



TOTEM PRESERVATION—Mrs. Jane Wallen, Director of the Alaska State Museum, left, is seen with Joe Demmert, Sr. who assisted Mrs. Wallen has been busy most of the summer in the

totem pole preservation project. The picture was taken during work in the town of Craig, Alaska.

—JOHN POORE Photograph

Museum Director Mrs. Jane Wallen Kept Busy on Totem Preservation

The totem pole preservation project has kept Alaska State Museum Director Jane Wallen on the road much of the summer.

During June, Wilson Duff, associate of Smithsonian Institution and Joe Clark, a wood preservation specialist along with several older Tlingit and Haidas made a survey of old deserted villages locating totem poles.

The basic aim of the survey was to locate remaining poles and buildings in deserted villages and identify the poles which were in a sufficient good condition to be preserved.

Many of the poles were so deteriorated and beyond preservation efforts. The Ketchikan and Wrangell Alaska Native Brotherhood camps arranged to find those who were able to help in the survey.

Ketchikan ANB has formed a committee to work on ownership of poles in conjunction with Klawock and Hydaburg ANB. Ben Lawless, assistant chief for Smithsonian also visited Wrangell, Ketchikan and Old Kasaan.

His experience in planning of exhibit facilities will aid in his role to help the various villages and museums in planning

for the kind of building which will be needed in which the poles may be preserved.

The important factor will be being able to secure permission from the tribal owners of poles and to bring them into a central building for preservation since since this is the only way wood can be indefinitely preserved.

The museum is currently making photographic prints of poles which could be preserved and sending them to Ketchikan, Hydaburg, and Klawock AMB camps to help identify poles.

Mrs. Wallen is working figuring cost of removing poles from old sites and hopes to go to

Washington, D. C. in October with the initial proposal.

The Smithsonian has agreed to co-sponsor in the request for funds to help remove the poles and for construction of the building where poles will be preserved.

An important feature of the project will be the Tlingit and Haida traditional art will be a matter of record since much of the import and tourist products are not true representation of northwest art.

Director Jane Wallen attributes much of the success of the program to the cooperation and assistance from the AMB.