



Return of Chilkat Blanket

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Tlingit & Haida is honored to welcome home a Chilkat Blanket from the late Frances Lambert Allen and her children Dawn-Marie Dunn and Allen Seth Dunn.

“Mom was a lifelong music lover and always curious about other cultures, and I think she would have been very interested to hear and see the dances for which the blanket was designed,” said Dawn-Marie.

The blanket was passed down to Frances’ dad, Rex Whitaker Allen, when his parents died. In the early-mid 1960s, he and Frances discovered it in a chest among items from that estate and it was given to her. Many years later (early 90s), Frances had the blanket professionally framed to hang in her Woodbridge, VA home. At that time, no one in the family had any idea who had made the blanket or where to start looking for information about its origin.



Several discussions were held over the years regarding Frances’ wishes when she died, as she wanted to avoid confusion and family disagreements about valuable objects. In the summer of 2017, Frances and Dawn-Marie agreed that the blanket should be returned to its original owners upon Frances’ death. If it wasn’t possible to discover the original owner, then it would be donated to a museum or other cultural institution.

Thanks to Google Image Search, Dawn-Marie discovered it was a Chilkat dancing blanket (probably from the turn of the 20th century) and reached out to Tlingit & Haida to bring the blanket home.