

# KIDS' PAGE

## DISCOVER NEW AND EXCITING STUFF FROM THE ROYAL BC MUSEUM THUNDERBIRD PARK

For nearly 60 years, Thunderbird Park has been one of downtown Victoria's most extraordinary features. Located at the corner of Douglas and Belleville streets, next to the Royal British Columbia Museum, the park's impressive display of poles and big houses has made it a tourist landmark. The poles represent many villages of the coastal First Nations. They stand in testimony to a carving tradition that has been passed along for generations.

The Kwakwaka'wakw big house in Thunderbird Park was built in 1952 under the supervision of the world-renowned carver Mungo Martin. It is a replica of a house built at Tsaxis (Fort Rupert) in the mid 1800s by Chief Nakapanam, whose position and name Mungo Martin inherited. Kwakwaka'wakw families of high rank sometimes named their big houses. This house has been given the name *Wawadit'la*, which means "he orders them to come inside". The chief who owns this house is so powerful that he can order anyone to come in and be his servant. The design on the front of the house represents C'ieqis, a supernatural sea creature shaped like a bullhead or sculpin.



Can you find the following on the pole?

- Thunderbird
- Three human faces
- A Gray Whale
- Barnacles



**ABORIGINAL NATIONS OF VANCOUVER ISLAND**  
Coast Salish, Kwakwaka'wakw and Nuu-chah-nulth are three major First Nations groups on Vancouver Island.  
**Activity:** Colour in the area that Chief Mungo Martin comes from.

### COPPERS

Coppers are symbols of prestige and wealth. They are owned and used in potlatch ceremonies only by high-ranking hereditary chiefs. Coppers are transferred from generation to generation. The value of one chief's ceremonies and potlatches are placed on the copper.

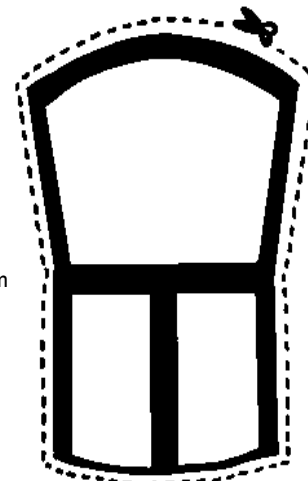


The Split Whale crest on the copper was designed by Hereditary Chief Tony Hunt of the Kwa-guith (Kwakwaka'wakw) village Tsaxis (Fort Rupert), who donated it to the Victoria Native Friendship Centre. The copper is the shieldlike form of the logo, and inside it is the split killer whale, a family crest that belongs to the Hunt family. Chief Hunt designed the crest in honour of his grandfather, the late Chief Johnathan Hunt.

The new pole in Thunderbird Park is the first original pole to be raised on the grounds in 40 years. It honours the families of the two Kwakwaka'wakw carvers, Henderson and Whonnock, and is dedicated to the Coast Salish people. The pole took five months to carve and paint, but the project involved three years of planning and preparation, from the idea, the design, building a model, and transporting the huge 553-year-old Western Redcedar log from Quatsino Sound, Vancouver Island.

**ACTIVITY:** Using the outline of the copper, select an animal or animals to create your own family crest.

When you are finished, cut out the copper, paste it on to cardboard, trim the edges, make a hole at the top and string it. Now you have your own family copper to wear.



### LEGEND FOR THE NEW POLE

- A Thunderbird (a Whonnock family crest)
- B Portrait of Gideon Whonnock
- C Beginning of the Gray Whale
- D Tail with carved upside-down face, representing Sam Henderson.
- E Barnacles (round circles).
- F Blow hole with a portrait of Johnathan Henderson.
- G Face of the Gray Whale (a strong Henderson family crest).

### TYPES OF POLES

The figures on traditional poles are crests that proclaim the ancestry and history, rights and privileges, names and lands, and responsibilities of the families that own them. Several types of poles are described below; you can see examples of some of these in Thunderbird Park.

**House post** holds up the main roof beams of the big house.

**Frontal poles** stand against the front of the house. Historically, they contained the house's doorway.

**Memorial poles** are raised to honour a person who has died. Traditionally, they are commissioned by the person who has inherited the name and associated privileges of the deceased.

**Mortuary poles** incorporated boxes containing the remains of the deceased.

**Welcome figures** greet visitors to a chief's territory. Traditionally, they stood on the beach and faced out to sea, welcoming people who arrived by canoe.

### WORD SEARCH

Big House	Drums	Storytelling	Carving
Masks	Copper	Thunderbird	Potlatch
Dancing	Rattles	Totem Pole	Whale

F	B	I	G	H	O	U	S	E	F	T	H	M	A	S
C	O	W	V	P	Y	I	T	T	U	H	K	A	M	A
T	S	K	S	A	M	B	O	G	D	U	Z	U	P	Y
H	J	G	Q	S	X	T	R	H	C	N	R	Q	O	P
A	V	A	S	E	E	V	Y	I	O	D	P	F	T	P
G	W	C	Y	M	R	A	T	T	L	E	S	G	L	K
N	H	P	P	E	A	R	E	K	U	R	D	A	A	U
V	A	O	D	C	R	S	L	M	B	B	R	A	T	H
M	L	P	A	V	S	G	L	A	U	I	M	N	C	T
E	E	O	N	A	Y	V	I	S	P	R	J	R	H	B
S	W	O	C	O	P	P	N	R	Y	D	L	G	W	A
K	E	X	I	C	Z	A	G	I	N	A	R	E	P	A
I	Z	E	N	H	E	D	R	R	E	C	O	U	P	Z
D	Q	W	G	T	I	X	A	N	W	I	E	G	E	S
G	N	I	V	R	A	C	O	P	P	E	R	Q	T	P