

Raven's Gift

This one was a story about a young fellow... the Man in the middle with the adze in his hand was a carver. He's holding the adze, he is saying "Here is my gift to you". The Chief commissioned this pole and the Raven brought the carved pole to another village that was near the river... the Beaver helped provide the log. I enjoyed working on the poles and I liked the people in Duncan. I love carving; it's been my life's work. I've been doing it almost forty years. I just love to carve. I strive to get better every time I do something (Doug LaFortune, Interview, Sept 2012).[©]



1989 | Size: 20'10" (6.4 m)

Doug LaFortune (a.k.a. William Horne)

Doug was born in 1953 and grew up in Duncan. He is Coast Salish of Quw'utsun' (Cowichan) and Tsawout, WSÁNEĆ (Saanich) heritage. On his mother's side, his grandfather Dick Harry was a chief. Doug started carving when he was nineteen years old. Doug's brothers Perry, Howard, and Aubrey LaFortune all helped carve his poles for this collection. His other artistic passion is drawing.[©]



Courtesy of Jane Mertz.

The Tzinquaw Story



BALD EAGLE
(YUXWULE)

KILLER WHALE
(Q'UL-LHANUMUTSUN)

KILLER WHALE CALF
(Q'UL-LHANUMUTSUNAL-LH)

The story goes that the Quw'utsun' people were starving because the Killer Whale prevented the Salmon from coming up the Cowichan River. So the people prayed day after day, until finally their prayers were answered. The Tzinquaw (Thunderbird) came and picked up the Killer Whale, deposited it on Mount Tzouhalem; the Salmon started coming up the river again. In this case, the pole depicts the Thunderbird (mythical eagle figure) as a saviour and protector of our people; and the Killer Whale as a monster (Cowichan Tribes, Submission, 1986).

As a first process to carve a traditional pole you would burn the log, burn the outer layer with pitch. The result is a different colour on red cedar; it is sort of a grey-black. The black sea-going canoes were also prepared in this same manner. Today we would use the natural colours and not paint on the poles. (Harvey Alphonse, Interview, Nov 2012).[©]



1986 | Size: 15'1" (4.6 m)

Chief Swalettul't'hw (Harvey Alphonse) and Kelly Antoine

Harvey was born in 1949 and is a hereditary chief with the Qw'umiyiqun (Comiaken) of Quw'utsun' Tribes through his grandmother Tstaaslewut (Catherine Lohe'), and her father Lohe' a hereditary chief. He carves masks for his family's sacred sxwayxwuy (mask dance) ceremonies. Kelly Antoine carved the upper figure of this pole; he is a carver from Samuna', (Somenos), of Quw'utsun' Tribes. Both artists are Coast Salish. Photo is of Chief Alphonse.[©]

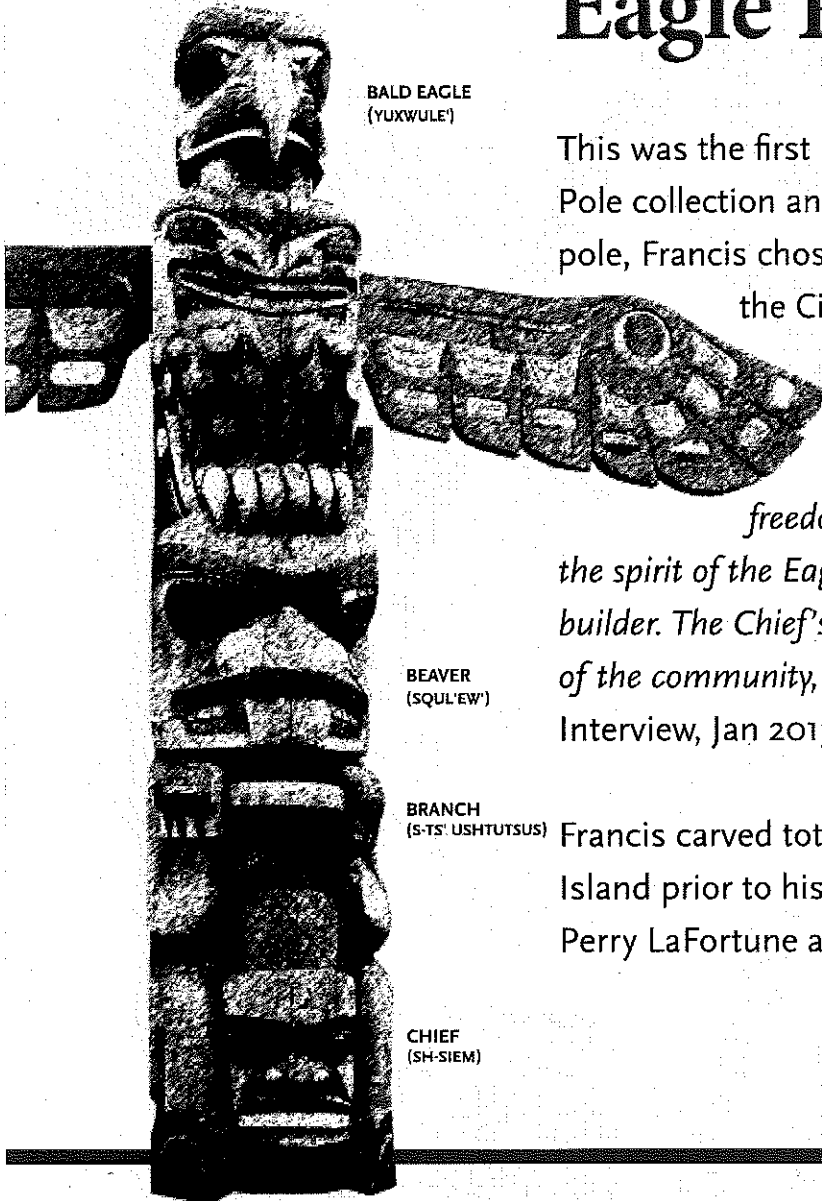


Courtesy of Cowichan Tribes.

Eagle Pole

BALD EAGLE
(YUXWULE')

This was the first pole commissioned for the City's Totem Pole collection and was raised in 1986. As this was the first pole, Francis chose the beaver to symbolize the start of the City of Totem's project. The beaver is always recognizable by the large front teeth.



BEAVER
(SQU'EW')

The Eagle for the Horne family represents freedom of spirit. The face on the chest represents the spirit of the Eagle. The Beaver was chosen as it represents the builder. The Chief's face on the Beaver tail represents the people of the community, the Quw'utsun' people (Francis Horne Sr., Interview, Jan 2013).

BRANCH
(S-TS' USHTUTSUS)

Francis carved totem poles for other projects on Vancouver Island prior to his work in Duncan. Francis's younger brother Perry LaFortune assisted him with this carving.®

CHIEF
(SH-SIEM)



1986 | Size: 12'9" (3.9 m)

Khut-Whee-Mul-Uhk (Francis Horne Sr.)

Francis is of Coast Salish heritage and was born in 1954 in Mount Vernon, Washington State. His mother was from Tsawout (Saanich) and his father from Lummi (Washington). Francis was raised on Vancouver Island. He started carving at the age of eighteen and is self-taught. Francis is the second oldest of six brothers (LaFortune), all accomplished artists.®



Courtesy of the artist.



OWL
(SPULQWITTH'E')

HUMAN SPIRIT

CHIEF
(SH-SIEM)

Owl Spirit

The design of this pole was inspired by Tom's respect for his mother. *My late grandfather, my late aunts and my mother always believed their suli (spirit) to be Spulqwitth'e' (Owl). That's why I did an Owl, to respect my mother. Rather than leave bare wood at the bottom, I wanted the Chief to have on his Killer Whale clan regalia. I cut my hand with a chisel, when I was carving the hand on the Chief figure, and when I was done I carved five stitches on the bottom of the Chief's hand. Wood is the perfect medium, you don't make mistakes, you make modifications with wood* (Tom LaFortune, Interview, Oct 2012).[©]



1986 | Size: 11'7" (3.5 m)

KETÍWFEL (Tom LaFortune)

Tom was born in Duncan in 1959 and is of Coast Salish heritage. He is from the Tsawout First Nation of the WSÁNEĆ (Saanich) peoples. Tom has worked with wood since the age of eleven. He honed his carving skills with master carver Simon Charlie, while working alongside his brothers Doug and Francis.

Tom's work is recognizable by his distinctive choice of colour.[©]



Courtesy of Jane Mertz.

Kwagu't Bear holding a Seal



Richard's father, Henry Hunt, was commissioned by the Royal BC Museum in Victoria to carve a traditional house post for their display of a Kwagu't big house. This pole is Richard's interpretation of the work that Henry did for the museum. *The Frog on top of the pole represents the Frog Dance that belonged to my mum. The Kwagu't Bear represents the dance of the Animal Kingdom from the forest and also the Hamatsa*. The Seal is also part of the same dance* (Richard Hunt, Interview, Sept 2012). Richard is strong in his traditions of the Kwagu't people. The dances that are represented on this pole are only allowed to be danced by Richard's family. When asked why he chose these figures, Richard responded, *It's the way my dad did it.*©

*Hamatsa is a high-ranking dance in Kwagu't culture.



1987 | Size: 11'9" (3.6 m)

Gwe-la-y-gwe-la-gya-les (Richard Hunt)

Richard is Kwagu't and was born in 1951 in 'Yalis (Alert Bay, Cormorant Island, off Vancouver Island), BC. His parents were Henry Hunt from Tsakis (Fort Rupert) and his mother, Helen, is from Dzawada'enuxw (Kingcome Inlet).

Richard learned to carve from his father. Richard has been honoured many times for his cultural work including the Order of BC and the Order of Canada.©



Courtesy of Jane Mertz.



The Friendship Pole



BALD EAGLE
(YUXWULE)

BEAR
(SPE'UTH)

SALMON
(STSEELHTUN)

Keeping with First Nations tradition, Cicero worked with his sons Darrell and Doug August on this pole. The sons assisted in all aspects of the carving, from roughing it out to the finishing work. Cicero's poles are tool-finished, not sanded, a feature that distinguishes his work.

The Eagle is the protector, he watches over us from the sky. The Bear symbolizes strength of the tribe. The people live with the Salmon all year round. It nourishes the people. The Salmon is smoked and salted to put up for our sustenance (Cicero August, Interview, Dec 2012).

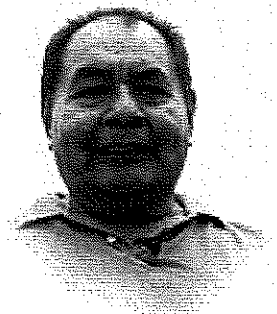
In 1986, Cicero carved a five-foot pole of an eagle as a gift to Duncan's sister city of Kaikohe, New Zealand. Tupari TeWhata refurbished the Kaikohe eagle pole in 2002, where it still stands in Council Chambers.®



1987 | Size: 12'6" (3.8 m)

Cicero August

Cicero was born in 1940 and is Coast Salish from Samuna', one of the Quw'utsun' Tribes. He is an accomplished carver in the Coast Salish style and has carved since the age of eight. He studied with his grandfather, uncle, and also with master carver Simon Charlie.®



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Transformation in Life



EAGLE GUARDIAN
(LULUMEXUN TU YUXWULE')

YOUNG PERSON
(SWIW'LUS)

BALD EAGLE
(YUXWULE')

MAN
(SWUY'QE')

This pole depicts the story of a transformation in life. The bottom figure signifies a Man on a vision quest. During this rite, an Eagle carries him away. When he returns as a young person, the Eagle with the wings wrapped around him represents his Guardian Spirit. His life starts, like a rebirth, or as some people state, a second chance to change his ways. The Eagle represents wisdom, great vision, and healing (Harvey Alphonse, Interview, Nov 2012).

Harvey was influenced by local carvers, including Nelson Canute who worked with Harvey on this pole. Nelson carved the top figure of Eagle holding the young person.®



1987 | Size: 12'11" (3.9 m)

Chief Swaletthul't'hw (Harvey Alphonse) and Nelson Canute

Harvey was born in 1949 and is a hereditary chief with the Qw'umiyiqun (Comiaken) of Quw'utsun' Tribes through his grandmother Tstaaslewut (Catherine Lohe'), and her father Lohe' a hereditary chief. He carves masks for his family's sacred sxwayxwuy (mask dance) ceremonies. Nelson Canute was born in 1932 and is Qw'umiyiqun (Comiaken). Nelson carved miniature totem poles and this was his first large pole. Both artists are Coast Salish. Photo is of Chief Alphonse.®



Courtesy of Cowichan Tribes.

Centennial Pole



BALD EAGLE
(YUXWULE')

WILLIAM CHALMERS
DUNCAN
(CITY FOUNDER)

THUNDERBIRD
(TZINQUAW)

KILLER WHALE
(Q'UL-LHANUMUTSUN)

CHIEF MAKER
(SLHENI)

FROG
(WUXUS)

The front of the pole is carved in traditional Kwakwaka'wakw style and the back is more Coast Salish. The snub-nosed canoe is representative of the Coast Salish style of canoe. The Quw'utsun' people are represented by the story of the Tzinquaw (Thunderbird) and the Q'ul-lhanumutsun (Killer Whale). The Chief Maker on the bottom of the pole is to honour the women in the community. The Salmon on the back are surrounded by painted lines representing the fish weir that is used to trap the Salmon. We wanted to honour the five original tribes in the ceremony (represented by the five salmon); each tribe had a representative at the dedication. Everything was about blessing the day with the chosen dances and songs. Mervyn Child, my nephew, and family members assisted in carving this pole (Calvin Hunt, Interview, Mar 2013).[©]

Totem co-sponsored by: Building Communities through Arts and Heritage Program, Department of Canadian Heritage, to commemorate the Centennial of the Incorporation of the City of Duncan in 1912.



2012 | Size: 34'0" (10.4m)

Kwagu't Chief Tlasutiwalis (Calvin Hunt)

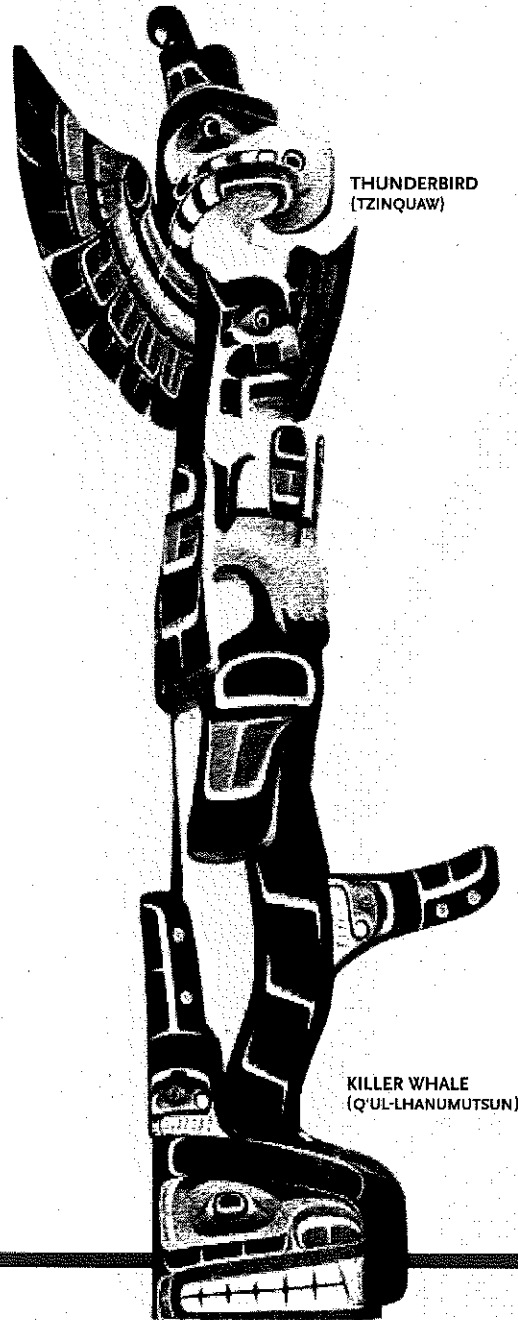
Calvin was born in 1956 and is the youngest son of Kwagu't hereditary Chief Thomas Hunt and Emma Hunt, the daughter of Mowachaht Chief Dr. Billy. Calvin's career as an artist started at age twelve and his passion for the arts is evident in the pieces he creates. He has received many awards for his work including induction into the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts.[©]



Courtesy of the artist.



Sea and Sky



THUNDERBIRD
(TZINQUAW)

KILLER WHALE
(Q'UL-LHANUMUTSUN)

1990 | Size: 20'0" (6.1 m)

The pole was done more as a symbol of British Columbia, as the figures represent sky and sea, and were done in a balanced relation to one another. The powerful Thunderbird being a symbol of the supernatural and of strength, with lightning and thunder as signs of his flight. The Killer Whale is shown in its awesome form reflecting its natural presence (Harold Alfred, Submission, 1990).

The Thunderbird is a mythical creature that is common in First Nations stories on the Northwest Coast, and the Killer Whale is often shown on poles with the Thunderbird. The colours that Harold used to paint this pole were inspired by commercial products: an Export "A"® cigarette package for the green and a Coca Cola® pop can for the red. John Ingraham, who taught the art of carving in the Kwakwaka'wakw territory, assisted Harold with carving this pole.©



Harold Alfred

Harold is from the 'Namgis (Alert Bay, Cormorant Island, off Vancouver Island) of the Kwakwaka'wakw people. Since 1990, he has become an accomplished jewellery maker working in both silver and gold.©



Courtesy of the artist.

Pole of Wealth



THUNDERBIRD
(TZINQUAW)

KILLER WHALE
(Q'UL-LHANUMUTSUN)

BLACK BEAR
(SPE'UTH)

All these artists used to “hang out” together in Duncan during this time and shared ideas, usually at Simon Charlie’s carving shed. This pole was a style that Simon started; it is a pole of wealth. The Thunderbird and Killer Whale are strong symbols with many First Nations on the Northwest Coast. The Bear is a Black Bear as they are from Vancouver Island. Norman had his own style of carving that two of his nephews were starting to emulate (in the 1990s). No one else is using this unique style, it is not considered Coast Salish, Nuu-chah-nulth or Kwagui’t; it was uniquely his own (Jane Marston, Interview, Jan 2013, sister of Rose Baines-Read who assisted Norman with this pole).[©]



1988 | Size: 12'9" (3.9 m)

Norman John

Norman was born in 1929 in Mowachaht, Nuu-chah-nulth Territory, on the West Coast of Vancouver Island. Norman learned to carve at the age of nine from his father, Jimmy John, who was a gifted carver. Rose Baines-Read (sister of Corky Baines and Jane Marston) was Coast Salish, born in 1948 on Peggy Island. She was an assistant carver to Norman for this pole. Both artists are now deceased.[©]



Courtesy of City of Totems book.