single most essential link in the revival of totem pole carving. Martin is reported to have said "If we Kwakiutl keep the art only for ourselves it will die. If we share it with the White Men it will live forever" [16, p. 171]" In the carving of replica poles by contemporary First Nations carvers, including second generation poles by descendants of the original owners, it is revealing that the aim has been less to create an exact replica of the original than to carve a new pole, faithful to the original, but not a duplicate. The aim seems to be to carve the pole the right way, as the original had been carved, responding to the width of the tree, following the grain of the wood, and adjusting to any irregularities. Meanwhile, the restoration of poles quite naturally continued to be controversial in many native villages. In 1950 Barbeau notes that "Henry Dudoward of Port Simpson, who paints the totem poles for the municipality in Prince Rupert, was ostracized by his own people, who consider his work in defilement of totem poles" [17, Vol. 2, p. 859]; and Ward reports that "In 1929 the Indian Agent for the Skeena District reported that the Kitsegukla Band had threatened one of their number who wanted to have his poles restored" [18, p. 21].

A possibly unique salvage operation was undertaken at Kitwanga on the Upper Skeena River at the time of the disastrous 1936 flood, notable because it was, as far as we know, the first extensive preservation effort conducted entirely by Northwest Coast native peoples. Philip Ward, for many years Chief Conservator at the British Columbia Provincial Museum and a participant in the 1969-70 restoration project on the Upper Skeena River, has written the definitive report on the Kitwanga restorations. He writes that "Apparently without any outside help, they removed all the endangered poles from the river bank, repaired those that were damaged, and re-erected them. . . ." Ward points out that many of the villagers who carried out this operation were no doubt ones who had been present during a previous 1925-26 government restoration effort using methods devised by an experienced timber bridge engineer, T.B. Campbell, and that on-site examination of the poles indicates that the Kitwanga people seem to have followed Campbell's procedure as far as possible. Nevertheless, the initiative this time was entirely that of the Kitwanga people themselves, the event going almost completely unnoticed by outsiders [19, p. 24]. In fact we cannot be sure exactly when the poles were re-erected. George MacDonald has suggested that the poles may not have been repaired and re-erected until January 1942 when a major potlatch was held at Kitwanga for the raising of three new poles. This would have allowed the old and new poles to be

erected at the same time with a single potlatch [20].

In the new installation, the poles were moved to higher ground and, as later with poles at Kitwancool, turned to face the road instead of the river. This preserved the practice of presenting the poles to those arriving at the village, the road having replaced the river as the main highway [21, pp. 26-27].

Ninstints

No single site reveals the gradually evolving change in conservation practice more instructively than Ninstints, on Sgan'gwaii (Anthony Island) near the southern tip of Haida Gwaii (The Queen Charlotte Islands), which, together with Anthony Island, has been designated a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. The poles at Ninstints have been studied and published in more detail and with higher archaeological and scientific standards than any other poles, so that only a brief up-to-date summary is presented here. Since all treatment of the poles at Ninstints requires separate approval by Parks Canada and the Council of Haida Nations, the progression of steps taken at Ninstints reflects decisions regarding shared values. The treatments themselves have been conducted jointly by skilled Haida tree experts and workmen and by non-native archaeologist, conservators and workmen.

It is instructive to note the steps initiated over twenty years after the salvaging of over a dozen poles in 1957:

In 1978 all vegetation, including trees and bushes, growing out of the poles cut back without disturbing their roots and some fallen poles and memorials were raised slightly on supports (Fig. 1).

In 1981 and 1982 extensive technical study of the poles and environmental factors were conducted on site; slight excavations were conducted around the bases of the poles, which were then filled with beach gravel to reduce rot; and the advancing forest of Sitka spruce, which was rapidly encroaching on the site was cut back [22].

About 1993 one pole was supported with a slender metal staff, and in 1994 several poles were propped with slender, crossing wooden supports (Fig. 2). Fallen details have occasionally been reattached.

In 1995 archaeological excavations were conducted around the bases of four poles that were threatening to topple, the poles partially straightened, and the excavations filled with large stones hauled up from the beach [23].

Museum Quality Conservation of New Poles

In the past, totem pole conservation focused on nineteenth and early twentieth century poles, all in various states of decay. With the gradual emergence of new carvers, especially an increasing number who have mastered the art of carving

and exhibit both deep understanding of the totem pole tradition and high originality, conservators are given the opportunity of treating important new poles in mint condition. Whether displayed indoors or outdoors, usually in the museums, government structures and private collections that have commissioned them, these poles are increasingly treated like any other work of contemporary art (where the problems of transient materials often far exceed anything faced with totem poles).

Contemporary poles installed outdoors provide more challenging situations and are more instructive since they decay much more rapidly than poles indoors. In most cases, new poles erected outdoors have been allowed to decay initially, with minimal cleaning and repair. In a few cases, however, exterior poles have been carefully cleaned and cared for from the time they were erected, thus providing a valuable opportunity to study their deterioration and to compare alternative treatments.

The ideals of modern conservation closely parallel those for modern medicine, with careful monitoring and preventive conservation preeminent. To date, the premier case study for meticulous care of exterior contemporary totem poles is Robert Davidson's magnificent group of three poles, *Three Variations on Killer Whale Myths*, erected in 1986 at the Donald M. Kendall Sculpture Gardens, at the PepsiCo World Headquarters, in Purchase, New York (Fig. 3) [24]. There they are displayed in the company of over thirty other twentieth century sculptures, including works by artists such as Moore, Giacometti, Nevelson, and Oldenburg. From the time they were installed their treatment has been carried out by Douglass Kwart under the supervision of Douglas Caulk, who has kindly shared with me their conservation program and details of their treatment [25].

Their approach has been to keep the poles looking as good as possible and to retard deterioration, while allowing the public free access. In keeping with advanced conservation practice, the artist has supplied wood from the trees from which the poles were carved to provide for repairs and has supplied paint and paint chips for repainting. Many contemporary First Nations carvers are happy to have their poles repainted. Davidson has said, "You have to repaint a pole periodically, like any house or any outdoor object" [26, p. 57]. To date the repair wood has been used only to plug carpenter ant holes. The paint has been used more extensively. Partly because the brilliant red paint, which Davidson especially likes, fades rather quickly and partly because the lower portions are exposed to the public, the poles are repainted every four years. In a close parallel to aspects of conservation practice in leading museums, only one pole is painted each year (no pole is painted the fourth), so that the poles never look startlingly new, yet differences among the poles are slight.

As with all sculpture in this superbly handled collection, the poles are given regular, detailed inspection, using an aerial lift. Each July they are brushed with a soft brush to remove organic matter where seeds might take root and insect egg cases are removed (carpenter ants are a constant problem). The poles have occasionally been sprayed with a natural oil distillation, with

excellent results in controlling the growth of mold and keeping insects away, thus also the woodpeckers that feed on the m. Although this product does gradually leech out with the rains, Caulk and Kwart are now considering cedar wood oil, which is closer to the trees' original oils, and, following the same natural process, will gradually leech out with water.

This approach accepts the gradual graying of the unpainted areas, though after more than ten years the shielded areas of the poles retain much of their rich cedar color and painted areas still retain their fine surfaces (Colour Plates 3 and 4). The display and conservation treatment for Three Variations on Killer Whale Themes equals that for the finest sculpture in leading museums internationally.

Ceremonies Associated with Conservation Treatment

The raising of a new First Nations totem pole is accompanied by a ceremony with feasting, dancing, and the declaration of rights and privileges. At Kitwanoocool, on the Upper Skeena River, a ceremony was developed in the twentieth century to accompany the burning of poles that had fallen. It is appropriate that some form of ceremony should also accompany the conservation or restoration of a pole. The following account is an unusually moving first-person description of such a ceremony.

For some years, Andrew Todd, Andrew Todd Conservators, Vancouver, British Columbia, has supervised and treated the major collection of poles at the Totem Heritage Center in Ketchikan, Alaska. In a recently completed article, he describes a small ceremony conducted previous to his treatment of an important pole in the collection, the Tongass Island Raven. As Todd describes it, rights and responsibility for the traditional ownership of the Tongass Island Raven are held by Esther Shea, an elder of both her family and the Tongass Tribe. Thus final approval of the proposed treatment rested with her. Andrew Todd has given me permission to quote the central section of his article.

Esther came to the Totem Heritage Center with members of her family and in the presence of them and the staff of the Ketchikan Museum Department and myself, a small but meaningful ceremony took place. In the hushed totem storage room, beside the Raven . . . Esther indicated she would sing a song. Alone in her native Tlingit language, she sang a blessing for the treatment and an explanation of the purpose of intervention to the Raven. . . . The meaning of the song in the Tlingit language was explained by Esther after she had finished. She said that she had asked the Raven to understand that the treatment was meant to help the people who were alive now to be more closely linked with their ancestors from the past. She asked the Raven to understand that no harm was meant and that the effort to preserve the wood and to keep the materials stabilized was so the Raven could continue to remind the native people of their culture, their symbols and the past. It was a beautiful ceremony that lasted only moments and yet was a very special experience. For myself as the conservator responsible for the treatment, the experience was a reminder that spirits and ancestors from the past were associated with the Raven and were understood

to be involved with my work. It also removed the burden of taking sole responsibility for the treatment of an object from another culture, and by giving the treatment approval through the blessing of a song, more history had been added to the long record of the Raven. The song in fact became another form of claiming authority and demonstrating the cultural ownership of the Raven. The oral history of legends and objects told by songs are a very important tradition in Native American culture' [27].

This exchange between the native descendant of the original owners of a pole and non-native museum personnel is characteristic of the vast majority of interchanges that have taken place in recent years. In the process, Native Americans have gained access to and a degree of control over their objects in Euro-American collections and have learned of the advantages of long term preservation of their cultural heritage. Conservators, Curators, and Administrators in museums have learned essential information about the history of the objects in their stewardship and have come to understand the traditional procedures for their care and how these might continue to enhance the cultural value of these artifacts.

Re-creating a Northwest Coast Village

It has long been recognized that the most impressive feature of Northwest Coast Indian totem poles was not their individual quality, remarkable as that often was, but rather their cumulative power as part of a complete village panorama seen as one approached from the water, densely spread in front of the longhouses facing the water, a seeming forest of awesome creatures, with ravens, eagles, and watchmen projecting into the sky. This is what we should most like to preserve, but the largest group of poles standing in-situ is at Ninistints, majestic in their own way but now only a remnant of their former grandeur. At the Gitksan villages of Kispiox, Kitwanga, and Kitwancool on the Upper Skeena River, groupings of more recent poles remain close to their original sites, but without their original houses or river settings. Fortunately, panoramas of Skidegate, Masset, Yan and other Haida villages are recorded in photographs taken by a number of photographers from 1878 to 1884, but even these show the villages past their prime and of course record no color.

As a result, a few attempts have been made to approximate a Northwest Coast village with its houses, totem poles and other memorials. For the Chicago Exposition of 1893, Skidegate carvers were commissioned to create models of their own houses and poles, which were displayed in a row approximating the village, against a painted forest background. Two much smaller models have been created for museum display, the first representing Skedans on display at the Royal British Columbia Museum, Victoria, the other a model of Skidegate at the Canadian Museum of Civilization, Hull. In the 1930s, a project was begun at Totem Bight State Park, north of Ketchikan, Alaska, to recreate a traditional Tlingit village, with houses and totem poles, some replicated from poles from deserted villages, others carved anew. Only a single Tlingit plankhouse was completed, but the large grouping of Tlingit and Haida poles makes this the outdoor location where one can get the fullest sense of a traditional Northwest

Coast village pole display. A small but first class grouping of houses and poles was constructed at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, 1959-1962. In the 1960s, a more extensive project was begun at the village of 'Ksan, at a traditional site on the Upper Skeena River, near Hazelton. Here, seven Gitksan houses were successfully recreated, with traditional painted fronts and a number of newly carved poles in front (Fig. 4). For years the 'Ksan Historical Indian Village thrived as a center for Northwest Indian culture, not only with a museum and exhibition space, but also a feast house, gift shop, and important school for teaching native arts. A performing arts group was also organized which performed at 'Ksan and elsewhere. If one is to recreate an original village context for totem poles, it is essential that it be a living village, not identical of course to a nineteenth century village, but with as many of the ingredients as possible and equally vital in its time. It is noteworthy, also, that the creation of new poles was seen as closely related to the preservation of older poles in other villages, and that First Nations peoples and non-native members of the Skeena Totem Pole Restoration Society worked together on both projects. Naturally there were many disagreements and problems, but each learned from and adapted to the other. Likewise, the creation of a composite Northwest Coast village at the Canadian Museum of Civilization, begun in 1984, involved the interplay of native and non-native people at all levels, and again a great deal of interchange and learning took place. With six newly constructed houses, each representing a different region of the coast, and a spectacular array of restored totem poles, this hall allows us to see the largest number of original full size totem poles on display in something like an original setting; but of course the display is inside and not a living village on the Northwest Coast. A museum provides a different context with an entirely different cultural meaning.

This year, after long planning, the most promising project yet has been initiated, the Qay'll Heritage Center at Qay'llnagaay (Sea Lion Town) just southwest of Skidegate on the Second Beach peninsula. This is a projected sixteen million dollar project to construct a series of longhouses (probably linked for convenient use) fronted by poles, facing the Skidegate Inlet. As at 'Ksan, plans call for an active center integrating many aspect of contemporary native culture; including a Haida Language Centre, Bill Reid Teaching Center, Performing Arts Theatre, and Information Centre. Plans are to double the size of the Haida Gwaii Museum at Qay'llnagaay, partly to accommodate newly repatriated objects with proper housing and display. The first six totem poles, to represent six of the southern Haida villages, have just been commissioned from six leading Haida carvers. Carving is to begin about March 2000 and to be completed by March 2001. Following traditional practice that in recent years has been so successful in revitalizing the art of pole carving at a high level, each head carver will supervise two apprentices [28]. By eventually recreating something approximating the full, living context for a large array of high quality totem poles, the Qay'll Heritage Center will be accomplishing what is no longer possible through conservation alone.

Conservation Training for First Nations People

Parallel to the expanding number of First Nations people who have trained as

lawyers, doctors, and for other professions, a number of young Native Americans have trained as archaeologists, conservators and as historic preservation specialists, thus uniting in themselves the two approaches supposedly at odds with each other. Of equal importance, courses in totem pole conservation for local caretakers are now recognized as essential. One week courses, which may serve as models for other programs, were held April 1998 and August 1999 in Wrangell, Alaska by the U.S. National Park Service in conjunction with the Wrangell Museum. The courses emphasizing hands-on works hops were conducted by experts such as Ronald Sheetz, Alan Levitan, Steven Brown, and Andrew Todd [29].

Conclusions

The rich interplay between the conservation approaches of Euro-Americans and Northwest Coast peoples cannot be fully conveyed with the few examples presented in this paper. Surely we must also look at exhibition practices; examples of complex pole restorations within leading museums; the dramatic advances in technical studies for wood conservation and the need for a full dendrochronological study comparable to those now available for European wooden artifacts; repatriation; the growth of First Nations museums and the new National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C., which has inherited the poles from the George Gustav Heye Collection in New York; contemporary situations where poles are still deliberately allowed to decay or burned after they have fallen; the status of original poles in museums when they have been replaced by replicas on their original sites; the need for a database of Northwest Coast totem poles and for monitoring of exterior pole deterioration; and the relation between traditional concepts of cultural heritage and what is now referred to as "intangible heritage," just announced as the subject of the next General Assembly of ICOMOS. In part to provide for this, I have prepared a comprehensive annotated bibliography for the conservation of Northwest Coast Native American Indian totem poles, available at my home page on the World Wide Web [30].

Nevertheless, I hope that these few examples indicate that there has been no single First Nations point of view just as there has been no single Euro-American point of view. There have been disagreements about conservation approaches within individual museums in Europe and America and within their conservation departments, and there have been disagreements within individual Northwest Coast Indian villages and within band councils. Far from posing a problem, this has been a productive situation, leading to discuss and increased understanding. More importantly, what have conventionally been identified as the Euro-American point of view and the Native American Indian point of view, so clearly put by Gloria Cranmer Webster at the beginning of this paper, have been interacting for many years, increasingly enlarging the range of alternatives practiced by each group. The process has been at times tense, sometimes even combative, but in the vast majority of cases those involved have reported the discovery of shared values and immensely rewarding results.

It seems to me that we are at a particularly fruitful stage in considering the

conservation of our cultural heritage. We are finally coming to recognize and respect the diversity of cultures and the different values these cultures place on physical objects as a result of their traditional materials, social practices, and the history of their people. And we can now see ourselves not as committed to a fixed set of rules but as part of an ongoing process, where no decisions are automatic but must be considered in the light of a variety of justifiable alternatives. This reconsideration can enhance our own understanding of what we and others value most in our past and inspire us to treat the cultural heritage of all places with greater respect and responsibility.

Acknowledgments

The larger study on which this paper is based has benefited from generous help from many conservators too numerous to mention here, including especially James Hay at the Canadian Museum of Civilization, Hull. For various type of assistance with this article, I thank especially Robert Barclay, the late Richard Beauchamp, Douglas Caulk, Miriam Clavir, Robert Davidson, David Gratten, Alan Leviton, Natalie Macfarlen, Andrew Todd, and Philip Ward.

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Captions

Color Plate 1

Haida, Kasaan, 30 foot totem pole, 1875-76, detail showing that even the top retains its original surface, NMNH, Smithsonian Institution, cat. no. 54,298. *Photo: Author 1995.*

Color Plate 2

Haida, Kasaan, 30 foot totem pole, 1875-76, detail near top showing the near-original surface and color, uniquely preserved for a 19th c. pole, NMNH, Smithsonian Institution, cat. no. 54,298. *Photo: Author 1995.*

Color Plate 3

Robert Davidson, Three Variations on Killer Whale Myths, 1986, detail of pole farthest left (see fig. 3) showing well preserved wood and repainted surfaces after twelve years exposure out-of-doors, Donald M. Kendall Sculpture Garden, Purchase, NY. *Photo: Author 1998.*

Color Plate 4

Robert Davidson, Three Variations on Killer Whale Myths, 1986, detail of pole farthest right (see fig. 3) showing results of meticulous preventive conservation and repainting, Donald M. Kendall Sculpture Garden, Purchase, NY. *Photo:*

Author 1998.

Fig. 1

Village of Ninstints, on Skan'gwaii (Anthony Island), Haida Gwaii (Queen Charlotte Islands), British Columbia, ca. first half nineteenth century, showing memorial raised on cross beams probably 1978. *Photo: Author 1994.*

Fig. 2

Village of Ninstints, on Skan'gwaii (Anthony Island), Haida Gwaii (Queen

Charlotte Islands), British Columbia, ca. first half nineteenth century, showing temporary propping of poles 1993-1994, jointly supervised by Parks Canada and the Council of Haida Nations. *Photo: Author 1994.*

Fig. 3

Robert Davidson, Three Variations on Killer Whale Myths, 1986 (see color plates 3 and 4), Donald M. Kendall Sculpture Garden, PepsiCo World Headquarters, Purchase, New York State. *Photo: Author 1998.*

Fig. 4

'Ksan Historical Indian Village, near Hazelton, British Columbia, re-created Gitksan houses and poles, 1968-1970, housing a center for Northwest Indian culture. *Photo: Author 1994.*

■ *to top*

Alan Levitan

Totem Preservation in Southeast Alaska

Emblazoned on posters, tourist brochures, and now even web sites, totem poles have come to symbolize the land and the cultures of the Northwest coast. The totem region, roughly 1,000 miles long and 100 miles wide, includes both coastal British Columbia and Southeast Alaska. Here in the resource rich, temperate rain forest a complex material culture evolved marked by a unique artistic style,

The art of the Northwest coast is governed by subtle rules of line and form. Few objects, whether wood, bone, shell, or fabric are left unembellished with carved, woven, or painted design. Although the artistic style evolved independently over many hundreds of years, most scholars now agree that carving of monumental wood sculpture did not become common until after contact with Europeans. This contact provided two elements that would make large scale carving easier: ready availability of iron for tool blades and the beginnings of a cash economy with specialization of labor. Russian traders, the first Europeans to explore the coast, highly valued the pelt of the sea otter, found in abundance in coastal waters. Trade in these pelts provided an income source for many in the tribal aristocracy. The newfound wealth and status were displayed

Participants in a preservation workshop cleaning pole surface in Wrangell's Kikseti park in preparation for the application of fungicide. Photo courtesy Randy Rodgers, Sitka National Historic Park.



most prominently in potlatches, ceremonial gatherings where material goods were given away to the guests. These events were often marked by the erection of totem poles, commissioned and paid for by the host.

Totems are almost always carved from a single log, although appendages such as wings and beaks may be carved separately and attached by means of a mortise and tenon joint. Western red cedar (*Thuja plicata*) was the wood of choice. This species grows to tremendous size, is relatively easily carved, and has natural resistance to the fungal deterioration that progresses quickly in the moist environment of the coast. The region where totems were traditionally carved is limited by the natural occurrence of cedar. In the southern reaches, where the cedars grow large, poles four to five feet across and 50 feet high were not uncommon. However, in the north where environmental conditions limit the size of the cedar tree, totem carving changes in scale and style.

The golden age of totem carving is short, generally considered to be between 1830 and 1880. By the 1880s disease had decimated the population of many of the native communities. This, together with governmental and church efforts, resulted in the destruction of many aspects of the traditional culture. At about the same time, expeditions, often organized by museums in the large cities of both Canada and the United States, began to assiduously collect material culture of the Northwest. While some were scrupulous in paying for the cultural property, others assumed that all goods in villages not permanently occupied were free for the taking.

Shortly after the turn of the century the territorial governor of Alaska, John Brady, sent out the sailing ship *Rush* to collect poles from Tlingit and Haida villages on the shores of Prince of Wales Island. Brady's intent was to send the totems to expositions in St. Louis and later Portland to draw interest to the Alaska exhibits. Most of these poles were eventually shipped back to Sitka, the territorial capital, where they were erected on the old Russian walk along a small peninsula just outside of town. Initially administered by the territorial government, this site was declared a national monument in 1910 and was incorporated into the national park system in 1916. The poles and the scenic trail along which they are erected now form one of the primary cultural resources of Sitka National Historical Park.

Pole Preservation

The condition of many of the poles was poor at the time they were collected, and this was a concern of the territorial government. Notes and early photographs in the park archives indicate that the poles were repaired before they were shipped south and again prior to erection in Sitka. Early preservation efforts consisted primarily of filling checks with plaster and wood shims, covering decayed areas with sheet metal and linseed oil coated canvas and re-painting. Though traditionally paint was used sparingly to highlight features or carved forms, in the early days of the park it was applied over all surfaces, often in non-original colors. The caretakers were aware of the deteriorating condition of the pole collection, however, their ability to improve the situation was limited by lack of money, manpower, and knowledge of the nature of wood decay.

The CCC Era

New efforts were directed to preserving the poles in a depression-era Civilian Conservation Corps program administered by the U.S. Forest Service. Experienced carvers were hired to teach unemployed young native men carving skills. Sitka was one of about half-dozen sites in Southeast Alaska where the CCC worked to preserve poles and by so doing preserve important cultural traditions as well.

The work included both repair of poles and replication of those that were considered beyond repair. The repair process typically entailed re-carving of the outer weathered surface, extensive wood patching of decayed areas, filling of checks with plaster, fastening of sheet lead caps to end-grain surfaces, applying fungicides and repainting. Although some of the techniques and materials employed would not be acceptable by today's standards, without the efforts of the CCC program most of these poles would not now exist in any form. Today many of the original poles have been placed in protective museum environments. A few, carved from particularly resistant logs, can still be found standing in totem pole parks throughout Southeast Alaska.

The highly deteriorated poles were taken down and placed beside new cedar logs for replication. A few segments of the original poles were salvaged at that time, but most were left to decay. At some sites a few of these totems remain recognizable, lying on the forest floor covered with mosses and saplings. The replicated poles, which

now possess historical value in their own right, form the core of the collection of poles still exhibited outdoors at Sitka as well as other totem parks.

Recent Preservation Efforts

Recognizing that the CCC era poles in their collection were deteriorating, the staff of Sitka National Historical Park asked the wooden artifact conservators in the Division of Conservation, Harpers Ferry Center, to undertake a condition survey. In conjunction with that survey, the park hosted a conference in the summer of 1991 that brought together subject matter specialists, conservators, carvers, cultural resource managers and members of the local community both native and non-native.

Initially one of the more contentious issues was the propriety of preserving poles at all. Traditionally, little value was placed on preserving poles and some members of the native community thought it best to allow old poles to simply deteriorate and return to the earth from which they came. After considerable discussion, a consensus emerged that it was indeed appropriate to preserve examples of earlier carvings to provide inspiration and information to contemporary carvers as well as the general public. The conference attendees felt that this effort should go hand-in-hand with efforts to preserve the skills and cultural traditions associated with totem carving, one of the activities of the park since the 1960s.

In consultation with the park staff, the research and planning for the preservation of the pole collection began. It was apparent that the most pressing need was to stabilize the poles on exterior exhibit and that treatment of the original poles and pole fragments in interior display and storage should be put off until a later phase. In early discussions it was emphasized that conservation treatment and continuing cyclic maintenance could extend the exhibitable life of the poles considerably, but they could not be preserved for the long term in an outdoor environment. We therefore recommended that plans be made for eventual placement of the poles in protective storage or display.

Seven poles were taken down and re-mounted on new yellow cedar support posts in the first phase of treatment. The rest were stable enough to undergo treatment while standing. Treatment generally included cleaning, consolidation of areas deteriorated by fungi and insects,

structural repairs, and the application of a non-toxic fungicide and insecticide followed by application of water repellent. In some instances where the splits in the poles were extensive, support systems were fabricated out of stainless steel or aluminum and attached to the rear. Generally, lost elements were not replaced. Where replacements were made, either for aesthetic or structural considerations, native craftsmen, familiar with the art form were asked to carve the elements. A number of factors led to the decision not to repaint the poles: the original paint colors and patterns were not known with certainty, an intact paint layer restricts the penetration of fungicide, and we felt that fresh paint tends to look awkward on weathered wood surfaces.

The preservation work at Sitka took place over a number of summer sessions. This enabled us to assess the effectiveness of the materials and techniques after a few years of exposure and adjust the treatment accordingly. Based on that assessment a cyclic maintenance plan for the outdoor poles was prepared. The park maintenance staff initially worked with us on the pole treatment to gain experience and in recent years has successfully taken over the cyclic maintenance tasks.

Spreading the Word

As word of the preservation work at Sitka spread, caretakers of other pole collections in southeast Alaska approached the park about sharing its expertise. Recognizing the broader responsibility of the NPS to the preservation of these unique artifacts, the park responded by serving as a local clearinghouse for preservation information and helping to underwrite travel to perform condition surveys for other totem collections.

After assessing the condition of the poles at a variety of totem parks we began to realize the magnitude of the preservation problems, the similarity of the problems from site to site, and how pressing the need for treatment is if the CCC era poles are not to be lost. Although some of the preservation tasks require the knowledge and skills of a conservator, it was evident that with proper training individuals who are steeped in the tradition and live in close proximity to the resource could accomplish many aspects of treatment at less cost. Further we felt the treatment of totem poles could potentially serve as a focal

point for community activity and help galvanize interest in the preservation of cultural traditions.

With that in mind, the Division of Conservation, in partnership with the Wrangell Museum, and Sitka National Historical Park, applied for and received a grant from the NPS's Cultural Resource Training Initiative (CRTI) program to provide training in carved pole preservation to residents of Southeast Alaska. The goals of the workshop were to enable participants to understand the nature of the threats to pole preservation, evaluate the condition of poles in their own collection, identify the treatment options, and perform some of the basic treatments. The course was geared to individuals, particularly members of native organizations, who have direct responsibility for caretaking the monuments but little background in the philosophy or practice of preservation.

The response to the workshop, which took place in April 1998, was encouraging. It brought together carvers, curators, conservators, and tribal administrators for an intense week of information exchange through lecture and hands-on work. Perhaps most valuable, the participants came to realize that others shared their concerns and that although the preservation problems are substantial, they are solvable. By the end of the week a fledgling pole preservation organization was established with the mission of disseminating information and working to secure funding for carved pole preservation.

The participants were unanimous in asking that a follow up workshop take place that will focus on additional hands-on preservation techniques. Thanks again to funding from the CRTI the course is scheduled to take place in Wrangell in August of 1999. This project provides a good example of how the NPS can leverage its expertise and funding and thereby have a positive effect on cultural resource preservation beyond its own boundaries. One of the course participants wrote:

I have learned much and been inspired and encouraged to go home and care for our poles.

I feel more confident about what I can do.

If that attitude can be sustained the outlook for the preservation of these significant artifacts will be much enhanced.

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Ellen Carrlee Conservation

Curious. Collegial. Conversational.

Totem Pole Maintenance



(<http://ellencarrlee.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/ellen-and-ron.jpg>)

Conservators Ellen Carrlee and Ron Sheetz at the Governor's Totem Pole, Juneau, Alaska in May 2010

Southeast Alaska is the land of totem poles. These iconic outdoor sculptures are powerful, valuable, and remarkably vulnerable. The Tongass National Forest, covering 80% of Southeast Alaska, is a temperate (cool) rainforest, with precipitation between 80 and 100 inches per year in most places where totem poles are made and displayed. (In comparison, Seattle's annual precipitation is usually under 40".) Imagine placing a wooden pole in the ground and exposing it to the weather for decades. Utility poles, which are heavily impregnated with preservative chemicals, typically last 25-50 years in much less aggressive conditions. Most totem poles are not treated with preservatives when they are erected.



(<http://ellencarrlee.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/ron-applies-x1003.jpg>)

Ron Sheetz applies water repellent

I've been involved in the maintenance of several totem poles, and in May 2010 had the great pleasure of working with Ron Sheetz, retired National Parks Service conservator who specializes in furniture and wooden objects. Ron has treated well over 50 totem poles in the past 20+ years, and is a wealth of useful information and experience. We agreed it might be useful to have basic totem pole maintenance instructions on the internet. Ron also wrote a Conserve-O-Gram for the National Parks Service a few years back called "Protecting Wood with Preservative and Water Repellents" available at <http://www.nps.gov/museum/publications/conservoogram/07-03.pdf> (<http://www.nps.gov/museum/publications/conservoogram/07-03.pdf>)

SUMMARY: If you are responsible for the care of a totem pole in an outdoor environment, a maintenance/inspection schedule should be developed and carried out. Inspections should check for loose parts, damage, and signs of decay or insect infestation. Borates and water repellent should be periodically applied. Borates help protect against rot and insects, but are water soluble. Water repellent protects the pole and prevents the borates from washing out with the rain. The application of borates and water repellent should occur every 3 – 5 years, depending on when the water repellents have worn off (water no longer beads up on the surface of the wood.) If the totem will be moved it is recommended to contact the Native community to allow them the opportunity to comment and to be involved with the preservation process. Moisture management is key to preservation. Proper drainage around the base of the pole and lead or copper caps at the top help preserve the wood. Typically, if you set aside a week to do the work, that's plenty of time and allows for vagrancies of weather.

INSPECTION: Every time a pole is taken down, there is a risk of damage. Better to leave it vertical if possible. This is fine for inspection and cleaning, but perhaps not convenient for the detail work painting and re-carving may require.



~~(<http://ellencarrlee.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/restore-auke.jpg>)~~

Scaffolding used for maintenance of the Auke Pole at Centennial Hall, 81.01.033 in the Juneau Douglas City Museum collection

Sometimes scaffolding is used. Rental of an electric or diesel boom lift is very helpful for maintenance purposes. A lift can usually hold two people if the total is under 500lbs.



~~(<http://ellencarrlee.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/lift-gareth-gary-ron.jpg>)~~

Diesel boom lift for treatment of Governor's Totem

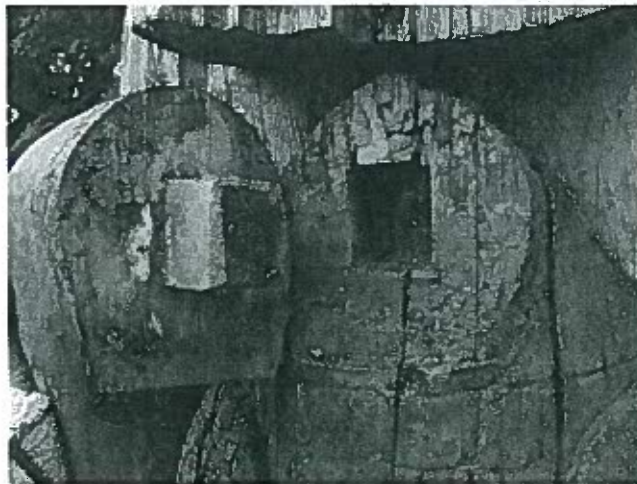
Note the importance of wearing a safety harness while on lift. In addition to the obvious safety issue, nothing brings out the local newspaper photographer like work on a totem pole, and a front page photo of you on a lift with no harness is an easy way to get a fine from OSHA. A few hours may be spent photographing, taking condition notes, measuring cracks, and probing the wood with an ice pick. When wood is damp, the hole from the ice pick swells back shut right away, leaving no mark. Plants near the base should be removed to promote air circulation and drying at the base of the pole.



(<http://ellencarrlee.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/bt-fig-seven-legs.jpg>)

Base kept clear of foliage to allow air circulation

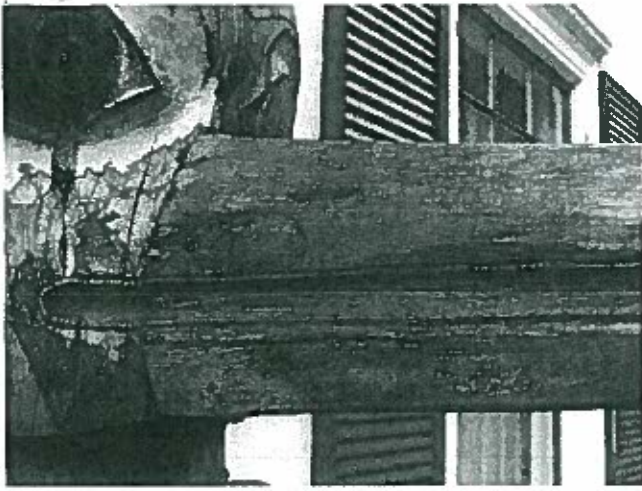
I prefer to document a totem pole from the top down, referring to the highest figure as "Figure One" and describing each figure separately. The figure's own right side is called "Proper Right" or PR and likewise the left is "Proper Left" or PL. I refrain from identifying the figures as specific animals unless a record has been left by the carver. It can be difficult to know, for example, if a bird-like creature was meant to be an eagle, hawk, mosquito, thunderbird, kadjuk or some other real or mythological creature. Best to keep the description simple, just enough to make clear which figure you are talking about. From the ground, I note the following:



(<http://ellencarrlee.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/4storyocinside6-04.jpg>)

Detached head with broken mortise and tenon join. Four Story Totem Pole, Juneau Douglas City Museum collection 84.19.001

Missing, loose, or detached elements. Inspect any lead or copper caps as well to see if they are loose or have missing or rusting nails.



~~(<http://ellencarrlee.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/bt-fig-three-pr-beak.jpg>)~~

Paint loss on top figure of Governor's Totem

Degree of paint loss, usually as an estimated percentage (ie "20% of the paint is lost from the 3rd figure")



~~(<http://ellencarrlee.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/bt-fig-four-pl-arm-face.jpg>)~~

Moderate green biological growth on figure four of Governor's Totem

Color and degree of soiling and biological growth (ie "localized green patches of biological growth" or "overall black biological growth" or "moss and lichens forming on the upper surfaces of the arms")
Look, too, for evidence of insect infestation.



(<http://ellencarrlee.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/picture-021.jpg>)

Carpenter ant infestation in a rotting totem pole

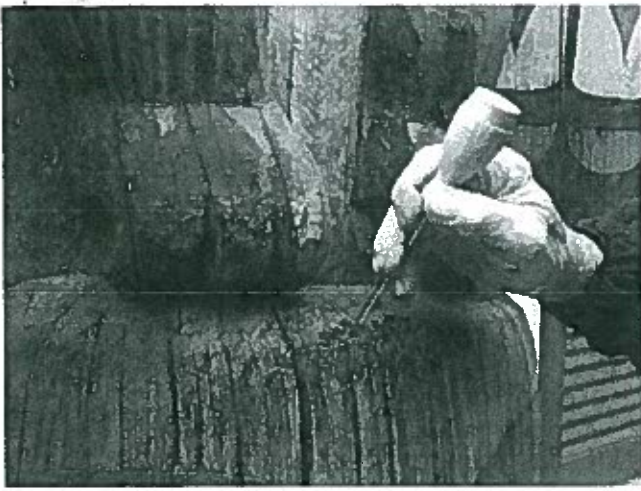
Some insects, like carpenter ants, will make their home in rotted wood.



(<http://ellencarrlee.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/bt-figure-crack.jpg>)

Ron Sheetz measures a large crack near top of Governor's Totem

Large Cracks. Totem poles always have cracks. I just keep an eye on the largest ones, and perhaps take a measurement or two of crack width. Photographs are a better way to keep track of overall cracks than written notes.



(<http://ellencarrlee.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/bt-fig-six-top-ron.jpg>)

Sound wood will not allow deep penetration of an icepick

Rotten areas. Using an icepick or a sharp steel awl, push the point into the wood and see how deep it goes. It is best to do this when the wood is damp anyway, as the hole will swell shut quickly. Sound wood will not easily allow penetration of the awl, while rotting wood will allow the tip to go in without much resistance. If the pole is directly in the ground or in concrete, the base may have rot. Sometimes the base is solid on the outer layer, but underneath there can be soft areas and loss. It is not uncommon for there to be rot beginning at ground level and extending down down 18-20" until the wood is more sound again, deep underground. Upper areas of the pole often have more rot than lower figures, and there is usually one side of the pole that suffers more intense weathering. If available, a Resist-o-graph is very helpful, especially around the base of a totem pole. The tool is a drill that measures resistance of the wood, indicating location and depth of decay. The drawback is the cost of the equipment, perhaps around \$12,000. However, sometimes one can be found or contracted through specialist companies or government agencies. I have heard of this tool being used on various Alaska projects by the National Parks Service and by the private company Extreme Access, an Oregon-based inspection and testing company.



~~(<http://ellencarlee.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/bt-fig-three-pr-wing.jpg>)~~

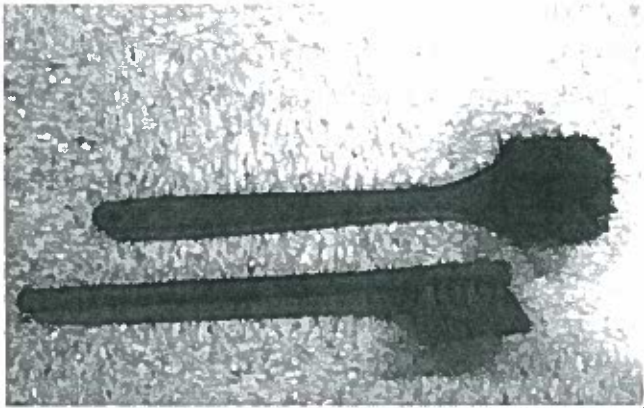
PR wing has more cracking



~~(<http://ellencarlee.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/bt-fig-three-pl-wing.jpg>)~~

PL wing has more biological growth

CLEANING:



(<http://ellencarrlee.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/palmyra-gong-brush2.jpg>)

Palmyra gong brushes with nice long handles

Ivory soap and warm water can be mixed in a bucket to make a cleaning solution. Use just enough soap to bring up bubbles when you swirl your hand in the water. Vegetable fiber or nylon scrubbing brushes work well, and a long handle is your friend. Smaller dish-washing sized nylon brushes are very helpful as well, to clean more detailed areas of carving, under noses and the like. Start from the top and work your way down, rinsing with a garden hose as you go. If biological growth is especially thick, you may find popsicle sticks and bamboo skewers useful to help scrape it off the surface. Remember not to use tools that are harder than wood or you may damage the pole. Occasionally, totem poles may have grass or small trees growing from them. In those situations, it is probably better to cut off the growth flush with the wood, since pulling out big roots can cause more damage and create empty spaces for water to pool.

RESTORATION: It is best to leave your cracks open (NO WOOD SPLINES), as this allows the water to flow out without getting trapped inside, and allows air circulation for the wood to dry out when it is not raining. Putting a sliver of wood into a crack usually creates a problem of holding moisture in the totem pole. Any attempt to fill the void eventually leads to a situation that encourages moisture retention in the joint between the wood and the fill as the two separate over time. This moisture retention will promote further decay. Cracks that develop in the pole surface due to the

drying/shrinking of the pole over time should also be left open and not filled. Poles carved in the round usually have more cracking naturally than poles that have been hollowed out a bit in back. **Epoxy:** Sometimes small pieces of wood are in danger of falling off and need to be adhered in place, as well as larger segments such as wings and beaks with loose mortise and tenon joints. Epoxy is typically used in this instance, but epoxy repairs are considered a specialist treatment. Judgment and experience are needed to determine when an epoxy repair is need and will contribute to the ongoing stability of a pole, since poorly executed repairs can cause more problems and be aesthetically disfiguring. Epoxy repairs are difficult to reverse without harming the wood, and skill and experience are required to select and apply epoxies, bulking agents, and tinting products. Most of epoxy work is generally done when a pole is taken down for extensive treatment. You can still do normal cleaning, biocide, and water repellent application for maintenance if you are not prepared to do more advanced restoration work like epoxy repairs, re-carving, and re-painting. **Painting and Carving:** If repainting or re-carving is to be done, the current preservation ethics require the work to be done by the appropriate Native carvers. Factors to be considered are if the original carver is alive, if living members of his family are carvers or perhaps other people he has trained, if a new carver is artistically mature and can match the quality of the pole, and issues of clan and moiety. Local museums, tribal organizations, or historical societies may have useful information. Newspaper articles about the original installation of the pole usually list the name of the carver, too. Traditionally, the oldest poles had little or no painted surfaces. 20th century carving styles and maintenance theories have seen periods where entire poles were painted. In general, paint has a tendency to trap moisture underneath and hasten the degradation of the wood, so less paint is better from a preservation standpoint. Less paint on a pole also means better penetration of the borates and water repellent, thus easier maintenance. However, occasionally re-painting is desired. In that case, borates should be applied FIRST and allowed to soak in and dry, followed by painting and then a final coat of water repellent. (The paint will not adhere well to the water repellent.)

PROTECTION:

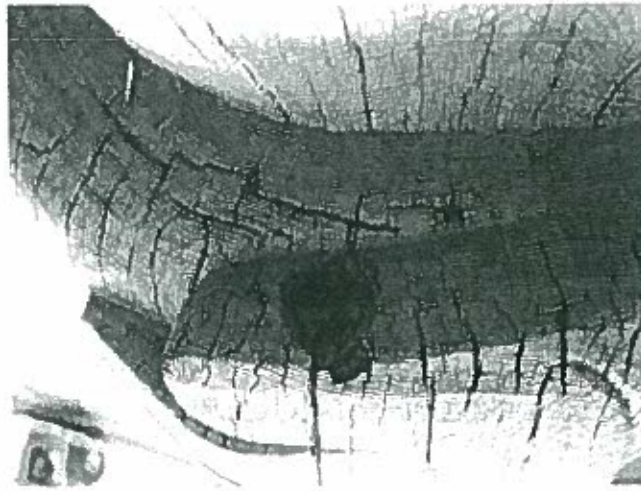


(<http://ellencarlee.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/applying2-people.jpg>)

Borate application goes much better with two people

Biocide: Bora-Care is a brand name of a water-soluble solution of sodium borates in polyethylene glycol.

<http://www.nisuscorp.com/portal/page/portal/Nisus/categories/homeowners/products/boraCare>
(<http://www.nisuscorp.com/portal/page/portal/Nisus/categories/homeowners/products/boraCare>) It will not penetrate well where there is paint, and penetrates best at endgrain areas.



(<http://ellencarrlee.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/endgrainarms.jpg>)

Borates will soak in readily in endgrain areas like tops of these arms. Apply until it no longer soaks in.

In larger amounts it can kill surrounding plantings and grass, which should be tarped when it is used.



(<http://ellencarrlee.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/cover-shrubs.jpg>)

Cover surrounding foliage for application of both borates and water repellent.

It provides residual protection against biological growth, but must be used in conjunction with a water repellent, or it will be leached out prematurely by the rain. As a borate salt, it is hygroscopic and will travel within the pole, continually attracted to water (ie areas of prospective rot) and provide ongoing protection. The product works against insects by interrupting the digestion of nutrients, starving them

to death. Bora-care mixes one-to-one with water for application, and the mixing goes much better with warm water. 1 ½ gallons of Bora Care (mixed with equal amount warm water) is enough for a typical 30-foot pole.



(<http://ellencarrlee.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/mix-borates.jpg>)

Ron told me he learned the strainer trick the hard way once...

Use a 6" metal strainer over the opening of the garden sprayer when pouring the mixed borates as a precaution against the sprayer getting clogged. A 2-gallon hand-pump garden sprayer helps greatly in application: you avoid the mess of a sloppy bucket, can spray deep into cracks and endgrain, can reach around the back of the pole more easily, and access hard-to-reach areas like wings. Working with two people is much easier than working alone, as one person can spray and the other can back-brush for improved penetration. Bora-Care can be applied while totem pole is still wet from washing to aid in the penetration of the borates. Wearing gloves helps keep your hands clean, as the Bora Care is rather sticky. Borates are also available in a solid stick as "Impel Rods." These are useful for placing inside big voids or cracks, or under caps and in loose mortise and tenon joints before re-adhering. They are a little larger in size than a stick of chalk, and can last around 10 years. You would not want to drill any new holes for putting in the rods, as this is counter to conservation ethics of preserving the original material of the totem pole. An exception may be at the base or below ground of buried totems. Washing and applying borates is usually a good day's worth of work.



(<http://ellencarlee.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/curator-addison-field-applying-bora-care.jpg>)

Juneau Douglas City Museum Curator of Collections Addison Field applying BoraCare to the Four Story Totem pole 84.19.001

Water repellent: A quality water repellent should be applied after the wood dries from the application of the Bora-Care. It is best to have a drying day in between if possible. Paraffin-oil based products are desirable, and your water repellent should be breathable and non-film forming. UV inhibitors and fungicides are also good ingredients. The totem poles in Southeast Alaska are most frequently protected with X-100 Natural Seal Wood Preservative. <http://www.abrp.com/pdf-files/spec/WOOD%20PRESERVE%20SPEC.pdf> (<http://www.abrp.com/pdf-files/spec/WOOD%20PRESERVE%20SPEC.pdf>) This product is also used by the National Parks Service and Parks Canada.



(<http://ellencarlee.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/during-x100-application1.jpg>)

Back-brushing aids in penetration and catches drips, too

Water repellent is oily and greasy, you'll want to wear old clothes, gloves etc and protect surrounding foliage. Put plastic carefully around the bottom to collect drips, you may even be able to re-use what pools on the plastic when you get to the bottom of the pole (sop it up off the tarp with a brush and apply to the bottom areas of the pole.)

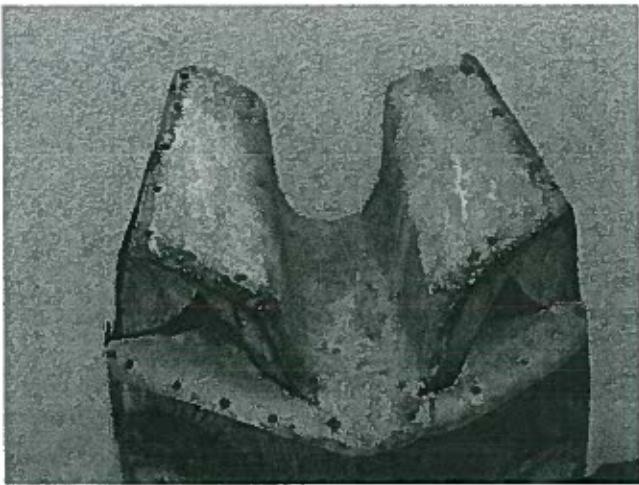


(<http://ellencarlee.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/plastic-for-x100.jpg>)

Plastic tarping to protect foliage and catch drips

Apply repellent slowly with the sprayer, starting at the top and working your way down, back brushing and preventing excess dripping and mess as much as possible. The need for the 2-gallon garden sprayer and the use of two people is the same as for the borate application. Approximately two gallons of X-100 water repellent is adequate for a typical 30-foot pole.

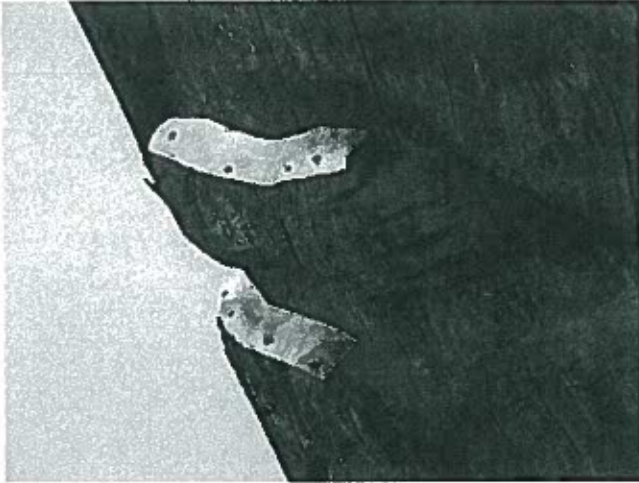
Caps: Custom-fabricated metal caps are used to prevent penetration of water into the end grain of the wood, particularly on the top of the pole and upper surfaces of beaks and arms on the higher figures of a totem pole. Done well, these are almost invisible from the ground.



(<http://ellencarlee.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/bt-figure-one-cap.jpg>)

Lead cap on top figure of Governor's Totem

Capping used to be controversial, because some people were concerned that water would get trapped underneath and cause accelerated rot. But Ron Sheetz removed some old CCC-era lead caps from poles in Sitka Historical Park and found that they were in much better condition than the poles that were not capped. For one in particular, the Twin Village Watchman (it was too tall for a lift so he had to go up in a crane with a cage!) the cap had blown halfway off and you could compare the two halves. The half that was still capped was much better, looking almost like new wood. The uncovered side was black and cracked and starting to rot. If the cap covers the end grain fully and allows for runoff, you won't trap moisture underneath.



~~(<http://ellencarrlee.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/bt-fig-two-lead-caps.jpg>)~~

Lead caps protect exposed endgrain.

Sheet lead works the best, since it can be cut and conformed to the surface easily with pressure from the hands and the careful use of a hammer or rubber mallet to gently trace over the three-dimensional carved shapes. Copper sheeting can also be used, but must be cut and lapped, so it is not as easy to form to the complex shapes of the carved surface. Thinner lead is better. Ron Sheetz has been using 1/16" lead or less...the thinner the better. 1/32 would be ideal, but it can be hard to find thin lead. Ideally, you would roll it down in a roller (such as at a machine shop,) but you can't always find one in the community where you're working. The lead turns a nice gray within a couple of days and really blends well with the weathered color of the pole. It becomes nearly invisible.



~~(<http://ellencarrlee.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/cap.jpg>)~~

Copper eventually darkens to an unobstrusive color, too, but it takes much longer, and there is always the concern of greenish or grayish copper stain streaks.



(<http://ellencarlee.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/lead-cap-nails.jpg>)

Ron Sheetz replacing loose nails that were too short with longer ones.

Stainless steel, copper, or galvanized nails should be used to attach the caps. Length of nail depends on the quality of the wood. Need to go deep enough to bite into solid wood and not work loose. If nails work loose, don't just tap them back in. There's a reason they have pulled out, perhaps were not long enough. Select longer nails, perhaps with rough edges like textured stainless steel nails, and they will have a better bite.

MOUNTING



(http://ellencarlee.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/img_1834.jpg)

Totem poles directly in the ground can suffer from rot and insect infestation

Poles mounted directly in the ground or in concrete inevitably develop rot at the base in the wet climate of Southeast Alaska. Putting a pole directly in the ground was the traditional way to display a pole, but when those poles deteriorated, the tradition was to have them re-carved or replaced. There is often a desire today to preserve poles in the outdoor environment as outdoor sculptures by known artists, objects in museum collections, or significant municipal investments in public art. Many of these poles today are mounted on a metal support attached to a concrete base.



(<http://ellencarlee.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/poleatmount03.jpg>)

Mount for Hasrnessing the Atom pole, Juneau Douglas City Museum collection 84.18.001

The metal support is engineered to extend up approximately 1/3 of the total pole height. This distance could be greater if good solid wood is not available within that length of the pole. Holes are drilled through the front of the pole, bolts extend into the metal support and the bolt holes are recessed and plugged.



(<http://ellencarrlee.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/bt-below-2.jpg>)

Shelf below elevates pole above soil and helps support its weight

The weight of the pole should also be supported at the base by a small shelf of metal attached to the strong back. Bolts go up into the bottom of the pole through that shelf. This prevents the bolts in back from holding the entire weight of the pole. Elevating the pole's base several inches above ground level will keep the pole out of the soil and prevent water seeping up into the base. The metal support mechanism up the back of the pole must have strong underground footings and is usually itself mounted in concrete underground. Examples of poles mounted with metal support poles are at the governor's mansion in Juneau, Totem Bight in Ketchikan, inside Juneau-Douglas High School, and the Juneau-Douglas City Museum.

NEXT STEPS

- The pole will look a little darker and the colors more saturated for a few weeks following application of borates and water repellent. The grain pattern will also be more visible for a while. This is particularly true while the oil-based water repellent is drying. In a few weeks, these temporary changes will fade and the pole will be back to its natural look.
- Inspect annually for damage, double check condition against your notes and photos
- When water no longer beads up, re-apply Bora-Care (will need about a gallon and a half) and the water repellent (1-2 gallons)
- If you need more advanced treatments (re-carving or painting, epoxy work, new mounting etc) start thinking about fundraising and identifying companies or volunteers to donate time and services.
- Performing preservation treatment will definitely help prolong the life of a totem, but to really preserve a totem, it will have to be placed indoors.

SUPPLIES LIST:



(<http://ellencarrlee.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/totem-supplies.jpg>)

Some totem pole maintenance supplies on hand at the Alaska State Museum

~~Lift~~-Electric is nice because noise is tedious

~~Safety Harness~~ If not for preserving your life than for avoiding a personal fine

~~Ice pick or awl~~ for probing wood to find areas of rot and estimate degree of deterioration

~~Ivory Soap~~ or other mild soap without dyes or fragrances

~~Warm water~~ for mixing and cleaning up Bora-Care

~~Hose~~ for washing (hose bib to open valve)

~~Long handled brushes~~ Palmyra gong plant fiber bristles are nice

~~Short handled nylon bristle brushes~~ (dish and toothbrush sized)

~~2-gallon garden sprayer~~ hand pump sprayer (to apply Bora-care and X-100)

~~Plastic putty knives~~ to scrape off thick biological growth

~~Popsicle sticks~~ to scrape off thick biological growth

~~Bamboo skewers~~ to scrape off thick biological growth

~~6" wire Strainer~~ to pour mixed Bora-Care into the sprayer and avoid clogs

~~Buckets~~ two clean 5 gallon buckets for mixing, wash water etc

~~1-gallon buckets.~~ The kind with measurements on the side are nice.

~~Tarps~~ to protect surrounding foliage and ground

~~Gloves~~ latex or nitrile, keep hands clean, rubber gloves can be nice, but less dexterity

~~Paper towels~~ Wipe up overspill of borates and water repellent

~~Bora-Care~~ Biocide containing disodium octaborate tetrahydrate and ethylene glycol, made by Nisus corporation. Approximately \$100 per gallon now, available from Wood Care Systems.

~~Impel Reds~~, box of 12 (1" x ½" for laying in open cavities to release borates slowly as needed)

~~X-100 Natural Seal Wood Preservative.~~ Paraffin oil-based water repellent.

This entry was posted on Wednesday, August 18th, 2010 at 10:46 am and is filed under ~~PROJECTS & IDEAS~~. You can follow any responses to this entry through the ~~RSS 2.0~~ feed. You can ~~leave a response~~, or ~~trackback~~ from your own site.

13 Responses to *Totem Pole Maintenance*

Elaine says:

~~November 4, 2010 at 12:19 pm~~

Hi: Thank you for your excellent, thorough, interesting site about the maintenance of totem poles.

I have a 6-foot tall authentic Alaska totem pole that

has been outside my parents' house in the Southern California desert for 35 years now. It's in good shape, except that the colors are fading. An acquaintance says there's something I can coat it with so that the colors do not further fade, but he cannot remember the name of the product. Do you have any ideas? Thank you so much in advance for any help you can provide.

ellencarrlee says:

~~November 5, 2010 at 8:24 am~~

I'm guessing that your friend means applying a coating that has an ingredient to filter ultraviolet light. I think the ingredient probably does more to prolong the life of the coating than to protect your paint from further light fading. Applying a coating (such as a clear water repellent) may saturate the surface and make the colors look a little more vivid, at least until the coating weathers a bit. But the UV filtering won't do much to prevent fading of colors. I created a posting for you in order to illustrate this point: ~~<http://ellencarrlee.wordpress.com/2010/11/05/light-fading-from-uv/>~~ (Hope that link works) Chances are, most of the fading that is going to happen has already happened.

Ron R. says:

~~November 21, 2010 at 7:23 pm~~

Ellencarrlee, you do great work!!!! Those totems are pretty tall. I need your help!

I had a 6 1/2' tiki carved out of a palm tree about 10 years ago. I painted the outside with acrylic paints and set it next to my pool right on the ground (not a good idea). The acrylic paints have held well and protected the tiki.

We've experienced a few bad hurricanes and during the last one I decided to set it down to avoid it from toppling over and becoming damaged. The tiki had adhered itself to the ground and was rooted. I pulled it out and set it on dry ground. The base is now hollow along the inside about 12" up from the bottom. I don't want to cut the lower 12" of the tiki because it has feet and a nice base on the outside. I know if I stand it up it will fall over.

I was thinking about filling the bottom with wood filler, plaster of paris, cement or some other hard material. The hollow area is pretty big so I thought adding some sealer type foam in the upper 4" to 5" might be okay. I would set the tiki upside-down and fill it in slowly allowing gravity to get the filler material deep into the tiki's cavity. I would do about 1"-3" every few days to allow the filler to dry. I want to fill the cavity with a material that won't expand too much.

After repairing the base I would like to set it on a concrete base in an area that can keep it dry and off the wet, humid ground.

How can I save my tiki? I need your expert help please.

Best regards,

Ron R.
Houston, TX

ellencarrlee says:

~~November 24, 2010 at 4:22 pm~~

Hard to tell what is the right solution for you without seeing an image or two. You could email them to me if you like: juneauellen (at gmail dot com). You are right to be cautious in putting a filler inside, especially something like concrete. Without seeing your sculpture, I think perhaps you might consider a strongback. That is, something like a metal or wooden post of some kind that would be mounted in the ground and give support for the sculpture, which could be bolted to it. I'm intending to write a posting soon on mounting methods for totem poles, as the questions comes up frequently here in Alaska.

Elaine says:

~~December 9, 2010 at 1:31 pm~~

Ellen—awesome visual demonstration you posted Nov. 5 on fading from UV exposure. Thank you. Back to my Nov. 4 question—since you believe most of the fading has already occurred, and since rain and moisture are not a problem for my totem in the desert, would you suggest simply leaving the totem alone and not applying any kind of protective coating? Thanks again!

Elaine says:

~~December 9, 2010 at 2:03 pm~~

One more quick question—what about applying Thompson’s Water Seal on my totem? Thanks

ellencarrlee says:

~~December 13, 2010 at 11:36 am~~

If you are in the southern California desert, I am not sure what putting a water repellent on the wood would gain you. Here in the Tongass Rainforest, a water repellent is a crucial part of maintenance. I don’t think it would do much to lengthen the life of a pole in the desert. My inclination is to not treat the wood if you don’t have to.

Elaine says:

~~December 13, 2010 at 12:54 pm~~

Okay, Carlee. Based on your expert advice, I’m going to leave my beautiful totem pole the way its been its

entire life—au naturel. It faces East, and receives primarily indirect light and virtually no moisture, so I’m going to trust that it will survive several more years and continue to remind me every day of my five glorious years living in Alaska. Thank you for providing an invaluable service with your work and website.

Heather morrison says:

~~September 11, 2011 at 4:45 am~~

Hello!

Our Scout Group in Banchory Scotland have had a Totem carved & will soon be putting it in situ – we would value some advice on the best method – it is 6meters high

Thank you in anticipation

ellencarrlee says:

~~September 30, 2011 at 3:36 pm~~

For most totem poles, using a supplementary strongback is the method with the most longevity. Putting the pole directly in the ground, which is the traditional method in its cultural context, results in problems around the base over time. Likewise mounting it in concrete. I’m working on a posting regarding ways poles have been erected, with images of various mounts. Let me know if you need me to send you some images sooner.

Kelly McHugh says:

~~October 21, 2011 at 6:47 am~~

This is so great Ellen. Thanks for your excellent work!!

Tim says:

~~December 29, 2011 at 4:31 pm~~

Hi Ellen, I am also with a scout troop in Pa and we are in the planning stages of designing a 20’ totem. How long do you have to wait to paint and waterproof the tree? We will be cutting the tree down in April. Thanks!

ellencarrlee says:

December 30, 2011 at 11:26 am

My area of expertise is the care of artifacts that already exist, and not the manufacture of new objects. There are folks out there whose expertise is the carving of new totem poles, such as the following Native folks:

<http://www.alaskaindianarts.com/>

<http://www.haroldalfred.com/Totem%20Poles.html>

<http://www.robertdavidson.ca/>

There is quite a lively conversation among folks from many walks of life regarding cultural appropriation, and here's a link to a blog posting for a recent book about totem poles and how they are thought about today

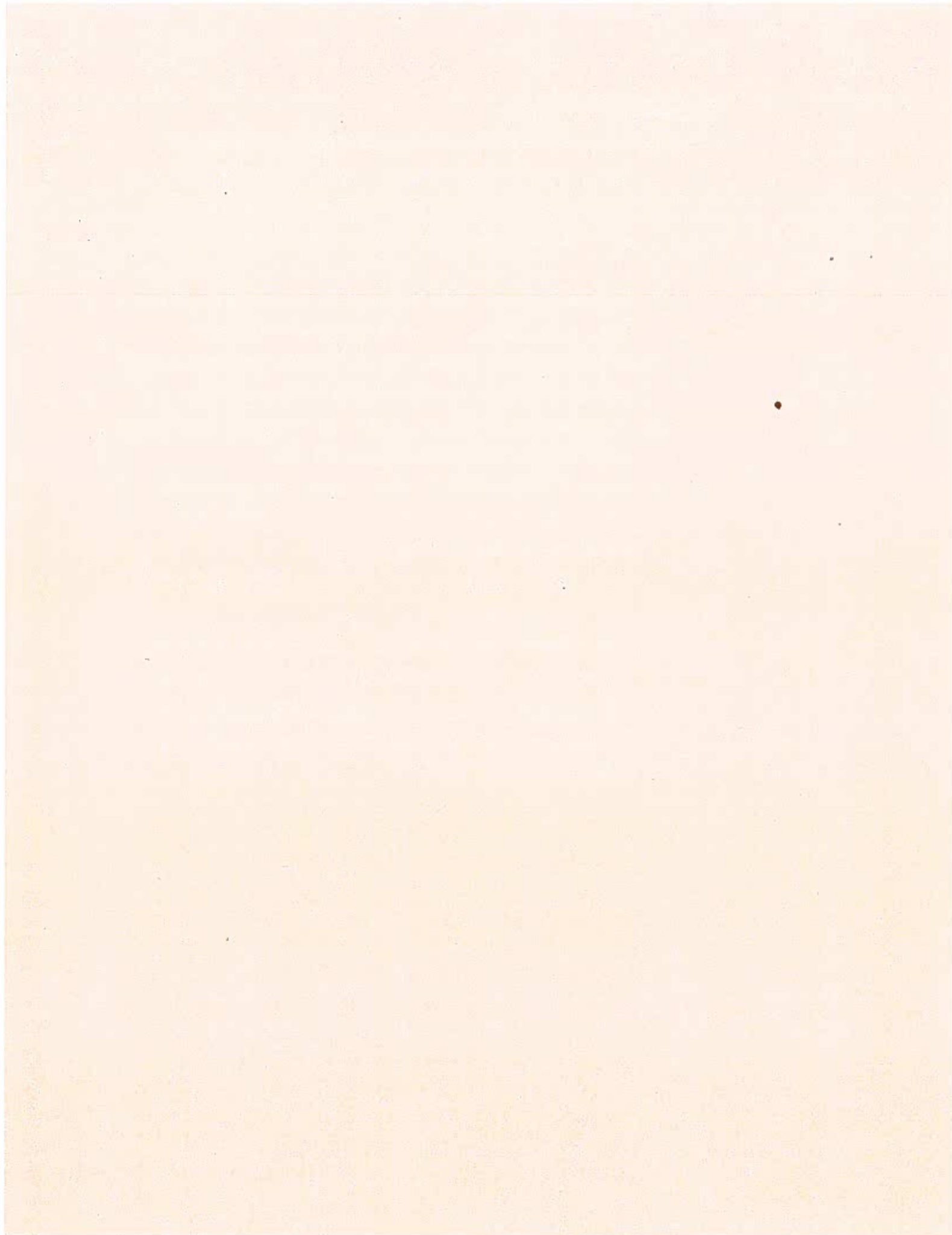
http://blogs.nyu.edu/projects/materialworld/2010/10/the_totem_pole_material_transf.html

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ii. Local opinion/articles

1. Kamb, Lewis "What to do with rotten, 110-year-old Tacoma Totem Pole" Tacoma News Tribune May 2, 2013
2. Kamb, Lewis "Let Tacoma Totem Pole decay publicly committee says", Tacoma News Tribune , May 17, 2013
3. Callaghan, Peter "Tacoma's totem: Sometimes a pole is just a pole" Tacoma News Tribune, May 19, 2013
4. Callaghan, Peter "When Tacoma's totem pole welcomed a president" Tacoma News Tribune, May 23, 2013
5. Callaghan, Peter "Letting totem rot is not the only Native way" Tacoma News Tribune, June 2, 2013
6. Brown, Candace "To let it rot or not – Tacoma totem pole controversy nearly ignores presidential history" Good Life Northwest, May 21, 2013
www.goodlifeww.blogspot.com/2013/05/to-let-it-rot-or-not-tacoma-totem.html
7. Kelley, Peter "1909 exhibition's darker side explored in the Burke's 'A-Y-P: Indigenous Voices Reply', May, 28, 2009 www.washington.edu/news/2009/05/28/1909-exhibitions-darker-side-explored-in-the-burkes-a-y-p-indigenous-voices-reply



What to do with rotten, 110-year-old Tacoma Totem Pole?

LEWIS KAMB

LAST UPDATED: MAY 2ND, 2013 06:49 AM (PDT)

It has towered over the bluffs of downtown Tacoma for more than a century, but now a prominent piece of Northwest Indian art is showing severe signs of decay and faces an uncertain future.

Age, rot and insects have combined to weaken the carved cedar log known simply as the "Tacoma Totem Pole" – a city-owned attraction some 8½ stories tall that adorns Fireman's Park at 9th and A streets.

Commissioned by civic boosters in 1903 and subjectively hailed as the "largest totem pole in the world," the artwork was meant as a finger in the eye of the city's bigger rival to the north.

But with its physical decline in recent years, the designated historic landmark now poses safety hazards to the public, city officials say.

"The pole itself is 110 years old, so it's got issues," said Reuben McKnight, Tacoma's historic preservation officer. "But recently we discovered that there's a bigger concern with stability than previously thought."

Last month, after inspectors probed the base of the old pole and found it rotting, public works officials scrambled to shore it up.

"We found a contractor with a 15-foot pole holder to brace it in time for the Daffodil Parade," said Darius Thompson, an associate city engineer. "That was a short-term fix."

A more thorough inspection by PCS Structural Solutions determined a cross section of the pole "has been compromised by at least 50 percent" in some spots, an April 15 memo to the city says. The engineers also found the pole falls well below city wind load standards, appears seismically unstable and generally is wet, soft and deteriorating.

"(T)he pole should be considered unreliable or unstable and a falling hazard," the memo concluded. "We recommend that the pole be lowered to the ground or shored as a precaution."

The city has since further buttressed the roughly 83-foot pole by collaring it about 15 feet up and bracing it with steel rods anchored in concrete. The pole is also fenced off to keep the public at bay. In all, the work has cost about \$10,000, city officials said.

With it temporarily stabilized, public works officials are now searching for a permanent solution.

"We want to install a brace system to keep it up for 20-plus more years," Thompson told the city's Landmarks Preservation Commission last week.

But some commissioners questioned whether removing the pole might be a better answer – if not for safety and preservation reasons, out of cultural sensitivity.

Edward Echtle, a historian who serves as the commission's vice chair, noted that based on the city's historic records, the pole was commissioned but secretly carved – potentially a sign that its carvers used taboo iconography.

Noting specific totem images "belong" to certain Native American families, Echtle said Tacoma's pole actually could be displaying stolen symbolism.

"Some people might see it as the city of Tacoma owns the log," he said, "but the tribe owns the images."

He suggested the city consult with the University of Washington's Burke Museum or the University of British Columbia's Museum of Anthropology to try to determine which tribe might be tied to the artwork.

"Then we can find out what they want us to do with it," Echtle added.

And that's what the city now intends to do, McKnight said. Among other consultation, city officials last week requested Shaun Peterson, a Puyallup Indian who carved the city's "welcome figure" in Tollefson Plaza, to help research the pole's origins.

"The commission gave us some direction to do some further cultural research," McKnight said. "We really don't know much about the carvings at all."

What is known about the pole largely comes from a 1975 narrative written by Washington State Historical Society archivist Caroline Gallacci, who prepared its application for city landmark status, granted later that year.

By Gallacci's account, Tacoma booster Chester Thorne and explorer William Sheard commissioned the artwork for \$3,000, hiring natives either from British Columbia or Alaska (records conflict on this point) to carve a massive cedar pole prepared by the St. Paul & Tacoma Lumber Company.

Four years earlier, Seattle civic leaders erected in Pioneer Square a 60-foot-tall totem pole stolen from a tribal village in Alaska. Tacoma's boosters, who'd "become irritated by articles describing Seattle's Totem Pole," sought to out-do their Seattle counterparts by commissioning a taller, legally obtained pole.

According to Gallacci, the Indian carvers sculpted the pole at Quartermaster Harbor on Vashon Island before Thorne and Sheard raised it publicly — a day before President Theodore Roosevelt visited town in May 1903. With a wolf at its foot and an eagle at its crown — and six animal or half-human icons carved in between — the pole stood initially at 10th and A Streets, near Sheard's curio shop and the storied Tacoma Hotel.

"The pole immediately became one of the major tourist attractions to the city," Gallacci wrote.

Fifty years later, the pole was moved a block north on A Street to Fireman's Park, where it has since undergone several repaintings and restorations. A plaque at its foot heralds it as the world's largest, though at least a half dozen taller poles can be quickly found through a basic Internet search.

"Sometimes, there was hyperbole in the descriptions of old tourist attractions," McKnight said.

But what's unquestionable is the pole's worsening condition. In recent months, carpenter ants infested it, and dry rot now runs at least 15 feet up its base, if not higher, Thompson said.

Peterson, the Puyallup carver, noted such poles aren't endemic of Washington's Coast Salish tribes, but traditional of Alaska and British Columbia natives. His research so far leads him to believe Tacoma's pole was the work of Alaskan-based carvers, possibly Tlingits using general Haida motifs.

"In those territories, it's sort of understood that poles have a lifespan," Peterson added. "They're left to return to the earth and the idea is to replace them."

In 2010, after conservators made a similarly grim structural assessment of the famed 70-year-old pole on the Washington State Capitol grounds carved by the late Snohomish Chief William Shelton, officials decided its time had come. The pole was removed, cut into six sections and is stored in the now-defunct Capitol greenhouse.

"We're not sure what its future is," said Marygrace Jennings, cultural resources manager of the state Capitol campus. "The current task is to get it stored in a climate-controlled facility to prevent any further deterioration, if possible."

As for Tacoma's pole, once all of the consultation and research has concluded, the Landmarks Commission will decide its fate.

"For now, it's safe, and the city is working on finding a permanent solution for stabilizing it," McKnight said. "But stabilizing the pole might not be the appropriate action."

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Let Tacoma Totem Pole decay publicly, committee says

LEWIS KAMB

LAST UPDATED: MAY 17TH, 2013 10:38 AM (PDT)

If a makeshift committee has its way, a historic but increasingly unstable totem pole that has stood in downtown Tacoma for more than a century would be taken down and left to decay publicly as a piece of the city's "living history."

No formal decision has been made about the pole, but an ad hoc working group assigned to examine what to do with the rotting artifact has tentatively recommended it be removed from Fireman's Park at 9th and A streets and "laid to rest" elsewhere.

"I think there's something very beautiful about the idea of this pole laying in the ground, decaying and becoming part of the earth again," JD Elquist, a member of the group, recently told the city's Landmarks Preservation Commission.

The idea, Elquist said, is to find a space for the pole — possibly in a local park — for a public exhibit with interpretive signs that would tell "the whole complete history of this pole as it's basically laid to rest."

ART AND A LANDMARK

The group's unofficial recommendation — made after consultation with an Alaskan Native cultural institution and a local Puyallup Indian woodcarver — has set into motion a formal process for both the city's landmarks commission and arts commission, each of which holds some authority over the pole.

Designated as a city landmark in 1975, the 110-year-old totem pole also has long been a part of the city's municipal art collection, putting it under an unusual dual jurisdiction of both commissions.

Reuben McKnight, Tacoma's historic preservation officer, said he is now working on a staff report to present to the landmarks commission for its June 12 meeting. The report will include historical and cultural context about the pole, as well as cost estimates for bracing it to keep it in place and for removing it for a public exhibit elsewhere. It also likely will relay the working group's recommendation, he said.

Meantime, the arts commission this week approved convening a "de-accession committee" to consider whether to remove the pole from Tacoma's art collection — a formal step that might need to be taken to eventually transfer the pole's ownership and allow it to be displayed in a public park, city arts administrator Amy McBride said. A meeting date has yet to be set but likely will occur before June 10, McBride said.

'NOT THE END'

Both McKnight and McBride stressed that a final decision on the pole's future has not been made and won't be without public input.

"It's not the end of the discussion at all," McKnight said.

The dilemma of what to do with the aging 83-foot tall totem pole intensified last month, after structural engineers probed a cross-section and found it "compromised by at least 50 percent," according to an engineer's report to the city.

PCS Structural Solutions also concluded the pole should be considered “a falling hazard” and recommended it be “lowered to the ground or shored as a precaution.”

City engineers have since fenced off the pole and temporarily braced it with a steel collar and rods anchored to concrete blocks. In all, the pole’s assessment and shoring so far has cost the city about \$10,000, officials have said.

Last month, when a city engineer reported to the landmarks commission that his team was seeking to find a more permanent bracing solution to keep the pole up another 20 years or longer, several commissioners questioned whether that was the appropriate action. The panel directed McKnight to conduct further cultural research on the pole.

A WORKING GROUP

McKnight and McBride formed the working group, which included landmarks commission vice chair Ed Echtle and Elquist, who sits on both the landmarks and arts commission. The members — except for Echtle — held what Elquist described as an “impromptu” meeting last week, apparently without public notice.

Members also consulted with city public works staff and Shaun Peterson, a Puyallup tribal member who carved the Welcome Figure that now stands near Tollefson Plaza.

Peterson, who has noted totem poles aren’t endemic of Washington’s Coast Salish tribes, recently told The News Tribune that he believes the pole is the work of Alaska’s Tlingit carvers who borrowed iconic motifs from the British Columbia-based Haida tribe.

“In those territories, it’s sort of understood that poles have a lifespan,” Peterson added. “They’re left to return to the earth and the idea is to replace them.”

‘LET IT GO’

That point was reiterated to Elquist, who consulted with the Sealaska Heritage Institute, a nonprofit Native organization in Juneau charged with perpetuating Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian tribal cultures.

“In an Alaskan village what will happen is that a pole will just fall to pieces there, or if it becomes a hazard, they will take it down, take it to the hillside, lay it down in the ground and let it go,” Elquist said.

According to city historical records, Tacoma boosters Chester Thome and William Sheard commissioned the pole for \$3,000, hiring two Alaskan or British Columbian Natives to carve it from a massive cedar log donated by the St. Paul & Tacoma Lumber Company.

Initially erected in May 1903 near the Tacoma Hotel at 10th and A streets, the eight-story artwork was subjectively hailed as “the largest totem pole in the world” — a direct jab at Seattle and its 60-foot tall totem pole stolen from an Alaskan village and erected in Pioneer Square in 1899.

The Tacoma Totem Pole, as its known, immediately became an attraction that drew tourists and helped establish the city as a gateway for the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition in 1909.

‘A STRONG ARGUMENT’

“It’s all part of a pretty big story,” McKnight said. “...(There’s) really an opportunity here to sort of heighten the awareness of Tacoma citizens about this story and how it fits in, so it’s not just a totem pole sitting in a park.”

Before coming up with its recommendation, the working group discussed other options, including moving the pole to a museum. But group members concluded the pole’s carving “wasn’t of museum quality,” Elquist said.

McBride added that, because the pole has been infested with carpenter ants, it likely would need to be frozen for several months before it could be placed indoors.

Landmarks commissioner Daniel Rahe, who works for an engineering firm, noted that from a structural perspective, "there are ways to preserve the thing in place.

"So I think we have to have a strong argument ... to pursue the more culturally respectful approach," he said.

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Tacoma's totem: Sometimes a pole is just a pole

PETER CALLAGHAN

LAST UPDATED: MAY 19TH, 2013 12:30 AM (PDT)

We might be overthinking this whole thing about what to do with Tacoma's 110-year-old totem pole.

It's good, of course, that the city's volunteer landmarks and arts commissions are analyzing how to respond to news that the eight-story pole suffers from rot and insect infestation. They have dual jurisdiction because it is both a protected landmark and part of the city's art collection.

But they so far seem to be approaching it from an overly self-conscious viewpoint that is equal parts political correctness and cultural correctness. Based on stories written by our city government reporter, Lewis Kamb, the current sentiment is leaning toward removing the pole from Fireman's Park on the edge of downtown and laying it to rest in some park where it can decompose in peace.

"I think there's something very beautiful about the idea of the pole laying in the ground decaying and becoming part of the earth again," said Landmarks Commissioner JD Elquist.

That might be appropriate, even beautiful, for something that is a sacred object, something that is legitimately a Native American artifact. That reportedly is what tribes in Alaska and southwestern Canada would do with similar poles.

But we'd be better off, and likely make better decisions, if we stopped seeing the pole for what it isn't and understood it for what it is. This isn't art or a Native American artifact. It's kitsch. It's a fabulous illustration of turn-of-the-century Western American boosterism.

"It is an artifact of the city's cultural and commercial history," said David Nicandri, the former director of the Washington State Historical Society. "It is an example of the city's outlook on itself and its rivalry with another city at a time when the outcome of that rivalry was still in doubt."

It started in 1899 when Seattle stole a 60-foot totem from an Alaskan native village and placed it in its commercial core. Tacoma boosters — led by the biggest of big-businessmen, Chester Thorne — hoping to one-up the city's rival, decided to act. A cedar tree donated by the St. Paul & Tacoma Lumber Co. was sent to Quartermaster Harbor where two Native American carvers created sections based on Haida and Tlingit iconography.

It was then erected in front of the jewel of downtown, The Tacoma Hotel, just in time for the visit of then-President Teddy Roosevelt.

Was it meant to be a sacred place for tribal ceremonies? Of course not. It was meant to be a proclamation that Tacoma was, in fact, the City of Destiny. And locals were proud of it. Photos in the Tacoma Library's Northwest Room collection show Daffodil Festival princesses, traveling troubadours and Shriners in their parade cars all posing beneath the pole. In 1948, Tacoma steelworkers put up a scaffold so the Painters Union could repaint the pole one Sunday to the accompaniment of a band of union musicians.

Does its commercial and pedestrian nature make it unworthy of landmark status? Of course not. It is exactly the kind of item that helps tell a story about the town's early aspirations. It might not belong in the city's art collection, but it certainly must remain on its historic register.

Come on, have some fun. Don't be embarrassed to advocate spending a few thousand dollars to shore it up and keep it where it is (especially since taking it down, securing a place for it to "return to the earth" and installing interpretive displays will probably cost as much if not more).

If it can't be kept standing, then move it indoors where it can be anchored to a wall or other structure. Seattle's history museum is fine with displaying pop culture items like Chief Skookum, the cigar store Indian that spent much of its life in front of a Tacoma tobacco store, and a stuffed gorilla named Bobo because both help tell a story.

But if Tacoma officials can't be comfortable with their own piece of kitschy vernacular folk art, give it to someone who gets it. Maybe McMenamins. Maybe the new Bass Pro Shops store.

When I first told Nicandri about the notion of laying it somewhere to decompose, he was skeptical but scholarly.

"That's kind of noble but overly sentimental given the commercial origins of the piece." But later, when he got warmed up, he was more blunt.

"Laying it in the woods somewhere, quite honestly, I consider that stupid. And you can quote me."

So I did.

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PETER CALLAGHAN

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When Tacoma's totem pole welcomed a president

Unlike some bigger cities, Tacoma isn't so jaded — or hyperpolitical — that it's afraid to treat a visit by a president of the United States as a big deal.

PETER CALLAGHAN, STAFF WRITER

Published: May 23, 2013 at 12:05 a.m. PDT

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Unlike some bigger cities, Tacoma isn't so jaded — or hyperpolitical — that it's afraid to treat a visit by a president of the United States as a big deal.

Partly, of course, because they're relatively rare. Starting in 1880 with Rutherford Hayes, only 14 incumbent presidents have come to town. The most recent was Bill Clinton in 1996.

And partly because, being relatively poor, we know they come to Tacoma for our love and not our money. (Take that Medinal!)

In that context, it is easier to see why the visit by President Teddy Roosevelt on May 22, 1903, was important enough that the city would want to install what it claimed was the world's largest totem pole.

Yeah, I'm back to the Tacoma totem pole again. On Sunday, I asked the city Landmarks Commission to stop taking itself — and its pending decision on what to do now with that pole — so seriously.

Rather than analyze the troubled pole as some sacred tribal artifact, which the members seem to acknowledge it is not, they need to view it as a quirky piece of city history.

Rather than lay it to rest in some city park as some Alaskan tribes might have done with authentic poles that had begun to deteriorate, they need to figure a way to preserve it and display it, inside or out.

Rather than hold meetings of ad hoc subcommittees in secret — at least without required public notice — they need to have a very open (and legal) process that doesn't start with a "consensus" reached by that subcommittee, but instead is open to all options.

And frankly, rather than become the first landmarks commission in city history to delist a protected landmark, rather than being an entity that doesn't just allow the item's demolition by neglect but presides over it — the current commissioners should champion the treasures under their protection.

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That's a better way to celebrate Historic Preservation Month, as declared by the City Council on Tuesday.

The Tacoma totem pole was commissioned by local businessmen as an act of civic boosterism. While triggered by competition with Seattle (you know, our pole is bigger than your pole), the timing was set by Roosevelt's visit.

"The President They Adored – Washington State Welcomes President Roosevelt in 1903" by Michele Bryant and Tacoma "Good Life Northwest" blogger Candace Brown captures the excitement that Roosevelt engendered and the legitimacy his presence gave the region.

"All of Tacoma waited for the president's train that afternoon of May 22, 1903, with citizens crowded into all possible vantage points, '... above the housetops, or dipping from every window,' according to the Daily Ledger," they wrote. The agenda included a speech in Wright Park, a ceremony to lay the cornerstone of the Masonic Temple and a carriage ride to the Tacoma Hotel, where he would spend the night after a massive banquet.

"The totem pole captivated Roosevelt with its distinctive carvings and enormous size," Brown and Bryant wrote. "As the carriage passed by, he raised his arm, pointing at the pole's features from top to bottom and seemed to honor it by removing his hat."

Over the years, the pole was loved by generations of Tacomans. That it is now out of mind is partly due to the fact that it is out of site, hidden in Fireman's Park, where few dare tread. It was even placed with its unpainted side facing into the city, appearing at a quick glance to be nothing but a utility pole.

Part of the beauty of historic preservation, however, is that we don't require buildings and artifacts to appeal to current tastes only. We understand that what is hip now might be considered distasteful later and hip again later still.

It will cost more to take the thing down, check it for lead paint and invasives, truck it to the woods, fence it to protect it from both adventurers and vandals and put up interpretive markers to mitigate the loss of the once-protected artifact.

And since surplus property laws may require it be put up for sale anyway, the best path is the simple one — keep it around for a few generations more.

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If a makeshift committee has its way, a historic but increasingly unstable totem pole that has stood in downtown Tacoma for more than a century would be taken down and left to decay publicly as a piece of

Letting totem rot is not the only Native way

PETER CALLAGHAN

LAST UPDATED: JUNE 2ND, 2013 02:16 AM (PDT)

Let's call it the Great Tacoma Totem Pole Controversy ... that wasn't.

On Tuesday, Tacoma's arts commission will begin a process that could lead to the loss of a pole that has been displayed for 110 years. A de-accession committee could decide whether to remove the pole from the city's art collection. Later, the city Landmarks Commission could decide whether to remove the pole from the protection of the register of historic places.

Both of those actions would further a recommendation of a Landmarks Commission subcommittee that the culturally sensitive response to troubling decay of the pole is to take it down, lay it in some wooded area and let it decompose.

It is not that the pole couldn't be restored, the commissioners were told; it is that it shouldn't be restored.

"I personally spoke with the Sealaska Heritage Institute in Juneau ... and it seemed to be kind of the case that totem poles do have a natural life span," said JD Elquist, a member of both the Arts Commission and the Landmarks Commission. "And what happens when a totem pole basically decays is that they go back to the earth."

His recommendation to both groups has led them to consider that the pole should be taken down. Our coverage of the issue, however, has revealed a lot of affection for the 80-foot pole that has been mostly hidden away in Fireman's Park on the edge of downtown.

And now I've found that the Haida and Tlingit traditions described to the commission are not as strict as portrayed. While Alaska Native tribes in the past would not have tried to restore their totems — for practical reasons more than sacred — they have more recently been influenced by conservation and restoration standards of Euro-American historians. Alaska tribes themselves restore poles, as does the National Park Service, as does the state of Alaska.

Of the experts I interviewed, not one said the Tacoma pole was beyond saving or that it should be returned "to the earth" regardless of its condition.

"It is true that old, decaying poles for which there is no hope of repairing should be put to rest to die," wrote Rosita Kaahani Worl, the president of the Sealaska Heritage Institute. "However, if it can be repaired, it should be."

And it can be repaired. As city historic preservation officer Reuben McKnight said, "nobody thinks it can't be done."

Neither is the cost prohibitive, likely in the \$10,000 range. Compared with what Sealaska Heritage Institute charges for new poles produced by its Native carving program — \$4,000 a foot — that's a bargain. And if local businesses and volunteers are enlisted — something that happened several times over the last century when this pole needed repairs or was relocated — the cost would be even less.

Ellen Carlee is the conservator of the Alaska State Museums and an expert on the maintenance and restoration of totem poles. She said a beloved pole in the Juneau area was cleaned by volunteers under the direction of conservation experts.

Carrlee said many methods are used to repair the decay that seems to have affected our pole, including using epoxies to replace damaged wood and attaching weakened poles to new cedar logs or steel supports. While poles don't last forever, they can have longer lives if regular maintenance is done, including removal of moss, application of sodium borate solutions as a fungicide, and the use of water-repellent metal caps to protect poles from the rain.

Carrlee said there has been debate and discussion over the years as to the proper response to decaying poles. While once old poles were taken down and replicated, that has changed. She noted that the Ketchikan Totem Heritage Center, which in the mid-1970s relocated 19th century totems from unoccupied villages, was created by Haida and Tlingit members.

The apparent belief by some in Tacoma that there is only one way to deal with a pole in need of restoration is incorrect, she said.

"It's ignoring that there are more than 100 poles being preserved in Alaska," Carrlee said. "I can't think of any organized situations of putting a pole into the woods to decompose." And while Tacoma's pole is not an authentic Haida or Tlingit pole, "there are a ton of totems that are murky in their cultural authenticity, but there is still a desire to preserve them.

"The National Park Service is preserving poles, as are many Alaska Native communities and various municipalities. What you are doing flies in the face of that."

Jo Antonson, the Alaska state historian and assistant state historic preservation officer, said the practice there is to "preserve as long as it has useful life."

Even poles that can't stand on their own are frequently displayed horizontally in cradles. Said Mary Kowalczyk, the ranger assigned to Totem Bight State Historical Park: "You won't believe how much people enjoy looking at poles that are lying down."

"People really love totemic art," Antonson said.

What about Tacoma's pole? From pictures and a description of its story, Antonson said: "It sounds like a pretty neat reflection of the history of Tacoma and a pretty significant structure.

"It sounds like it is clearly worthy of preservation."

Once the two city commissions realize that as well, we can move toward repairing and then relocating to a more prominent location — perhaps along the Prairie Line Trail — Tacoma's iconic totem pole.

Peter Callaghan: 253-597-8657 peter.callaghan@thenewstribune.com
(<http://thenewstribune.com>) [@CallaghanPeter](http://blog.thenewstribune.com/politics)

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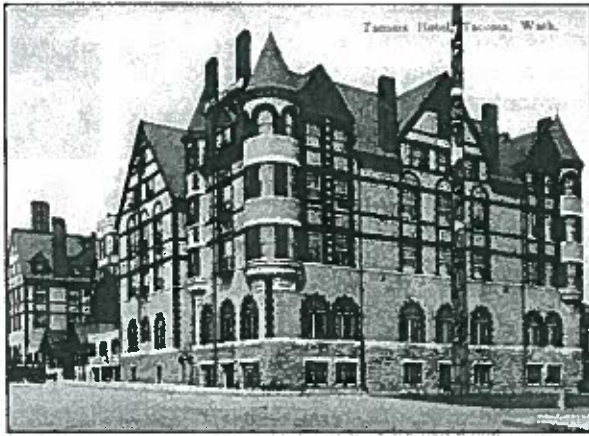
Good Life Northwest

Welcome! This blog celebrates life in the Pacific Northwest, a place filled with natural beauty, a rich history, fascinating people, and so much to do, explore, discover, and enjoy. Even if you don't live here, you will feel at home, so come on in and look around.

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TUESDAY, MAY 21, 2013

TO LET IT ROT, OR NOT — TACOMA TOTEM POLE CONTOVERSY NEARLY IGNORES PRESIDENTIAL HISTORY



postcard image loaned by Reed Fitzpatrick

One hundred and ten years ago today, citizens of Tacoma stood around and gawked at a spectacle—the raising of the totem pole whose fate the city now ponders. But the city does so without a full appreciation of the circumstances surrounding that event, thereby ignoring some very significant local history. Sensitivity to native cultures, political correctness, and practicality combine to create a controversy here, because the pole is rotting and no one seems to know what to do with it. But, to my amazement, the most important part of the story is the part getting the least attention, and that is the pole's relationship to the visit of former President Theodore Roosevelt.



See News Tribune articles:

Let Tacoma Totem Pole decay publicly, committee says

Old Tacoma Totem Pole 'should be laid to rest'

Tacoma's Totem: Sometimes a pole is just a pole

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TO LET IT ROT, OR NOT — TACOMA TOTEM POLE CONTOVE...

NORTHWEST REPERTORY SINGERS OFFER "SONGS OF LOVE, ...

TENOR GUITAR GATHERING IN OREGON BUILDS A FOLLOWIN...

A PHOTO TOUR OF THE HULDA KLAGER LILAC GARDENS

- ▶ April (8)
- ▶ March (4)
- ▶ February (4)
- ▶ January (4)

▶ 2012 (53)

▶ 2011 (43)

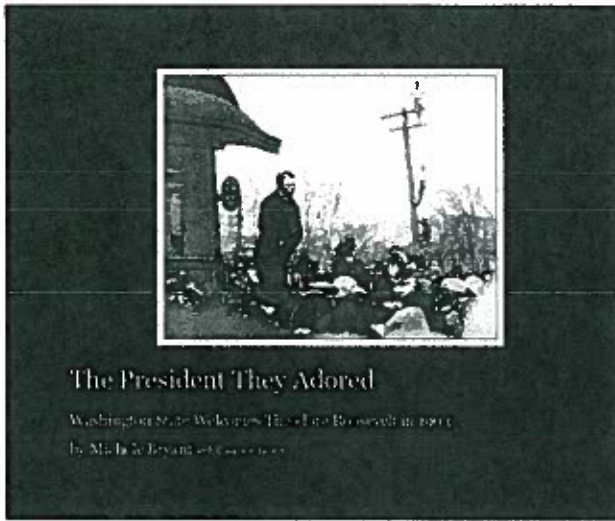
▶ 2010 (34)

▶ 2009 (37)

▶ 2008 (38)

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In 2010, skilled researcher and writer Michele Bryant and I coauthored a book titled "The President They Adored—Washington State Welcomes Theodore Roosevelt in 1903." (It is out of print but will soon be available again as an e-book.) While working on the book, the fanfare surrounding the president's tour of 17 cities and towns in Washington, and the extravagant preparations made, astounded us. Coming up with a totem pole taller than Seattle's 60-foot model was typical of the many, sometimes outlandish, ways jurisdictions vied for the president's attention. And this totem pole, carved on the shores of Vashon Island, *did* get his attention during a visit that included a parade, a lavish banquet, the laying of the cornerstone of the Masonic Temple and two 21-gun salutes. But before I get into all that, let's return to the almost frantic totem pole scene the day before.

By the afternoon of May 21, 1903, the crowd at the base of 10th Street in Tacoma had grown to several thousand. Tense anticipation charged the atmosphere as a crew of twenty men attempted to raise the approximately 100-foot, 15,936-lb. totem pole—claimed to be the largest in the world—to stand in front of the Tacoma Hotel. At any moment it could fall and splinter into pieces. Already, just as the pole began to lift, a hook had broken off and done some damage.

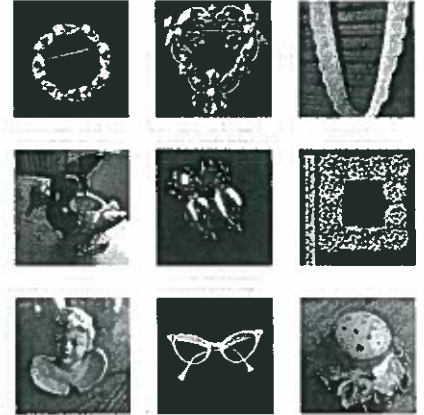
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ALL ABOUT BIRDS



Daily Ledger newspaper clipping from 1903

The Tacoma Daily Leger reported:

"The descending block made a dent in the figure of the bear man at the base of the pole, but nothing but can be readily repaired. Had the pole been a foot higher at the breaking of the gear, it must necessarily have broken in two over the supporting false work about midway of the length. A second start and the strain on the five-sheave tackle was seen to be too great, and hoisting was stopped and the pole backed while the lower block was made fast to a point higher up the pole, giving a greater purchase with less strain.

The inch-and-a-quarter hoisting rope was run taut by twenty men with a smaller five-sheave tackle, making the purchase require for twenty meant to hoist the pole equal to ten blocks. The strain drew the main rope small, but the higher the pole went the less grew the strain until when erect and towering to nearly the height of the Tacoma hotel alongside, it took back-ropes to prevent the pole coming forward of its own weight."



I feed tacoma

ABOUT ME



Candace Brown
Tacoma, WA, United States

I love life in the Pacific Northwest. As the sixth generation of my family in Washington State, I was born in the Puget Sound area and have always lived here with appreciation for my surroundings. I thrive on the salt air and sounds of the gulls. Fresh snow on the mountains, my own muffled footsteps on a forest path, bird songs, and wildflowers all bring me joy. I even love the rain. This is a region filled with unsurpassed natural beauty and fascinating people whose stories still wait to be told. Good Life Northwest is about quality of life. I like to picture you smiling when you read it and going away feeling better when you're done.

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The only serious accident was on the first start off, when the hook of the upper block broke square off, letting the pole back the foot it had been raised.

Has Halo of Light.

The descending block made a dent in the figure of the bear man at the base of the pole, but nothing but can be readily repaired. Had the pole been a foot higher at the breaking of the gear, it must necessarily have broken in two over the supporting false work about midway of the length. A second start and the strain on the five-sheave tackle was seen to be too great, and hoisting was stopped and the pole backed while the lower block was made fast to a point higher up the pole, giving a greater purchase with less strain.

The inch and a quarter hoisting rope was run taut by twenty men with a smaller five-sheave tackle, making the purchase required for twenty men to hoist the pole equal to ten blocks. The strain drew the main rope small, but the higher the pole went the less grew the strain until when erect and lowering to nearly the height of the Tacoma hotel alongside, it took back-ropes to prevent the pole coming forward of its own weight.

The ring of eighteen electric lights, looking like a halo over the head of the eagle at the top, will be kept lighted at night by the Snoqualmie company free of expense to the city. Two of the regular pole-climbing employes of the city and two firemen are down as al-

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Daily Ledger newspaper clipping 1903

And that was only the beginning of the excitement that gripped the city for two days. Here are some excerpts from "The President They Adored" concerning Roosevelt's stop in Tacoma:

~All of Tacoma waited for the resident's train that afternoon of May 22, 1903, with citizens crowded into all possible vantage points, "... above the housetops, or dipping from every window," according to the Daily Ledger, a copy of which cost a nickel at that time. Men swung their hats and women and children waved their flags. A twenty-one gun salute fired from Puget Sound as the Commander in Chief stepped from this train.

Soon a procession rolled toward Wright Park with the president in his carriage, sometimes standing, sometimes sitting, talking, laughing, smiling, and showing his teeth. He stepped onto an elevated platform to address a sea of thirty thousand upturned faces.

~From Wright Park, the procession approached the Masonic Temple building site, so the president could lay its cornerstone. The stand was decorated with bunting, and a large American flag stretched over the president's chair. Hundreds of Mason, wearing their traditional white aprons, watched as Brother Roosevelt stepped from the platform to the stone, picking up the trowel and placing some mortar on its underside, his inexperience causing laughter and words of encouragement. After a short speech and the traditional scattering of corn, win, and oil—emblems of plenty, joy, and peace—the Tenino sandstone cornerstone was swung into place.

~The masses cheered as the president's carriage approached the Tacoma Hotel with many following the procession along the guard ropes. The banquet reception boasted

Northwest floral beauty at its finest, with decoration of pink roses, Solomon's seals, asparagus fern, huckleberry, Oregon grape, white lilacs, kinnickinnick, tall palms, and rhododendrons—the Washington State flower. Outside the hotel, dogwood and Scotch broom framed a large American flag draped over the doorway.

~The totem pole captivated Roosevelt with its distinctive carvings and enormous size. As his carriage passed by, he raised his arm, pointing at the pole's features from top to bottom and seemed to honor it by removing his hat.

~The president admired all objects of beauty and fine workmanship, including an elaborately embroidered silk cloth that was draped over his carriage. This relic, dating from the 16th century and probably made by nuns as a cover for a catafalque, survived as a 400-year-old heirloom passed down through the family of Mr. Joseph Moore of Tacoma. Even in 1903 it was valued at thirty thousand dollars.

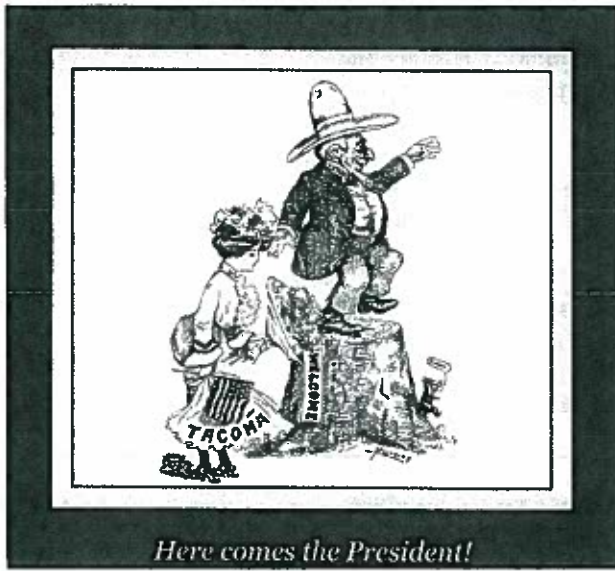
~A salute of twenty-one guns was fired again the next morning as President Roosevelt left Tacoma aboard the luxurious steamer *Spokane*. It flew the dark blue presidential flag with its golden eagle as they headed north to Bremerton, two hours away.



page from "The President They Adored"

Considering that a century and ten years is a mere blink of an eye in terms of history, how quickly events are forgotten. Whether or not you are a fan of Theodore Roosevelt, his tour through the state would have amounted to an unforgettable day for the tens of thousands of impassioned people who came to see him along the route, often climbing trees, even telephone poles, leaning out window, covering rooftops and crowding train stations just for a look. When he visited Spokane a few days later, as our book describes, "... it was said that never before had so many people assembled in the vast region between the two mountain ranges of the Rockies and the Cascades, and no one there ever expected to see anything like it again."

I hope this background information will influence the city to preserve the totem pole, not letting it rot, but finding an indoor location where it can safely be displayed. It represents more than a rivalry with Seattle. It represents a time when Tacoma's citizens felt a sense of unity, excitement, pride, and joy as history was made before them. We could use a reminder of how that feels.



cartoon from Tacoma's newspaper, The Daily Ledger, in 1903

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Posted by Candace Brown at 1:03 PM

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This is an archived article.

May 28, 2009

1909 exhibition's darker side explored in the Burke's 'A-Y-P: Indigenous Voices Reply

By Peter Kelley

News and Information



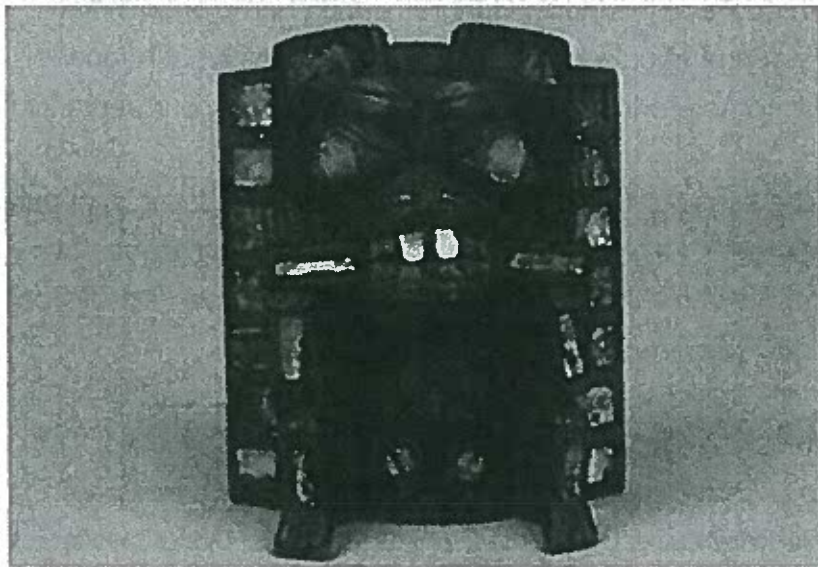
Frank Nowell, courtesy of UW Special Collections

They meant well: Caroline McGilvra Burke, left, and friends dress in Native clothing for a tea during the A-Y-P. Burke curator Robin Wright thinks the woman at right might be Mrs. R.A. Ballinger, wife of the Secretary of the Interior at the time.



Frank Nowell, courtesy of UW Special Collections

At top: The main entrance to the A-Y-P's Eskimo Village, showing sled dogs and Eskimos posing in front. Below, the entrance to the Igorrote Village at the A-Y-P. Both photos taken in 1909.



Images courtesy of the Burke Museum.

At top, Kwagiutl artist David Neel's painting *Beaver Frontlet* — Burke #1001. The work was inspired by the actual headdress frontlet, collected decades ago by George Emmons, shown below. A frontlet is a carved crest figure attached to a ceremonial headdress. The call for art for this exhibit provided him the opportunity to base a painting on the headdress, "which I have long admired," Neel said.

In August of 1909, during the third month of the immensely popular Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition, Mrs. Caroline McGilvra Burke decided to give a tea for members of the Congress of Indian Educators and other dignitaries, then visiting Seattle.

For the afternoon, Burke — whose 1962 estate gift in memory of her husband, Thomas Burke, began the modern Burke Museum — and friends wore festive Native American dress. Two Navajo girls were brought from Fort Defiance Indian School in Arizona to demonstrate weaving for the visitors. Ironically, the Native American girls wore the late-Victorian dresses required by their boarding school.

Local press covered the event. The *Seattle Times* headline blared "INDIANS BREAK INTO HIGH

SOCIETY.” The sub-headline added with faux astonishment: “Blanketed Warriors and Students of Schools Ride Automobiles to Mrs. Thomas Burke’s Residence.”

A photo of Caroline Burke and her costumed guests is part of the Burke Museum’s newest exhibit, *A-Y-P: Indigenous Voices Reply*, which opens May 30 (with a host of opening day events: learn more at <http://www.washington.edu/burkemuseum/ayp/events.php>) and runs through Nov. 29, at the museum.

The duality of the tea party is hard to miss — an apparently sincere intent in 1909 to celebrate Native American culture on the one hand, and a tone of patronization, even latent racism, on the other. Indians riding in cars and attending teas — how quaint!

“The thing is, the Burkes were very progressive people for their era,” said Robin Wright, Burke curator of Native American art, who created the exhibit with Deana Dartt-Newton, the museum’s new curator of Native American ethnography. “They both spoke at the Indian Congress and championed Indian people. And yet to our 21st century eyes it’s sort of shocking what they said — ‘Look what happens when you educate these Indians and they become productive members of society, like our servants.’”

That insensitivity was mild compared with the sensations of the AYPE’s famous Pay Streak, a popular attraction that ran from 40th Street to the shores of Lake Union. There, among other attractions two exhibits styled as realistic “villages” purported to show visitors the behaviors of Eskimos, mostly from Alaska, and the Igorot mountain people of the Philippines.

The performers in these villages were treated more like zoo specimens than men and women. The Eskimos were required to play leap frog, said Dartt-Newton “basically to represent the frivolity of ‘untamed’ native life,” and others sported trimmed hair styles and performed various tasks “to show the virtues of a civilized life.”

She said, “It was so patronizing. Nobody was asking Native people what they wanted, all the decisions were made for them as if they were children.” She added, “Native people were portrayed as another exploitable resource in the untamed Northwest and Pacific.”

This cultural disconnect lies at the heart of *A-Y-P: Indigenous Voices Reply*, and intentionally so.

The curators said they set out with two basic goals. The first, said Wright, was to examine how indigenous people were displayed and treated at the fair and ask how that has changed over the intervening century.

The second, crucial part was to present work by current Native artists — by way of reply to the long-ago AYPE exploitation. “That Native people have opportunities to reply publically to these types of stereotypical, pervasive images of Native life is, I think, the most important thing about this exhibit,”

Dartt-Newton said.

With the help of an advisory committee that included on- and off-campus members of area tribes, the curators put out a request for submissions and received about 30 in return. Of those, they chose 16 works. Learn more about the artists and their works at <http://www.washington.edu/burkemuseum/ayp/artists.php>.

Some of the artists got inspiration and ideas from objects in the Burke's existing ethnology collection. Tlingit artist Garrett Jackson said he was inspired by the items his own great-grandfather, Lt. George T. Emmons, collected during those days that were exhibited at the AYPE and later became a foundation for the Burke's ethnology collection.

Artist MaryLou Slaughter, a descendant of Chief Seattle and his first wife and a member of the Duwamish tribe, wove a hat inspired by the one held by her ancestor in his famous portrait. Artist Nicholas Galanin of the Tlingit tribe appropriated a video from the Burke itself of 25,000 research slides taken by then-curators Bill Holm and Wright. He stripped the video of credits and "re-appropriated" it right back to the Burke under the title, *Who We Are*.

Other participating artists are: Tony Ayala (Chumash), Phillip John Charette Aarnaquq (Yup'ik), Michael Halady (Duwamish), Anna Hoover (Aleut), DeAnn Sackman-Jacobson (Duwamish), Swil Kanim (Lummi), Sonya Kelliher-Combs (Athabascan/Inupiaq/European), Tima Link (Santa Barbara Chumash), Justin McCarthy (Yup'ik), David Neel (Kwagiutl), Tanis S'eiltin (Tlingit), Preston Singletary (Tlingit/Filipino/European) and Matika Wilbur (Swinomish/Tulalip).

And here's another scene from 1909, as reported by the press of the day. Myrtle Seattle, Chief Seattle's granddaughter, was invited to the home of Mrs. R.A. Ballinger, wife of the then Secretary of the Interior, during the AYPE — not as a guest but to serve what the papers called "an appetizing and up-to-date lunch" to Ballinger and her friends.

"It was a long step toward civilization from the crude, coarse food dished up to the warrior who gave the city its name," the *Times* reported afterward. "Myrtle and her dusky classmates demonstrated how well they are taught in the United States Indian schools the secrets of preparing wholesome and appetizing meals."

Such articles and more from 1909 will be available for viewing, as well as others on Native American issues from as recent as 2009. Visitors will be asked to leave comments on the question, "Do you think things have changed?"

A-Y-P: Indigenous Voices Reply is not simply a contrite revisiting of past sins; it's also an open invitation to the viewers to decide for themselves how much or little attitudes toward Native Americans

and others have changed over the last 100 years.

Co-curator Dartt-Newton, herself a member of the Chumash tribe, has strong feelings of her own. "One thing's for sure. While certain attitudes have changed, some things have not. We are not at a place of complete reconciliation ... Native people still have to fight against repressive and racist ideologies."

That's why she says the contemporary pieces are such a powerful statement in *A-Y-P: Indigenous Voices Reply* — "Because in contrast to 1909, today Native peoples are asked to speak for themselves — to represent their art and culture in ways that speak to what's important to them.

"Though we have no way of knowing what Native people thought or said of the A-Y-P Exposition — because no one was asking, no one was reporting — one hundred years later we hear them speaking — not of oppression, but of resistance, revival and resurgence."

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iii. Citizen/Commissioner Comment

- 1. Echte Considerations May 18, 2013**
- 2. Bjornson, Citizen Comment, Letter and Attachments,
June 3, 2013**

Considerations for the future of Tacoma's Totem Pole

Issues needing further research and discussion

-Ed Echte

May 18 2013

Who carved it?:

Northwest coast natives in Tacoma commissioned by Tacoma businessmen. It is likely the carvers were part of the annual migration of Northwest Coast peoples who travelled to Western Washington as seasonal laborers in agriculture and other industries.

Why was it carved?:

Our current understanding is mainly from the Euro American perspective. Businessmen intended it to symbolize Tacoma's role as a commercial hub central to industry and tourism on the northwest coast and challenge Seattle's claim to the same. However, the details of their relationship between the businessmen and the carvers remains unclear and more research is needed to uncover more of the story.

Why might natives have agreed to carve it?

While money exchanged hands, there may be additional motivations behind the carvers' creation of this pole we should explore. For example, at the time of its carving, the Canadian government and missionaries were actively suppressing expressions of native culture including music, dance and art they saw as barriers to natives' acceptance of white culture. [See: Cole and Chaikin, *An Iron Hand Upon the People: The Law Against Potlatch on the Northwest Coast*] The carvers may have embraced this as an opportunity to represent their culture as an important and enduring society, in defiance of the coercion they faced to abandon their traditions.

Isn't it Kitsch?

While experts agree the skills of the Tacoma pole carvers may not be the best example of the craft, it still may represent sacred imagery to the people who carved it and their tribe. Disease and outmigration severely impacted northwest native culture in the late 19th century and in many places traditional carving skills were lost. Not until decades later, after government sanctions against these arts were lifted, did many tribes actively work to renew these traditions, an effort that continues today. In this context it's possible this pole may represent an important snapshot of the state of the craft at the time it was made.

The art is not indigenous to this area.

By the late 1800s many Northern BC and Alaska natives migrated to Western Washington for seasonal work at mills, in the hop fields and other industries. While traditional animosities lingered between local and northern tribes, many people formed family ties across tribal boundaries [See: Alexandra Harmon, *Indians in the Making: Ethnic Relations and Indian Identities Around Puget Sound.*] The pole was created at a time when natives were forging new intertribal allegiances as they grappled with the new social order brought by whites.

Can't we just cut it up and save it in pieces?

The pole is a single piece of art. Cutting it into sections to preserve it is analogous to cutting up a painting of a crowd into individual portraits to preserve it.

Law Office of Erik Bjornson

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Tacoma, WA 98402

(253) 272 -1434

FAX (253) 573-1209

June 3, 2013

Tacoma Totem Pole De-Accession Review Panel

Landmarks Preservation Commission
Planning and Development Services
747 Market Street, 3rd Floor
Tacoma, WA 98402-3793

Tacoma Arts Commission
Community and Economic Development Department
747 Market Street Room 900
Tacoma, WA 98402-3793

RE: Restoration and Maintenance of Historical Totem Pole in
Fireman's Park

Dear Landmark Commissioners, Tacoma Art Commission and the Tacoma
Totem Pole De-Accession Review Panel,

Please maintain and protect and take whatever steps
necessary to protect, restore and maintain Tacoma's Historical
Totem pole in Fireman's Park. As many Tacoma historians have
concluded, the totem pole is both a piece of art and a Tacoma
"historical artifact."

**Please decline to "de-access" the totem pole as such a move
would do nothing more than inappropriately take the totem pole
out Tacoma's Art Collection to have it moved and/or destroyed.**

The totem pole is clearly a historical artistic piece, one
of the city's most important, and deserves the dignity and
protect of the being in the Tacoma Art Collection so that it can
be maintained.

I have been an attorney in downtown Tacoma for 18 years.

The last 5 of those years have been located directly on and overseeing Fireman's Park. I have literally walked by the totem pole in Fireman's park 1000 times and can assure you it adds a great deal of character to an otherwise nondescript modernist cement poured park build right over the entrance to 705.

Having significant and unique art in Fireman's Park will improve the attractiveness of the park and use and hence graffiti and vandalism, issues all Tacoma City parks deal with. Because Fireman's Park is located downtown, it has had far more of it's share of such issues.

As you know, Fireman's Park is located right next to the Russell Building where State Farm is scheduled to move to. The totem pole is so close to the Russell Building, that many pictures of the pole have the building in the background.

As many people, and local Tacoma historians have pointed out, having the totem pole taken down to decay (rot) in the woods would be misguided and a waste of one of Tacoma's few remaining historical landmarks. Former Washington History Museum Nicandri discussed the issue with News Tribune columnist Peter Callaghan

"It is an artifact of the city's cultural and commercial history," said David Nicandri, the former director of the Washington State Historical Society. "It is an example of the city's outlook on itself and its rivalry with another city at a time when the outcome of that rivalry was still in doubt."

When I first told Nicandri about the notion of laying it somewhere to decompose, he was skeptical but scholarly.

"That's kind of noble but overly sentimental given the commercial origins of the piece." But later, when he got warmed up, he was more blunt.

See the complete enclosed article.

Many other Tacoma historians have come to a similar conclusion.

Also, please see the Alaska totem pole experts quoted in yesterday's Tribune including Ellen Carrlee, "the conservator of the Alaska State Museums and an expert on the maintenance and restoration of totem poles":

The apparent belief by some in Tacoma that there is only one way to deal with a pole in need of restoration is incorrect, she said.

"It's ignoring that there are more than 100 poles being preserved in Alaska," Carrlee said. "I can't think of any organized situations of putting a pole into the woods to decompose." And while Tacoma's pole is not an authentic Haida or Tlingit pole, "there are a ton of totems that are murky in their cultural authenticity, but there is still a desire to preserve them.

"The National Park Service is preserving poles, as are many Alaska Native communities and various municipalities. What you are doing flies in the face of that."

Jo Antonson, the Alaska state historian and assistant state historic preservation officer, said the practice there is to "preserve as long as it has useful life."

Even poles that can't stand on their own are frequently displayed horizontally in cradles. Said Mary Kowalczyk, the ranger assigned to Totem Bight State Historical Park: "You won't believe how much people enjoy looking at poles that are lying down."

"People really love totemic art," Antonson said.

What about Tacoma's pole? From pictures and a description of its story, Antonson said: "It sounds like a pretty neat reflection of the history of Tacoma and a pretty significant structure.

See the enclosure for the complete article.

Finally, enclosed is an article detailing many types of repair and restoration techniques for totem poles.

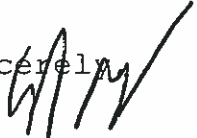
In summary, please use your commissions to quickly, efficiently restore and maintain the totem pole in Fireman's Park. Yes, it may cost a few dollars to fix the pole. However, in comparison to the cost to renovate a building or perform street construction, the cost is very low.

Given the fact that the pole is 110 years old, the allocated cost per year required will no doubt be very small.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

I may be reached at (253) 272-1434.

Sincerely,



Erik Bjornson

cc: Marilyn Strickland and Tacoma City Council

THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

October 22, 2010

Riverfront Park totem pole gets a makeover

City employee used materials on hand, donated lift to complete repairs

Chelsea Bannach
The Spokesman-Review

Tags: American Indian Community Center Canada Island Dave Randolph Inland Northwest Wildlife Council Larry Carey Riverfront Park Scott Brunell Spokane Parks and Recreation totem pole



Scott Brunell, a city parks employee, stands in front of the totem pole he refurbished in Riverfront Park on Thursday.

After decades of exposure to the elements, the tattered totem pole in Riverfront Park needed some serious work.

The eagle at the top of the totem was missing its head and one of eight feathers on its wing. Another feather, barely clinging to the wing, blew precariously in the wind. The once-vivid paint was faded and chipped.

In short, the weathered totem pole was more of an eyesore than an attraction, said Scott Brunell, craft specialist with Spokane Parks and Recreation.

"I just couldn't stand looking at that thing," he said. "In some places, the paint was completely worn off. People couldn't tell what it was."

So Brunell got his boss, Dave Randolph, the Parks and Recreation labor foreman, to approve the project. Then Brunell got to sanding and single-handedly refurbished the entire pole, which is located on Canada Island.

"It was just a labor of love," he said. "It just needed to be done."

Brunell had to mix whatever paint he had on hand to match the original colors. That required some imagination, he said, because the original paint was worn off in places.

"We had to do some guessing, but we tried to keep the colors looking the way they originally did," he said "I'm pretty happy with the way it came out."

He had completed the bottom third of the pole when he hit a road block; he could not

reach the top. He needed a lift, which would have cost Parks and Recreation about \$500.

So the Inland Northwest Wildlife Council, which paid a Canadian Indian and an American Indian to construct the pole in 1978 for its annual Bighorn Outdoor Adventure Show, donated a truck lift for a week so the project could be completed.

Even though the pole looks better, no one is really sure what it means, said Larry Carey, an Inland Northwest Wildlife Council member. He is working with the American Indian Community Center to get more information on its significance.

"Typically when they carve a pole it signifies an event or means something," he said.

The council is also trying to get the city to approve a plaque to let people know who built the pole, when and why, he said.

A second totem pole in the park, constructed for Expo '74, is half-carved and also in a state of disrepair. Brunell said he hopes the carving will someday be completed and that he can be the one to revamp the "derelict" pole.

For now, though, he is happy to have completed the first one.

"It's great," he said. "Now I think it's something worth looking at."

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News From Terre Haute, Indiana

August 26, 2010

72-year-old totem pole gets makeover

20-foot totem pole stands in front of Vigo County Historical Society

Arthur Foulkes

The Tribune-Star

TERRE HAUTE — Terre Haute's mystic Tootooch, or "Thunderbird," is getting a much-needed makeover.

The 20-foot totem pole that faces South Sixth and Washington streets is getting a fresh paint job and being restored from the inside out.

"It's part of our history," said Tracy Pruitt, owner of Pruitt Properties, which is donating the restoration work on the 72-year-old piece of art. "This is a historic landmark."

It has been at least 10 years since the totem pole, which stands on the front lawn of the Vigo County Historical Society building at 1411 S. Sixth St., was last restored, Pruitt estimated. He and a crew of several of his employees are all donating their time to restore the longtime Terre Haute treasure.

"It's in pretty bad shape," Pruitt said while looking at the totem pole on Wednesday afternoon.

He hopes the restoration work will be completed today – well ahead of the Farrington's Grove neighborhood block party, which is scheduled for Sunday afternoon on the Historical Society lawn.

Several employees of Pruitt Properties, which does restoration work, were pulling rotted wood from inside the totem pole Wednesday. They plan to use a leaf blower to dry the inside of the pole and then fill the hollow sections with foam and chalk, Pruitt said.

"The wood's rotting inside," Pruitt said. A hole in the top of the totem pole has been allowing rain to enter the pole, he said. That will now be closed, Pruitt added.

The exterior of the totem pole will also get a fresh coat of paint, Pruitt said. There are seven different colors and they will all be matched to the original colors, he said.

Tootooch is the name of the winged "thunderbird" at the top of the totem pole. According to Sacred-Texts.com, an online archive of books about religion, mythology and folklore, Tootooch is a "powerful, mystic emblem having its origin among the native tribes of British Columbia" in Canada.

"Keep this emblem always and you will be under the protection of the Thunder Bird wherever you may be. It will bring you the best that life has to offer. Your business dealings will prosper, the course of your

love will run smooth and goodwill toward your fellow creatures will fill your heart and will be returned a hundredfold,” the website states.

Totem poles were never known to be a part of the culture of native tribes in this part of North America. Rather, they were – and continue to be – part of the culture of American Indian tribes from the Northwest.

The Vigo County Historical Society’s totem pole came to the area thanks to Mrs. Chapman J. Root, who ordered the pole produced for the family’s Allendale estate in the 1930s. According to past editions of Terre Haute newspapers, the pole was made from a pine tree that had grown in southern California and was transported here aboard a railroad flatcar.

Pine is a soft wood, which has contributed to the deterioration of the totem pole, Pruitt noted.

The totem pole was carved by C. Huston Isaacs, an industrial arts and science teacher at Sarah Scott Junior High School, and his friend, Charles Eggleston. The totem pole was placed in a wooded and floral area of the Root estate in Allendale and stayed there until 1963, when it was moved to the Historical Society property as gift from the Root family.

At the base of the pole, Isaacs and Eggleston carved a bear, a symbol of strength. Above the bear is the figure of a “tribal ancestor” holding a box containing the sun, moon and stars. Atop them both – and several smaller figures – is Tootooch, the powerful thunderbird god.

“People kind of associate the totem pole with the [Historical Society] building,” said Barbara Carney, assistant director of the Historical Society museum.

Pruitt, a life member of the Historical Society, said he recalls seeing the totem pole when his mother would bring him to the historical museum years ago. He still has a postcard produced locally showing the totem pole decades ago, he said. An image of the card can be seen online at www.cardcow.com.

“It’s not every day you restore a totem pole,” Pruitt said. “I think it’s important. It’s history.”

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iv. Peterson Report

This document is submitted to the committee or designated officials only as a reference of information that may serve towards making a decision regarding the Tacoma totem pole located currently in Fireman's Park.

My name is Shaun Peterson. I am a member of the Puyallup tribe of Indians and have served as a consultant to the city regarding tribal matters where history and cultural knowledge has been needed. I learned a great deal from the late Judy Wright who directed me to research our tribal archives when I was carving my first Story Pole for Chief Leschi School in 1995. Equally important was my work with curator emeritus of the Seattle Art Museum Native collection, Steve Brown. I worked with Steve for several years and met a number of Alaska Native carvers whom I'd worked with learning not only carving technique but cultural protocol that is involved with the creative process.

From my first experience as a Native artist carving a story pole, I learned about totem poles and welcome figures. It was made clear to me not only by art historians and practicing artists but elders who expressed discomfort when talking about raising totem poles in Coast Salish territory. The most vocal of these elders included Jack Moses who expressed the opinion that if Coast Salish people were to raise totems in our village areas we express to the world we are a conquered people. That memory stayed with me over the years and it carries a great deal of truth.

It is well known that the totem pole in Fireman's park was commissioned by businessmen in competitive efforts with the city of Seattle at the turn of the century. It marks a time when Coast Salish people had little say in what was shortly before their territory. It along with the pole of Pioneer square mark a time of taking art and culture from one place and appropriating it for the sake of tourism. At the time of many of these pole installations, the Tacoma pole in question included, there seems to be no mark of ceremony or cultural relevance but only the boasting of it's size. These poles serve as iconography that have long mislead the public including tribal communities to some degree that these objects are in association with Coast Salish tribes when in fact they herald from the very groups they once warred with.

I understand this is a complex matter. My intention was to give some perspective but I see it would be in best interest that I recuse myself from the voting process. I can offer up answers to questions should they arise and have provided the committee with a brief background from consulting community members of the Haida and Tlingit that I know. Today I have brought professor Robin K. Wright as well which was a request from the city council from my understanding at one point to share her knowledge as curator of Northwest Coast Native American art at the Burke Museum.

Qwalsius - Shaun Peterson
June 4, 2013