

# CPS SOURCE bySunday

Architectural features are one of many ways to identify the distinct architectural styles of every culture and historic period. In North America, historic Native American homes along the Northwest coast have several hallmark features including **totemic house posts** and **carved gables**. These features are common in the traditional plank longhouses made by Northwestern tribes such as the Tlingit and Haida.

At the University of Missouri, the Museum of Anthropology has two houseposts and a raven's head gable. All three of these pieces, which are believed to have been collected in a Tlingit village, are of cedar. They are carved and painted to represent totemic figures, which serve to distinguish the owner's lineage or clan. The two posts were placed at the front corners of the house to provide support and decoration; the tops are carved into seated anthropomorphic figures. The gable figure represents the head of a raven, one of the important emblems of the Tlingit and related tribes.



#1977- 805  
House Post 1  
Tlingit, c 1900  
painted cedar



#1977- 806  
House Post 2  
(Head only)  
Tlingit, c 1900  
painted cedar



#nomac34  
Raven's Head Gable  
Tlingit, c 1900  
painted cedar



Alaska Exhibit  
ST LOUIS WORLD'S FAIR 1904

Not only are they classic examples of these amazing architectural features, they have an exciting story about leaving their original location. John Brady, governor of the Alaska territory from 1897 to 1906, brought them with several other items collected from native Alaskan villages to Missouri for the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904. The posts and gable figure were used on a clan house that was part of the fair's Alaska display, which Brady exhibited in hopes of promoting immigration to the territory. Most of the display items were returned to Alaska after the fair, but the two posts and raven's head gable were acquired by the University of Missouri and subsequently became a part of the Museum of Anthropology's collections.

## EXPLORE

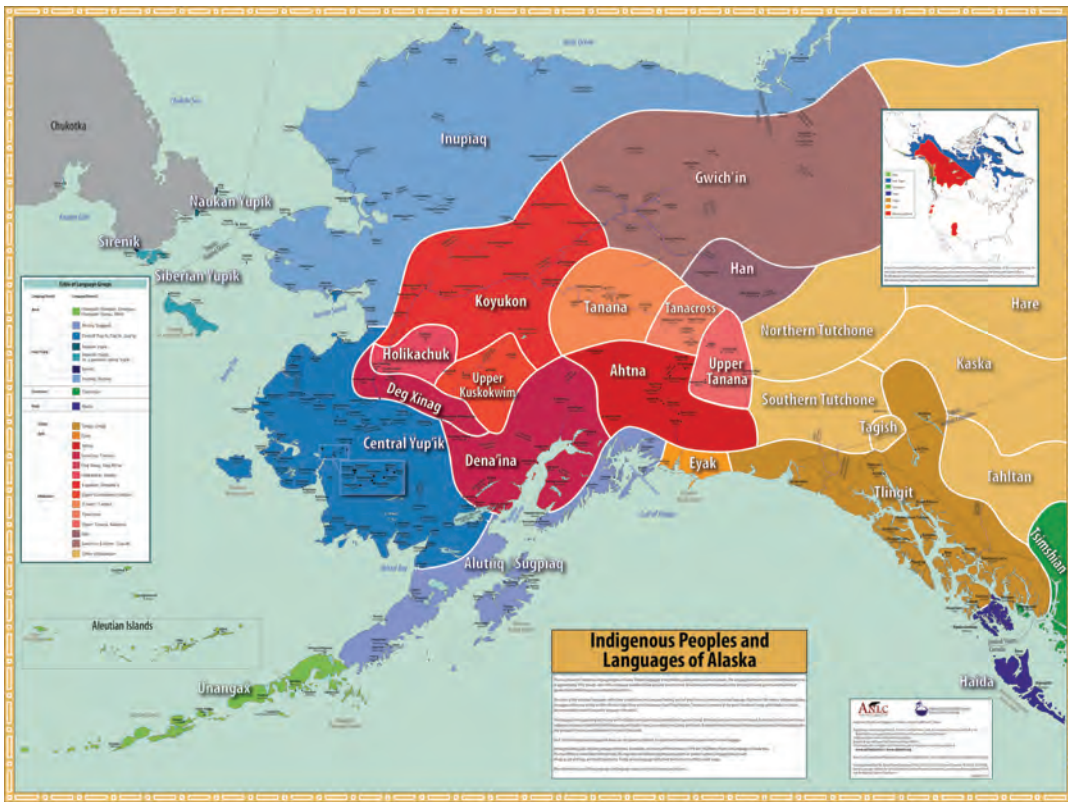
To see more artifacts, visit the Museum of Anthropology's online databases:

<https://anthromuseum.missouri.edu/?q=online-databases>

Database search words:  
Tlingit, Haida, Northwest

## Tips for Using the Museum Databases

- Log in as a "Guest."
- Enter search terms into one or more fields and click the "Perform Find" button in the status area on the left-hand side of the screen.
- Use the book icon in the status area to move from one record to another in the found set.
- Click on the magnifying glass icon to return to find mode and perform additional searches.
- When finished working with a database, please be sure to click the "Log Out" button in the status area to close your session.



Note: The Tlingit people extend all the way into southern Alaska.

# Northwest Coast Native American Groups

