

Stolen artifacts recovered in Portland



Spilyay Tymoo photo by Behrend

ARTIFACTS RETURNED—Chief Nelson Wallulatum, above, looked over his ceremonial suit recovered in Portland recently. At right, are just some of the items returned in the same investigation.



Spilyay Tymoo photo by Behrend

The Wasco ceremonial suit reported stolen by Wasco Chief Nelson Wallulatum on February 28, 1983 and numerous other items reported stolen from Lilly Heath, Velma Frank and Ellen Squiemphen last year were recovered at an "unknown source" in Portland by BIA criminal investigator Bill Elliott. The recovery came while Elliott was working with the Portland Police Bureau on another artifact theft. The suit, which is valued between \$8,000 and \$10,000, is almost completely intact and undamaged. The only item missing is the ceremonial staff that was stolen in an August burglary. All items were recovered at the same place and the same suspects are considered to be allegedly responsible for all the thefts.

The investigation department has been working on the artifacts burglaries for about six months. They have coordinated with police

departments in all cities such as Portland and Eugene that have large Indian populations. The Portland Police Bureau got the lead and came across, the biggest and "most major breaks" in the investigation. Portland is very interested and concerned about the artifacts thefts.

Sergeant of tribal investigations Rick Souers said that he and Elliott have been attending state law enforcement meetings to inform them of the cultural importance of Indian artifacts. Souers said that they are trying to establish a program in which to photo and inventory all articles of beadwork and other items belonging to tribal members that are either located in "treasure houses" or homes.

The number of artifact thefts on the Warm Springs reservation are up, says Jerome Main, agency special officer. From late July through mid-August 1982, eight burglaries were reported. By October,

more than 20 burglaries were being investigated by authorities. The rise in the number of thefts can be attributed to the ease of fencing the stolen articles and value of the artifacts. "The risks are small and the profits are great," says Main. The artifact-fencing business is very lucrative.

If a thief finds the right fence, one artifact, such as a huckleberry basket, can bring up to \$2,000. In addition, foreign countries are extremely interested in Indian artifacts. People from four primary countries, West Germany, Japan, Saudi Arabia and Italy, are involved in the purchase of artifacts.

Main said in order to lessen the number of artifact thefts on reservations, the bureau is seriously considering developing a program to identify all artifacts in the Northwest. The FBI currently uses a system, the National Crime Information

Center (NCIC), which locates stolen items that are identifiable through serial numbers that have been recovered. However, this system is not equipped to handle unmarked items such as artifacts.

Because there are no bureau funds for this new system, the bureau will be asking the tribes in the four Northwest states if they are interested in funding the program. Main estimates the system will cost approximately \$20,000. If everything goes as planned all tribes will have access to this theft

prevention program within six months.

Wallulatum was grateful that the outfit was recovered. he said the "religious significance of the outfit is beyond expression. It's like a part of my soul. The staff is still missing—I feel naked without it." Wallulatum has been using another outfit for ceremonies. The stolen outfit will be returned to Wallulatum when the investigation is completed.

Main said there are suspects, but would not release the names nor the identification of the fence in Portland.

Museum to depict Warm Springs story

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it be through audio/visual, murals or computers. It's important to get the accurate story across to the visitor, member or non-member.

Plume says the story line, so far, centers around the three tribes. "I see three different roads that are coming together in a major highway." It's important that each tribe keeps its own identity. "I try very hard to work closely with people so they know what they're doing and why," she says.

Developing such a plan carries big responsibilities, says Plume, who is of Sioux descent. "You always want to tell their story in the best way possible." Plume is always concerned with accuracy of a story line because she leaves the area, the tribes have to live with it. Plume feels that reservations are cultural centers in themselves and that Indian people are fortunate that they have history. "Their history began with Lewis and Clark."

In addition, culture preservation is exciting work and should open an entire new

employment field for tribal members. "This should encourage young people with their career planning," says Plume.

Plume is actively working with MOIHS and Liz Tewee, who is currently employed with the Tribe as museum intern. "I work closely with Liz so that she understands what's going on," says Plume.

"She's getting paid to train me," replied Tewee.

Plume's only regret is that she doesn't have more time to interview people but there are deadlines to be met. As Plume is conducting interviews, Jim Burke is conducting an economic feasibility study and Dave Waldron is working on the design of the museum. The time frame includes 26 steps, beginning with Plume's work and ending with the museum construction. Grand opening is planned for May 1986.

Between those two steps are many activities such as conducting a funding campaign because the museum won't be totally financed with tribal funds, establishing a budget, complete the final

design and engineering specifications of the building and groundbreaking.

The proposed location for the museum is Kah-Nee-Ta but because some people have voiced disagreement on this site, community meetings are planned for further discussion. Many people feel that a museum would be a drawing card for Kah-Nee-Ta and that it should be located there. Others feel the museum would be located too far from the Warm Springs community itself—out of reach of tribal members.

Plume worked with the Yakima Indian Nation in developing the story line for their museum and cultural center and also worked with the National Park Service with Indian tribes in cultural resource development for 12 years. She is currently attending the Oglala Community College, located on her reservation, studying for her degree in Lakota studies. She works part time as a consultant and is currently involved with her tribe in developing their museum.

There are many people, says Plume, who are unfamiliar with museums. "Many people have not been to museums. I wasn't interested until I ran a traveling art display. All museums are concerned with preservation and protection of a culture."

The museum's story will be the story of the Warm Springs tribe, as related by tribal members. It is the members who will select the story and how it will be depicted. "An interpretive plan is like a blueprint of a building. It establishes the basic structure,

then it is up to the planning committee to make the final display decisions," says Plume.

The Warm Springs museum will be a useful tool, a teaching mechanism, with which the Tribe will be able to relate to those who are unfamiliar with the Tribe's history, culture and heritage. And with Plume's apparent expert advice on how best to display those articles significant to Warm Springs' past, present and future, the museum will truly be a showcase and something that tribal members will be proud of.

Garage raffle results

The Tribal garage grand opening ceremony attracted over 185 people on May 20. Besides refreshments raffle prizes were offered.

Ninety-five people received prizes. Larger prizes winners included: Colleen Arthur, disc camera; Gwen Spino, silverware; Austin Smith,

suitcase; Leta Smith, electric knife; Craig Tailfeathers, picnic jug; Amelia Colwash, General Electric mixer; Teeney Miller, jacket; Tony Howtopat, popcorn popper; Cassie Katchia, Ray-o-vac carryboy; William Napyer, toaster; and Estelle Lawson, Frybaby.