



Nisqually Indian Tribe

ARCHIVES VIRTUAL GALLERY PRESENTATION

The preservation of photographs and collections of both physical and digital is an integral part of making sure that the history and culture are preserved and perpetuated for the future generations of the Nisqually tribe.

By Kurtis Bullchild, Archives

IN OUR VIRTUAL GALLERY...

- Baskets
- Bentwood Boxes & Chests
- Stone & Tile



BASKET: CEDAR ROOT BERRY BASKET (1/4)

- All the basket materials were gathered during late or early summer. All materials needed to make them need to be dried to weave together.
- Material: Coiled cedar root, bear grass, dyed cherry bark
- This basket was used to store dried berries for winter. The picking baskets were made differently. This design represents berries. This basket is also waterproof.



BASKET: EYES OF THE GREAT SPIRIT (2/4)

- Material: Bear grass, dyed cherry bark, Equisetum-cedar root base
- The design tells about the Great Spirit story. This basket was water proof and used for storing large food items, most likely fresh foods.



BASKET: KALAMA FAMILY (3/4)

- Material: Coiled cedar root, bear grass, dyed cherry bark
- The Kalama Family is a large family within the Nisqually Tribe. This basket was made for storing dried fish, or meat. Also could've been a cooking basket.
- The design of this basket could have been about the family, an event, or family member. Examples: warrior, war, marriage, chief, or treaty signing.



BASKET: BLOOD OF MOTHER SONG NAME (4/4)

- Material: Coiled cedar root, bear grass, dyed cherry bark
- The song is in the design of this basket. The basket maker knew the song. This was most likely used to hold water and other liquid type of materials.



BENTWOOD BOX & CHESTS

- Material: Cedar
- Bentwood boxes and chests were used by the Northwest Coast tribal people for cooking, storage for foodstuffs such as dried fish, fish eggs, dried berry cakes, nuts, also dishes, bowls, tools, trade goods and for trading. Bentwood boxes and chests came in variety of sizes, with or without a lid or handle, and were decorated as well as plain.
- At a Potlatch and on certain occasions, the magnificent chest and their contents were set out in a display of opulence to validate the wealth and status of the household. Bentwood containers with a height greater than the width are termed boxes, while those with a length greater than their height are referred to as chests. Bentwood containers are made by kerfing and steambending a single plank of Cedar to form four sides. (Cedar, Hilary Stewart)



STONE

- Material: Stone (type unknown)
- Mortar and Pestle, used to process medicinal plants, nuts and grains or even various minerals like ochre or vivianite to produce natural “paints”. This mortar and pestle was donated to the T.H.P.O Department 2021, by a person whose grandparents had found them on their property over forty years ago and wanted them returned to Nisqually Tribe.



TILE

- Material: Ceramic
- Nisqually Tribe Archives received 12 ceramic wall tiles (6" x 6" ea) with artwork from Klee Wyk Studio, donated from Heidi Smith and Mary Blazek, daughters of Ethel Petro. The history from Heidi is, "these tiles were never installed and when my mom (Ethel Petro) moved into her home in Tacoma, WA in the 1990's we found these wrapped and tucked into a corner of the garage. Since the internet was in its infancy at the time, it was hard for us to find any information about Klee Wyk Studios. All we found was that it was a studio active in the 50's and early 60's located in the Nisqually flats and that it concentrated on Northwest Coast Indian Art. We were not able to find a contact at that time so put them away, mom (the estate of Ethel Petro) has been gone for a while and she wanted these tiles to go back to the Nisqually tribe". The tiles are from Del Mc Bride, Klee Wyk Studio collection. Del Mc Bride is the descendant of John (McLeod) McCloud, Catherine Mounts, and McAllister families.

