

Chief Pelling Thunder

Biography

"Nevada's Sagebrush Sculptor" - C.R.T.

1983 - part of Thunder Mtn. burned arson suspected (Macias)

Creek Indian

monument to present our waterfulness, as well as "West's reddest people"

9 hrs, 3 stories, 200 statues. - faces of Indian men, women, children

Pipes above roof - represent lifeline linking all nations and people. Many of gods + famous Creek chiefs.

was decimated WWII drives - wounded by bozoka.

1982 - ^{raising} hauling silver ore to support reconstruction.

1983 \approx nominated ^{and won} for Governor of NV State Arts Award "Folk Arts" category. (did he receive it?) 1st folk artist to do so.

1911 - born as Frank Lee Spout

med. vision \rightarrow move to 40 acres on side of Thunder Mtn in NV.

enorm. shaped like Indian carry basket, "so that the Great Spirit can pick the whole thing up and just carry it all away".
made of local rocks, etc.

staircase made of beagle handlebars

1969 began sculpture on land considered worthless. Ran (news?) school @ Thunder Mtn. to teach people fundamentals of survival = \approx to live as an Indian.

Monument is 3 stories high. Top story - bedroom w/

nl. #9 - Judith Hopper: 2 articles - 1. on Gandhi restoration (tie
into Rodia, CRT, Forthie (?)

walls of bottles.

collected pieces from aircraft crashed up. One statue dedicated
to memory of son killed in auto. crash.

Father named Cray Snake (Creek), mother Cheyenne named
Naomi Ruth. CRT - eighth grade ed.

recalls Gandhi: Cts. of Socky: steel shaft as backbone -
the "Tree of Life": Allegorical figures from Indian mythology.

Hollings
2

Hollings
1981

Chief Rolling Thunder

Bibliography

Gibbs, Juleyn 1986 "Visions of Home" Whole Earth Review
Fall, '86, no. 52

Morris, Sandra 1983 "One Man's Junk is Another's Folk
Art". Gazette-Journal, Sunday Aug. 21.

Hillinger, Charles 1977b "A Touch of Junk to You, It's Chief
Thunder's work of art." Chicago Daily News, Tuesday, Nov. 24.

Childress, Bill 1975 or 1976 "Rolling Mtn. Thunder".

Amazing America p. 429

Hillinger, Charles 1977a "Chief Rolling Thunder's Basket of
Sculpture". San Jose News, Tuesday, Nov. 22, 1977.

Galeas, Janet 1981 "Artist, Philosopher, Indian Chief: Rolling
Thunder's Mountain Museum". Art Express vol. 1, number 1. May-June

Exhibitions

"Nevada's Inexpressible Art", July 15 - Dec. 31, 1984. Nevada
Hist. Soc.

questions - 8/6/82 letter - was a site plan etc. ever prepared

Rolling Thunder

side 4 tapes Brn 11-11-11 (sounded like DeKnozie - can't find on map) OK
on tape

- 1889 Father Brn 1889
1922 moved to So CA with family
1929 " " No CA
- did trapping, cutting wood and was a tree trimmer
Benjar near Marysville also gold mining
- 1930-40 worked for Forest Service & for various Sheriff and
Police Depts and started wood carving
- 1940's US Airforce ^{comm 20} - after war work with kids and
50's became a Methodist Pastor
later worked in Butte County (CA) in Police Department
and started Jr Police Groups
- 1960's Private Investigator in Redding CA and worked
on Sacramento Valley Museum - also built museum in
Shasta County (CA) and did sculpture near
Oroville
- 1968 (first saw land in 1959) moved to Nevada near
present site - first built private home and then
sculpture.

Kathy Hale - see letter friend of

4th Annual Gov Arts Award 1983
for Significant Contribution to Arts in Nevada - Folk Arts