



THE WASHINGTON ARCHAEOLOGIST

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WASHINGTON ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
c/o Seattle Central Community College
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Seattle WA 98122

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FINAL ISSUE

STATEMENT OF POLICY

The Washington Archaeology Society will cease its function as a publishing society at least for the foreseeable future. Thus after 25 years of publishing the "Washington Archaeologist" and "Occasional Papers" we will 'hang it up' with this issue.

There are many reasons but the basic one is not enough people with enough interest to continue. We hope to have annual social meetings but there are no future plans for digs.

It is a little sad as literally hundreds of people have been involved in the activities of W.A.S. over the years. I feel we have made a significant contribution to scientific investigation and teaching of Archaeology. The Society has published over 200 papers on archaeology or related subjects that are in libraries all over the world. But times do change and we must adjust.

As we have done no research or investigation of late and this is our last issue, I thought it fitting that we reprint two papers from Vol. I dated 1957.

The first is from Vol. I No. 1, a declaration of the purpose and origins of the Society, by Charles Nelson, first W.A.S. President and long time guiding light.

The second paper is by Del Nordquist, "Remarks about the Emblem of W.A.S.". Del has the record of the longest service to W.A.S. of any member. He has held every office at one time or another and at times held them all from Secretary to Publisher. Del's single handed efforts kept us going in some lean years.

I am leaving the U.S.A. for two years, so any correspondence regarding the Society should be addressed to:

Vice-President,

ANN TRYNASTY
218 N.W. 70th
Seattle, WA 98117

or Board President,

JOHN PUTNAM
9026 N.E. 14th St.
Bellevue, WA 98004

Astrida Onat has assured me the W.A.S. artifact collection will have a safe home in her laboratories at Seattle Central Community College. She will make the Collection available to any qualified investigator. For information contact:

Dr. ASTRIDA ONAT
c/o Seattle Central Community College
Seattle, WA 98122

My best to you all.

Bob Beattie
President,
Washington Archaeological Society

ORIGIN OF WASHINGTON ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
C. G. Nelson, President, WAS

The mechanics of forming any society are very much the same--a group meets and elects an interim chairman; a constitution and by-laws are written and accepted; officers are elected and there you have an organization and a set of rules by which it can conduct its business. The Washington Archaeological Society followed this pattern to the letter. How it was formed was very routine. What is important, however, is why this group was formed -- where did the idea start -- what was the need for an organization?

During the spring quarter of 1956 an extension course was offered by Dr. Osborne that was essentially a survey of archaeology as it related to the Pacific Northwest. This class was attended by some who had a general interest in the Pacific Northwest; by teachers who wished to increase their knowledge of this area; and, by collectors whose interest was something more than academic.

Those of us collectors attending gained a world of factual information. One conclusion emerged although it was never once stated. Possession in itself is not creative. This idea when applied to the collection of artifacts emphasizes the need for having both the artifact and its record of collection complete so that the artifact has meaning. An artifact by itself is sterile--even its aesthetic value is depreciated.

The process of collecting an artifact so that it has meaning is a technical thing. The degree of technical skill required ranges from a knowledge of basic archaeological techniques to a high level of specialization that only a professional archaeologist achieves after years of study and experience. The opportunity to achieve technical competence individually is denied most collectors. The limitations are time, money and ability. The benefits that could result from the proper type of collective or group effort becomes apparent.

Besides the collector having an archaeological problem, the archaeologist working within his professional field has a collecting problem. Those of us who were considering the ideas and problems outlined above further recognized the need for an organization which would provide the means for the diffusion of archaeological knowledge and the preservation of archaeological findings, materials and sites. It is within this area that another basic requirement was met. In order for any organization to enjoy sustained success it must have something to give as well as receive.

The process of organizing the Society was consequently accomplished in consort with the Washington State Museum and the Department of Anthropology of the University of Washington. The minutes of the meetings during our organizational period show how carefully the charter members considered these problems. The action was a group effort with each of the members forming the charter contributing. Areas of disagreement were resolved through cogent arguments, reasoning and compromise resulting in what we hope is a high level of purpose and ideals.

REMARKS ABOUT THE EMBLEM OF THE WASHINGTON ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

By Del Nordquist

The design which every member finds on his membership card and at the heading of this publication is more than a decoration. It has significance which one might not realize upon seeing it for the first time. The emblem was taken from a petroglyph made by the Indians of this region many years ago. No living Indian has any knowledge of its origin and assign it to the period prior to the coming of men in the world.

The face of Tsagiglalal, The Rock Woman or "She Who Latches," is pecked into the face of a large fragment of basalt on the Washington side of the Dalles. The design shows signs of paint, mostly red ochre, rubbed into the pecked areas of the glyph. Certainly, the face must have been awe-inspiring to the Indians of the region for it spread over the face of the stone, which, itself, was almost as tall as an average man and as wide as he could stretch both arms. The position of the petroglyph is upon a ledge that overlooks the lower valley and it is in the immediate proximity of several pit houses and the famous Wakemap Mound. It is not likely that the stone will be inundated by the rising level of the river behind the Dalles Dam.

Edward Curtis stated that the Wishram brought offerings to "The Rock Woman." She had power and anyone might seek aid from her. Some sought to enhance their own abilities at hunting, fishing, or fighting. Some sought aid to alleviate their troubles and some sought to seek power to hurt or kill someone they hated. Women considered Tsagiglalal as able to insure pregnancy and to even determine the sex of their child. It is interesting that cradle boards were found among the rocks of the area. There is no evidence to prove that there was any connection between these boards and the power of the petroglyph, for they might have been part of a local burial complex. However, one can imagine and speculate that Tsagiglalal might have been the guardian of the children's remains.

The story told by the Wishram is that of the chieftainess who lived there in the remote past.

"A woman had a house where the village of Nih.hlu'idih was later built. She was chief of all who lived in the region. That was long ago, before Coyote came up the river and changed things, and people were not yet real people. After a time Coyote in his travels came to this place and asked the inhabitants if they were living well or ill. They sent him to their chief, who lived up in the rocks, where she could look down on the village and know all that was going on. Coyote climbed up to her home and asked: 'What kind of a living do you give these people? Do you treat them well, or are you one of those evil women?' 'I am teaching them how to live well, and to build good houses,' she said. 'Soon the world is going to change,' he told her, 'and women will no longer be chiefs. You will be stopped from being a chief.' Then he changed her into a rock with the command, 'You shall stay here and watch over the people who live at this place which shall be called Nin.hlu'idih.'"

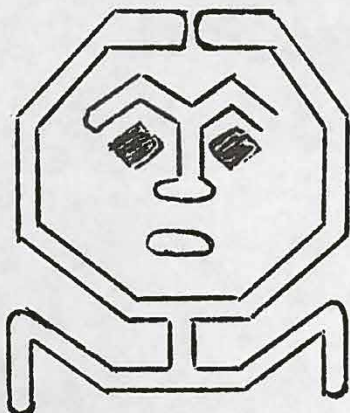
"All the people know that Tsagiglalal sees all things, for whenever they are looking up at her those large eyes are watching them." * (See footnote)

There is probably no more impressive petroglyph in the whole Columbia Valley than that of Tsagiglalal. For this reason alone it is quite appropriate that The Washington Archaeological Society use it as their emblem. Fundamentally, the glyph consists of prominent eyes, nose, mouth, and ears. The eyes are emphasized by brows. Throughout the whole of the Northwest this same combination exists in many forms and they are even adapted to the sally bags of the Dalles Region. More frequently the face appears in combination with other petroglyphs and occasionally in groups of the same form with minor variations. These faces are known all the way to Puget Sound and abound in the Lower Columbia area. Sometimes they are called owl representations. It is not unlikely that the awful representations of Tsonoqua, the Cannibal Woman of the Kwakiutl, may have some relationship to Tsagiglalal.

As would be expected, different areas transform the contextual meaning of the image into their own folk idiom and thereby manifest some attributes not given elsewhere. There is a thread of continuity shared between all which is that of a giantess able to do good and bad as she saw fit. This transformation of meaning is practiced among people everywhere; even among ourselves. One can cite examples from our own European-type culture. One such example is the use of Roman coins as decorations in Christian reliquaries. The bearded emperors of the late Roman Empire were especially used as they were reassigned the identity of John the Evangelist. Similarly, the Roman goddess Venus became the Virgin Mary.

With the many possibilities of interpretation of the "Rock Woman's" image, the petroglyph may take on special meaning for our society. The symbol is found widely in Washington and therefore represents the general brotherhood of the organization. It is the super-petroglyph of all in the state and becomes the climax of all forms of this art which are found so widely distributed in the region. As for speculative meanings to the society of the concept, "She Who Watches," it can be used for emphasis on the ethical standards of doing good and meritable work in archaeology. We might figure the emblem to scare off unscrupulous and indiscriminate diggers. As a final suggestion and one which the writer feels is much more appropriate, "The Watcher" should best represent the wardship which the society represents for the preservation and the salvage of our state's archaeological past.

* Edward S. Curtis, The North American Indians, V. 8, pp. 145-6



FACE DESIGN FROM
WASCO SALLY BAG

In Washington State Museum

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