

Saxman Native Village

Clan House

Rest Rooms

Halibut Street

Carving Center

Thunderbird/Whale Pole

Moon Raven Pole ☼ ☐☐☐ ☼ Sun Raven Pole

Eagle Pole 11 13 Seward Pole

Owl Pole 10 14 Kats/Loon Pole

Eagle/Beaver Pole 9 16 Chief Ebbits Pole 15 Lincoln Pole

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Totem Guards Frog Border Totem Guards

Killer Whale Avenue

Eagle/Beaver Pole 7
Rock Oysterman Pole 6
Klawak Blackfish Fin Pole 5
Kats & Bear Wife Pole 4

Totem Row

18 Eagle/Beaver Pole
Gift Shop & Restroom
19 Raven/Frog Pole
20 Two Frogs Pole
21 Pointing Figure Pole

Eagle Avenue

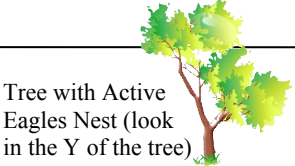
3
Monuments & Petroglyphs 2
Sun Raven Pole 1

3 City Hall
Parking
Bus Stop

South Tongass Highway

Downtown Ketchikan / Cruise Ship Terminals

Bus Stop



Tree with Active Eagles Nest (look in the Y of the tree)

Saxman Native Village Totem Poles

1. **Sun Raven Pole:** This is a Memorial Pole. Moving down the pole - the figure at the top is the Sun Raven, the human figures are his children, the round face symbolizes Fog Woman & below her is Raven and Frog. Next to the wings of Raven are figures of salmon. The Sun, Raven, Salmon, & Frog are all clans of the Tlingit Nation. This pole also illustrates three Tlingit legends. The top represents Raven's birth to a Tlingit girl, who married the Sun; the humans are their children who returned to earth. The Frog Woman and Raven tell how Raven got angry at Fog Woman because she was a better fisherman than him and how she left him taking her Salmon with her (which is why salmon swim upstream). The Raven and Frog figures tell a legend of how Raven followed Frog to the bottom of the ocean and brought back food for the Tlingit people after the great flood had almost destroyed the world and had wiped out all the other food.
2. **Monuments, Petroglyphs, & Cenotaphs:**
 - a. Petroglyphs: Ancient rock carvings of the indigenous people of this area. There are no Tlingit histories of their origin or purpose. The Tlingit's say they were here since the beginning of time. Exact time is difficult to say but at least 15,000 years old.
 - b. Cenotaphs: A monument, marker, or headstone placed in memory of a deceased person who was not found (as in drowning) or whose body is buried elsewhere.
 - c. Marble Grizzly Bear Monument: Main emblem of the Grizzly Bear House of the Wolf Clan. This monument is the gravestone of Tlkiateuo, a former chief of the Tlingit people. Wood carving began to decline in the 1800's and marble monuments were sometimes used in place of wooden monuments. Notice how the carver simulated the adze marks of a totem pole figure. This monument was placed before the 1900's.
 - d. Beaver: This monument was placed in the late 1930's or early 1940's in memory of the relatives of Paul Johnny and other members of the Beaver Clan.
3. **Tired Wolf Host Posts:** These poles are fastened to the corner posts of the tribal houses and are made to be portable so that they transferred to a new house if the clan desired. These posts were carved in 1827 for members of the Kanagunt Island people. They are not identical – the differences are in the eyes. The one with the plain eyes is considered inferior to the other.
4. **Kats & Bear Wife Pole:** This pole would have been set into the front of a Tribal House and on special occasions, people would enter the Tribal House through this door. The opening also represents the bear den. The figure at the top is one of the Kats Bear children. The man figure is Kats being held by his bear wife. The face at the bottom is the human wife. Notice the Labret through her lip. This pole is another version of the Kats Bear Wife Story (see the story under Kats Pole #14).
5. **Klawak Blackfish Fin Pole:** This memorial pole is also referred to as the 'SeaBear' Pole. The top part of the pole represents the fin of the killer whale, another local clan. The bottom figure represents the Bear. Both the Killer Whale and the Bear Clans belong to the Eagle division of the Tlingit people.

6. **Rock Oysterman Pole:** This is a Memorial Pole to a young man who lost his life fishing for octopus. The figure at the top is Eagle; the two lower figures are Beavers. The bottom figure is the rock oyster. These figures represent the clans the young man belonged to. The human figure is the victim. The man drowned when the giant oyster shell closed upon his arm and he could not get away from the incoming tide. The two-toned human face represents his violent death.
7. **Eagle/Beaver Pole:** This pole is one of a set of three Memorial Poles. The second is directly across the street and the third is in front of the Village store. The figures at the top represent the Eagle Tail House and the figures at the bottom represent the Beaver Clan. These are Memorial Poles to the three brothers who drowned in a fishing accident. Originally carved in 1875, this pole is a replacement of the original pole. When it was raised in May, 1986, it was the first pole raised in the traditional hand and rope method in 25 years.
8. **Totem Guards:** The two sets of animal figures by the park steps represent two divisions of the Tlingit people, the Ravens and the Eagles. The Bears represent the Eagle people and they are one of the clans attached to that division.
9. **Eagle and Beaver Pole:** The figures at the top represent the Eagle Tail House and the figures at the bottom represent the Beaver Clan. These are Memorial Poles to the three brothers who drowned in a fishing accident.
10. **Owl Pole:** This is a Memorial pole to a Shaman, the traditional medicine men or women of the Tlingit people. The owl at the top represents the crest or clan symbol of the shaman. They were a highly skilled group, going through a long training (upward of 15 years) culminating in a series of physical ordeals. The final part of the training was when the Shaman was sent into the forest to commune with the spirits. The bottom figure is a weasel, the spirit helper and guide of the Shaman. The face in the middle of the weasel's ears represents the Shaman.
11. **Eagle Pole:** Not much is known about this pole and it is a confusing mixture of styles. It is believed to be a memorial of the Eagle, Wolf, & Bear clans. The figure at the top has a wing style and coloring of the Eagle but the straight beak of the Raven. The human figure is also confusing as it contains some elements of the Frog Woman, a Tlingit mythological figure, but may have been meant to represent the person whose pole this is. The bottom figures appear to be eating one another and again, it is not certain if the artist meant to convey a story or not. The two tone face in the center probably relates that the person for whom this pole was carved died unpleasantly or violently; this is the usual meaning of the two tone face but the colors usually used are red & black.
12. **Moon Raven Pole & Sun Raven Pole:** Located on either side of the stairs in front of the Clan House, these poles are Memorial Poles. The Sun Raven Pole is for Reynold Denny Sr., the Chief of Saxman Village, and the Moon Raven Pole is in memorial for Martha Shields, an outstanding elder of the Village of Saxman.

Many years ago there was an old man who controlled the Sun, Moon, & Stars. He kept them each in a box so that there was no day or night. Raven, white at the time, wanted the old man to release them but he knew he would not. Raven knew that the old man had a daughter and one day turned himself into a sliver of a stick and fell into the daughter's drinking water. Drinking the water, the daughter became pregnant and soon presented the old man with a grandson whom he loved greatly. As the Raven/grandson grew he

wanted to release the Sun, Moon, & Stars. Begging his grandfather to play with the box with the Stars, he was finally allowed to and opened the box releasing the Stars, making the evening.

After some time he again asked to play with one of the boxes, to which the grandfather said no. Crying and crying, the grandson talked the grandfather into letting him play with the box with the Moon. His grandfather watched the grandson very carefully for a long time but one day became distracted which allowed the grandson to open the box and release the Moon.

The grandson still wanted to let the Sun out but knew that it would be very hard to get his grandfather to allow him to play with the Sun box. So the grandson went to his mother and cried and cried to be allowed to play with the box. His mother told him no because they were his grandfather's and he had already released two of them. Going to his grandmother, he cried and cried but was also told no. Going back to his grandfather he begged and cried and was told no so he stopped eating. Not eating and crying all the time softened his grandfather who loved him very, very much and could not get mad at his grandson.

The grandfather let the grandson play with the Sun box but had a guard watch him at all times. One day, the grandson pretended to sleep until the guard also fell asleep and he was able to release the Sun. At the exact time he was releasing the sun, his grandfather and a medicine man arrived and saw what was happening. As the grandson turned back into the white raven to follow the sun, the medicine man stopped him and held him in one spot in the sky over the fire. The grandfather placed wet wood to burn which put out a black smoke, turning the white raven into a black raven. The medicine man told the black raven he would always know where he was and would always watch him.

13. **Seward Pole:** This is an example of a Ridicule Pole, a pole raised to make fun of a person or clan. In this case the person being made fun of is William H. Seward, Secretary of State under Abraham Lincoln. In the summer of 1869, Seward stopped at Ft. Tongass where he was entertained by Chief Ebbits of the Tlingit Nation. Seward was treated like royalty and given many gifts. In Tlingit Culture, he was expected to return the honor by giving gifts to the Tlingit people. He did not do so, so the Tlingit people painted nostrils and ears red, signifying stinginess.

14. **Kats/Loon Pole:** This is a Mortuary Pole, raised to pay honor to a deceased clan member. The figure on the top is a Loon and the descending figures are Bears. The figures represent two of the clan groups that the person belonged to. This pole also illustrates one of many "Kats" legends. The human figure at the bottom is Kats, a figure similar to Hercules. His bear wife is holding him. The cubs are his children. The story states that Kats left his human village and married a spirit bearing her human form. Later, he went back to the village to help his family hunt and while there accidentally looked upon his human wife, breaking a promise to his bear wife. Upon returning to this bear family, his bear wife was angry with him and in loyalty to their mother, his sons devoured him.

15. **Lincoln Pole:** This is an example of a commemorative pole, raised to mark an event of importance to the clan or village. The pole marks the signing of a peace pact between two rival Tlingit Tribes. The figure at the base of the pole is called the "Proud Raven" after the Raven Clan that persuaded the Eagle Clan to sign for peace. The faces represent the two tribes; the lower human figure with the raven legs represents the human side of the Raven character. The figure of Abraham Lincoln at the top of the pole represents the U.S. Revenue Cutter "Lincoln" which was instrumental in finalizing the peace by its presence. The figure of Lincoln is used rather than the ship because the figure on the top of the pole must be an animate object.

16. **Chief Ebbits Pole:** This is a Memorial pole to Chief Ebbits of the Fort Tongass Tribe of the Tlingit Nation. The two top figures are bears, the blue figure is a mud shark and the next figure is a wolf, and the bottom figure is another bear. These represent the clans he belonged to. The wolf figure is holding a copper shield called a ‘Tennah.’ Each shield represents that the person owned at least 3,000 blankets or 20 slaves. This is a rare pole in that it is dated. Also, note the upside down figure. This represents a person who owed a debt to the chief and has not yet paid it off.

Frog Borders: Note the logs with all the frog heads peering out. These frogs illustrate one of the Tlingit Legends, “The Princess and the Frog Clan People”. The story is about a Tlingit Chief’s daughter who was very vain about her beauty. One day she saw some frogs and made fun of them. These were no ordinary frogs, they were spirit frogs. That night the son of the Frog Clan Chief changed into his human form and asked the Tlingit woman to marry him. Taken by his manner, she agreed. He took her back to live with his people under the lake. To her, it looked like an ordinary village. Her family mourned her as they thought she was dead. One day, many years later, her brother was bathing in a creek and threw water over some frogs. When the water hit the frogs, the man saw his long-lost sister sitting among them. He ran and told the village and they brought many gifts to the Frog Clan people but the Princess did not want to return. The Tlingits decided to drain the lake so that the frogs would die and the princess would be forced to return. The frog heads in the logs represent the frogs peeking out as the waters of the lake recede. To save the Frog Clan, the Princess returned to her village but she remained a Frog on the inside and died.

17. **Thunderbird/Whale Pole:** The Thunderbird is a large, mythical bird. It is believed that when the Thunderbird flaps its wings, it produces thunder and when it blinks its large eyes, it produces lightning. This huge bird lives high on the mountain tops where it brings whales to feast. It is believed that whale bones can still be found on many mountain tops.

18. **Eagle/Beaver Pole:** This pole is one of a set of three Memorial Poles. The second is directly across the street and the third is in front of the Village store. The figures at the top represent the Eagle Tail House and the figures at the bottom represent the Beaver Clan. These are Memorial Poles to the three brothers who drowned in a fishing accident.

19. **Raven and Frog Pole:** This is a memorial pole to members of the Raven and Frog Clans.

20. **Two Frogs Pole:** This is a memorial pole to a woman of the Frog Clan. The story is the same one as the frogs in the frog border. The pole is also something of a pun as the woman’s Indian name is “Two Frogs on a Drifting Log”. It was carved about 1899.

21. **Pointing Figure Pole:** This is a memorial pole to a member of the Raven Clan. It was originally placed on top of a short, undecorated shaft. The carving was made for a group of brothers belonging to the Raven Bone House of the Raven Clan and raised between 1890-1900 to mark the grave site of their sister on Pennock Island.