

# Tlingit-Haida Cultural Show Impresses

By John Borbridge, Jr.  
Tlingit-Haida Group at Large

The first annual Tlingit and Haida Culture and Art Show, sponsored by the Tlingit and Haida Group at Large, Greater Juneau Area, was held at the Juneau National Guard Armory on April 8-9.

It was enthusiastically received, with attendance estimated at 600. Remarks received at the conclusion of the show included: "A beautiful show!" "Thank you for permitting us to see these wonders!" "A splendid display of Alaskan history!" "You must bring this wonderful display to us again!"

The generous response of participating communities ensured the success of this venture with Angoon, Haines, Hoonah, Hydaburg, Juneau, Klukwan, Aitka and Yakutat being represented.

Among the many uniquely valuable and meaningful artifacts on display were Chilkat balnkets, various ceremonial headdresses, jewelry, ceremonial knives, potlatch bowls, intricately designed and carved, hats, horn spoons, food containers, storage boxes, a canoe, totem pole, Russian trading goods, and many other items.

A representative of the clan whose artifacts were being displayed was present at each table.

The public was informed as to the significance of various items by Tlingits and Haidas who were dressed in ceremonial garb.

In the background, visitors could hear tape recordings of Tlingit and Haida songs.

Mrs. Jennie Klanott of Haines demonstrated the skill involved in the weaving of a Chilkat blanket while Mrs. Kadashan was weaving a basket and Mrs. Bessie Visaya and Mrs. Mary Betts were sewing mocassins.

The Tlingit and Haida Group at Large, Greater Juneau Area, was the host to over 100 participants and visitors at a dinner following the close of the exhibition.

John Borbridge, Jr., president of the organization, and Mrs. Albert Wallace, program chairman, expressed heartfelt appreciation to the various individuals who, by sharing the many objects that they had, helped to make the show a success.

The willing spirit demonstrated by the many volunteer helpers, among whom were a large number of our young people, was most impressive.

One of the most rewarding outcomes of this show was the reaction of many of our young people, whose pride in their heritage was either re-awakened or reinforced.

Carl Sandburg once wrote: "When a nation goes down... (or) a society perishes, one condition may always be found. They forgot where they came from."

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Through this show, we demonstrated our pride in our heritage.

Plans are now being made for another such show for 1968 at which time it is anticipated there will be increased participation and attendance.