

Collection includes between 500 and 600 items

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um and welcome home the artifacts gathered by Episcopal Rev. Robert Summers in the 1870s from the first Native Americans to inhabit the Grand Ronde Reservation.

The remodeling of Chachalu has turned the library area in the former Willamina Middle School building into a world-class, 4,000-square-foot gallery space and former classrooms have been renovated into work areas, offices and research library for Cultural Resources Department staff members.

The Summers Collection includes between 500 and 600 items collected in the 19th century that were purchased from Summers by the Rev. Selwyn Freer, who donated all of the items to the British Museum in 1900. Approximately 260 of the items are related to the Grand Ronde Reservation and the British Museum loaned 16 of those items to the Grand Ronde Tribe for the "Rise of the Collectors" exhibit that runs at Chachalu through May 2019.

The British Museum loan might be its first ever to a Native American Tribe in the United States, several people said during the re-opening event.

The loan culminates approximately 20 years of perseverance by the Grand Ronde Tribe to either have the items returned or, as they are now, loaned.

In December 2002, Tribal Council Chairwoman Cheryle A. Kennedy, former Tribal Council member June Sell-Sherer and then-Cultural Resources Department employees Lindy Trolan and Kim Mueller traveled to London to view the items being held by the British Museum. They were informed at the time that it would require an act of Parliament for any item in the museum's collection to be relinquished.

"The thing that I thought after we asked them, 'We're here to return ..., we want to take these back home.' They said, 'Yes, we understand. We'll do all we can to help you, but you have to understand these don't belong to the museum. They belong



To listen to excerpts from the Chachalu Phase II grand opening event, visit www.speaker.com and search for "Smoke Signals podcasts."

to the people and so you need to have an act of Parliament to have them returned.' Kennedy recalled before viewing the 16 items.

"The other thing I thought about was Restoration. The mightiest country in the world, the United States, said they did something wrong and reversed our Termination. So, if the United States can do that, hey, we can get an act of Parliament. It's doable. ... I'm glad they are here and, yes, I did think we would get them."

Kennedy said she thinks that Chachalu is better than what Tribal members envisioned in the 1980s when the seed was planted for an eventual Tribal museum.

"It is such a proud moment," Kennedy said. "No words to express ... If you looked at a landmark in time of the Grand Ronde people's history, it would be right up there among one of the first marks. We live on. That's how I feel about it."

The Chachalu Phase II re-opening brought out many current and former Tribal Council members, including Kennedy, Vice Chair Chris Mercier, Secretary Jon A. George, Brenda Tuomi, Kathleen George, Michael Langley, Lisa Leno, Jack Giffen Jr., Jan Reibach Sr., Kathryn Harrison, Steve Bobb Sr. and Reyn Leno.

"I am so proud of our Cultural Resources Department," Jon A. George said while taking in the new exhibit space. "It looks so professional. The way it's displayed. I feel like I am coming into somebody's home and seeing their beautiful

collections. ... What a dream come true."

Former Tribal employees who attended included Trolan, Chinook Tribal Chief Tony Johnson and former Cultural Resources Department Manager June Olson.

"It makes my heart happy that they are finally home after 100 plus years," Trolan said after viewing the 16 items. "They've been at the British Museum since 1900, and before that they were taken from their homes. So it's beautiful to see it come full circle."

Tribal Council Chief of Staff Stacia Hernandez and Tribal Council Administrative Assistant Shannon Simi greeted visitors and handed out approximately 250 gift bags that included a "Rise of the Collectors" informational book that explains the history of how the collection was created and delves into details about the 16 items on loan.

The 16 items are displayed in a 144-square-foot, 9-foot-tall Brentwood box, which was a "way to hold something of significance for the future," Cultural Resources Department Manager David Harrelson said during the re-opening presentation. Only five people were allowed inside the box at any one time to view the Summers' items.

The items on display include an adze handle, cooking basket, cooking tray, dentalium purse, beaver teeth dice, elk skull spoon, epaulettes, gig (harpoon), horn bowl, horn spoon, hunting cap, mat creaser, parfleche (purse), rattle, seed basket and seed fan.

Attendees standing in the Brentwood box heard the sound made by the rattle, providing them with a sublime extra level of understanding, Historic Preservation Manager Briece Edwards said.

Interpretive Coordinator Travis Stewart, who sat on the selection committee, said the 16 items were picked because they reflect the diversity of the people who lived on the Grand Ronde Reservation in the 1870s.

"They are objects from all over the ceded lands," Stewart said. "This shows the diverse arts and skills of the people here."

Although the items are on loan, Tribal Cultural Resources staff spent the week since their arrival on May 23 documenting the items by taking multiple photographs and inputting the photos in a 3-D computer program so that the Tribe will always have the items virtually, Senior Archaeologist Jessica Curteman said. Even after the items are returned to London, Tribal artisans can call up the 3-D scans to examine how something was carved or how a basket was woven, she said.

The Chachalu gallery space also features a wall-length picture of the Willamette Valley inundated with water from the Missoula floods that also carved out the Columbia River Gorge. Other exhibits and informational panels discuss the Tribe's housing, traditional foods, rural lifeways, history and relationship with Willamette Falls.

"Absolutely beautiful," Tuomi said after seeing the 16 Summers Collection items. "I wonder whose family they belong to. I wonder who made them. It makes me think back and try to put myself in many, many years ago and it's amazing. It's quite emotional. ... I look forward to future exhibits."

The Phase II re-opening presentation that started at 4:30 p.m. was held outside under a tent. An Honor Guard of Tribal Elders Steve Bobb Sr., Raymond Petite and Alton Butler and community members Al Miller and Richard VanAtta brought in the colors and one of the largest impromptu drums to form for a Tribal event during the last 10 years sang and drummed to welcome visitors.

Harrelson said that Chachalu is a Kalapuyan word meaning "the place of the burnt timbers" and that the museum's location has been a center of the community for more than 100 years. "We aim to keep it that way through providing a place where visitors can learn about the Grand Ronde people," he added.

Harrelson also thanked Cultural Resources Department staff members who helped save the Tribe at least \$2 million in the development

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Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Eric Bernando looks at a wall length photo depicting the flooding that occurred in the Willamette Valley as a result of the Bretz Floods, also known as the Missoula Floods, during the Chachalu Museum & Cultural Center's open house held on Friday, June 1.