

# KANSAS GRASSROOTS ART ASSOCIATION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PRESS INFORMATION

Contact: Barbara Brackman  
913-842-8242, Lawrence, KS  
Melissa Atkinson  
918-743-2856, Tulsa

## SAVE THE TOTEM POLE PROJECT

Persons interested in contributing to the project to preserve The Totem Pole on Rt. 28-A east of Foyil, Oklahoma may make donations to a "Save the Totem Pole" fund at the First National Bank of Chelsea Oklahoma.

The fund will be administered by the Kansas Grassroots Art Association, a non-profit, tax-exempt agency founded to preserve such one-of-a-kind architectural wonders.

A group of interested Oklahomans and preservationists from around the country have agreed to begin a three-step plan to save the Totem Pole. The first step was a temporary repair to the roof of one of the buildings on the site; the second step will be raising \$3000 to hire consultants in fields such as engineering, historic preservation and paint conservation to develop a plan and budget to preserve and maintain the site. The third step will be to raise funds to carry out that plan.

The roof repair, necessary to protect the buildings' interior murals from further weather damage, was begun in November. Volunteers used donated materials and materials bought by the KGAA to temporarily patch the roof. Further

patches will be added this spring, says project coordinator John Holmes of Vinland, Kansas. Although the emergency repair is temporary and should not be considered a restoration, Holmes estimates it will last five years,"which should give us time to reconstruct the original roof right."

Donald Howlett of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, a specialist in restoration of environmental folk art, began assessment of the surface and structural damage to the 90 foot concrete Totem Pole and adjacent Fiddle House. Volunteers drew a site plan from which long-term preservation plans can be made; others began collecting photographs of the Totem Pole and other buildings taken over the years to help in making decisions about repainting the once colorful buildings.

The Totem Pole was begun in 1937 by Ed Galloway who moved to the acreage near Foyil after retiring from his position as woodworking teacher at the Sand Springs Children's Home west of Tulsa. Galloway built a museum to house his 400 hand-carved fiddles, and he constructed the "World's Largest Totem Pole" of concrete and decorated it with his interpretations of American Indian motifs. He estimated that 300,000 people viewed the park in his life time. He died in 1962 and since then the park has been closed.

A quilt will be raffled off in the fall of 1984 to raise funds for the preservation project. The quilt will depict the Totem Pole and various decorative motifs from the buildings. Persons interested in working on the quilt, or those who have old photographs of the Totem Pole which might be copied are asked to write to Totem Pole Project,

Kansas Grassroots Art Association, PO Box 221, Lawrence, KS 66044.

Donations for the project can be made directly to the Save the

Totem Pole Fund at the First National Bank of Chelsea, OK

74106.