

Beaded necklaces dipped in Tomanowos

TOMANOWOS continued
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to Grand Ronde for its power," Lewis said.

Travis Mercier created a cleansing solution of Mill Creek and rose water, which Tribal members dipped beaded necklaces in after the service, capturing some of Tomanowos' power.

Travis Mercier and Tribal intern Santiago Atanacio started the ceremony with an honor song, which was followed by a blessing given by Harrison.

Lewis delivered an opening speech and invited other Tribal members to share their experience of being reconnected with Tomanowos.

Travis Mercier spoke of how Tomanowos knows "our history of the land and our people. It is out of place here." He said he hopes that one day Tomanowos will return to its people and be placed in a protected area near where it used to sit on Tribal ceded lands.

Tribal Council member Chris Mercier remembered his first visit to the museum in 2001 and not knowing any of the meteorite's history.

"The connection between this meteorite and our ancestors has gone on for a long time," he said. "It has a fascinating history and there is an interesting story that circulates around this meteorite. And it will go on."

"It blows my mind that this is not of this Earth. You can't get more heavenly than that."

Soderberg said he regretted not attending the ceremony sooner.

"This is mind-staggering," he said, "and it was found on the land of my ancestors."

Snyder said she was honored to attend and happy that her daughter-in-law, Tina, could witness the event and take it home to share with her grandchildren.

"It's not just important for our Tribe," Snyder said. "It is a part of history."

Petite said he had read up on the Tribe's history and culture, which prompted his desire to visit Tomanowos.

"It gives me hope it will stay



Photos by Michelle Alaimo

Tribal Elder Raymond Petite takes in the World Trade Center site during a tour of New York City on Monday, June 14.



At left, Tribal Elder Jeanne Snyder talks about Tomanowos and being able to be part of the private ceremony with the meteorite at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City on Monday, June 14.

and museum made an agreement that benefits the Tribe and youth with the annual internship.

"Even though it is 2,500 miles away," Lewis observed, "Tomanowos is still helping us. That is a great thing to take away."

Museum intern Santiago Atanacio, 18, said the ceremony was the coolest experience he has had while in New York City.

"Everyone younger than me in the Tribe can know they can do this," Atanacio said.

Museum intern Corey Stryker, 16, said he did not know about Tomanowos' existence until a few years ago.

"My sister came here as an intern," he said. "It was a life-changing

experience. As a person not really involved in the Tribe, it is powerful to see some-

thing, feel something like this. It feels good to know it's part of my history now."

Tribal Council member Toby McClary, who was visiting Tomanowos for the third time, but the first time as a Tribal leader, said the words about its power and energy are true.

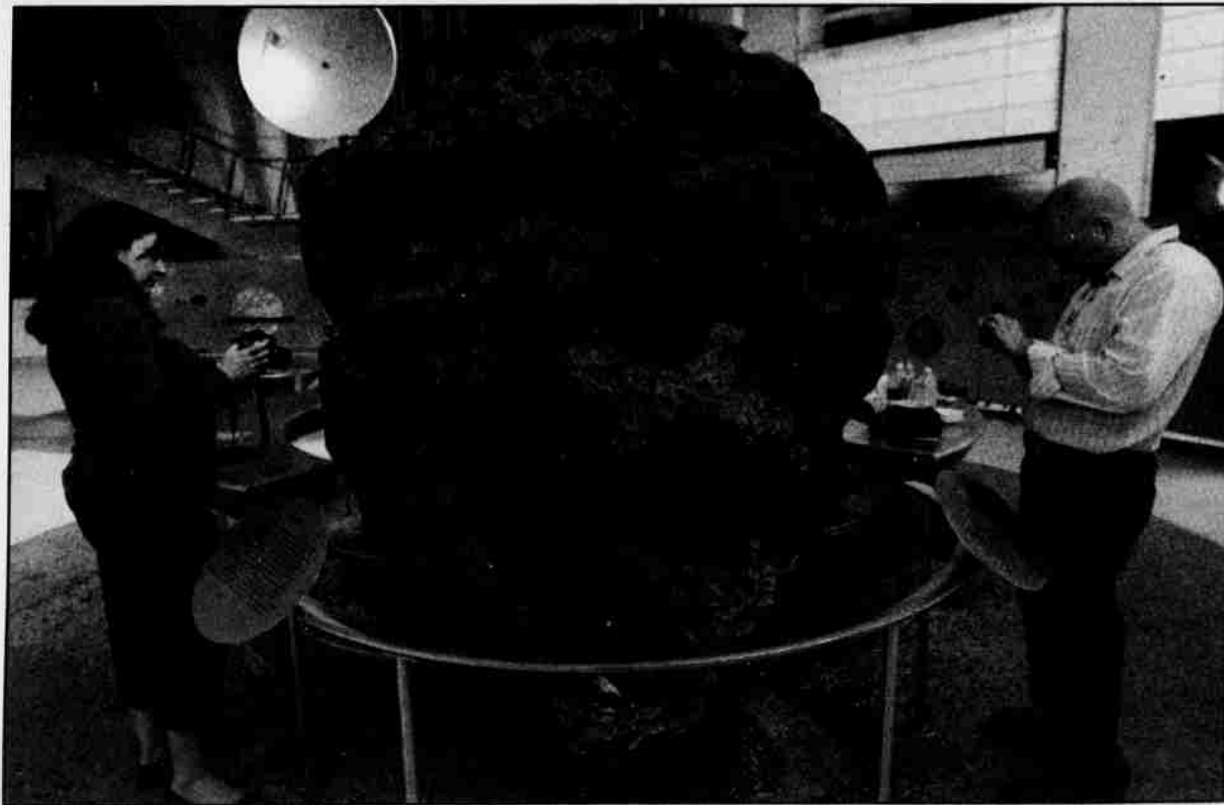
"The fact that we're sitting here proves how much power and energy this has," McClary said, looking at Tomanowos. "I still have a sense of the power this puts out. I wouldn't trade it for anything."

Tribal members then cleansed Tomanowos with water as a blessing song by Mercier and Atanacio echoed in the vacated center.

Tomanowos was once again feeling the touch of its long-lost people, hearing their voices and language, and, just perhaps, enjoying the presence of Harrison once again.

"Every time I visit, it's a big experience to me," Travis Mercier said. "It's a pilgrimage I want to make until it returns home."

"This has been a really great experience for me," Sell-Sherer, who attended with her sister, Tribal Elder Nancy Coleman, said of her time alone with Tomanowos. "I'm happy. I have a much more peaceful inner-being." ■



Above, David Lewis, Tribal member and Cultural Resources Department manager, touches Tomanowos to feel its power during a private ceremony.

Tribal member Camille Mercier, left, and Tribal Council member Chris Mercier both take pictures of Tomanowos before the private ceremony at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City on Monday, June 14.