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NOV 1 1982

NATHAN EDWARD GALLOWAY BIOGRAPHY

Nathan Edward Galloway moved to Foyil, Oklahoma, a remote wooded area of eastern Oklahoma near Grand Lake, in 1937 when he retired from teaching wood working to the boys at the Charles Page Home in Sand Springs, Oklahoma. There he began construction of the octagonal workshop, the three story totem pole, four smaller totems, a concrete tree, tables and chairs, owl gates, and totem gates. All of these structures were made with wood and metal and wire mesh armatures covered with tinted concrete and then carved with a myriad of bas-relief anthropomorphic figures, flora and fauna.

However, Galloway had been carving since about 1905 when he lived in Missouri. Apparently his first wood carving were buttons for his mother's clothing. While he taught at the Charles Page Home in Sand Springs, Oklahoma, he carved massive tables, chairs, chests, and totem poles, as well as small plaques, pipes, frames, boxes, and other assorted carvings. After he moved to the Foyil property he continued carving in wood when he wasn't working on the concrete figures in his park. In fact he made and carved hundreds of violins which he hung from the ceiling of the octagonal workshop.

Many of the motifs of Galloway's carvings were inspired by plants and animals-- fish, owls, squirrels, vines, trees; and berries. Most of the human figures are portraits of Indians in full headdress. Galloway studied issues of National Geographic to get as much historical accuracy as he could.

Galloway liked to have people stop by the park and have a picnic, browse in the workshop and buy post cards of his work he had had printed. Galloway died in 1962. In 1967 his house, adjacent to the park where many carvings were stored was vandalized and most of the wood pieces were stolen. They have never been recovered. However, many wood pieces are still in the possession of family and friends and the park structures are in relatively stable condition though there has been some vandalism and structural deterioration that continues to accelerate and threaten the structures.