



BBC Television Star Tom Hart Dyke's Totem Poles Blessed By Red Indian At Lullingstone Castle

Tom Hart Dyke, star of BBC's "Save Lullingstone Castle" had his friend, Red Indian decendent Reg Cannon bless his newly arrived totem poles in the World Garden of Plants at Lullingstone Castle in Kent.

For Immediate Release

DARTFORD, United Kingdom/EWORLDWIRE/June 8, 2006 --- An unusual family arrived at BBC Two's favourite ancestral home, Lullingstone Castle in Kent. A totem pole family made up of a Dad, Mum and baby totem has come all the way from Bali to take pride in their place in the plant hunter, Tom Hart Dyke's, World Garden of Plants at Lullingstone Castle.

In the 1700s, British explorer Captain James Cook encountered the totem pole off the coast of British Columbia, and now explorers to Tom Hart Dyke's garden can also discover the totem pole on the very same coastline in the garden laid out in the shape of the world map.

Dyke says of his totem poles, "It's taken a year for them to get here from Bali, they've been stuck in ports for months. The carver might as well have got in his dug-out canoe and paddled here from Bali. It took so long, but now they're here we had a special ceremony to cleanse the family."

The special ceremony was given by Reg Cannon, 74, from Dartford, a member of the Lakota Sioux tribe of North America. Cannon's family came to the United Kingdom in 1901 to settle in the Southeast.

The cleansing ceremony took place at noon on Tuesday 6, June within the walls of The World Garden.

Cannon explains, "I wore a full regalia - buck skins, leggings, war shirt and eagle feathered war bonnet, and I consecrated the totem poles using Californian white sage."

Dyke and Cannon have a special friendship that goes back to when Dyke was kidnapped by guerrillas in the Darien Gap, Panama in 2000. Cannon, a regular helper at Lullingstone Castle, held a special prayer circle for Dyke when he was missing in November 2000. Cannon says of the worrying time, "We prayed for Tom's safe delivery in late November 2000 and then just before Christmas 2000, Tom came marching through the Castle Gate. After Christmas, we did another pipe circle to thank the Great Spirit for Tom's safe return. I put my tepee up next to the lake and Tom and his mum took part."

Six years later, they've teamed up to bless the garden. Cannon is as enthusiastic as Dyke about the fledgling garden project. "I love the concept, I think it's brilliant. Great for families and kids," stated Cannon.

Dyke says of his totem pole family, "They're something special for the kids. I want to encourage them into gardening at an early age, and fun objects like Ayres Rock, the Cobra from India and the totem poles inject some fun into horticulture and if they notice the labels on the plants at the foot of the totems, then all the better."

Lullingstone Castle is open Friday and Saturday 12 p.m. - 5 p.m., Sundays and Bank Holidays 2 p.m. - 6 p.m.

For more information or for images, visit www.lullingstonecastle.co.uk.

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