

from the Walker Staff

CA Cleveland, Annie <Annie.Cleveland@walkerart.org>

7/5/2017

Yesterday, 4:15 PM

dick_bernard@me.com

Reply |

Dear Community Member:

On behalf of the Walker staff, we appreciate your honest feedback regarding the acquisition, placement and recent dismantling of the *Scaffold* sculpture in the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden. We humbly acknowledged that we were "learning in public", as we quickly understood the pain we caused the Dakota people and many others.

Going forward over the next 3-6 months, we will be transparent about how we conduct community outreach for future public artworks, rebuild our external relationships with the Dakota people and broader community, and be better stewards of the public's park across from the Walker Art Center.

Please accept our apology for any harm that we have caused. We hope to earn your respect once again.

Regards,

Annie Gillette Cleveland
Chief of Marketing & Strategic Communications
David Goldstein
Associate Director, Visitor Services

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walkerart.org

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Woodbury Mn 55125
July 6, 2017

Dear Annie & David

& Olga, Kathy Beane

I, among many others,
received the letter
at left yesterday

Thank you.

My permanent, public
file on the issue is
at my blog for May 31 +
Jun 3, 2017 -

OUTSIDE THE WALLS.ORG/blog
I added ~~your~~ letter

at June 3, plus a couple of photos taken ~~on~~ July 2 at
the Garden. Sunday, a Dad + his little child were playing
on the grass where the Scaffold stood. Nearby many were
playing on the mini golf course. I took a couple of photos
of the tree, which has come to symbolize the Native American
presence at your facility + walked again by the Cottonwood
tree with its powerful message. It is more than just a
tree; as the Scaffold was much, much more than a gallows
used to hang 38 native Americans at Mankato in Dec. 1862.

I still believe the greatest honor would be

~~to remove~~ to remove the sod from that sacred spot on your ground
+ let the few square feet revert to a truly native state.

I don't harbor many illusions about the probability of such happening. The decision makers are human beings & one of our many failings is the inability to acknowledge mistakes made. (And to be clear, while I knew nothing of the decision making to commission the Scaffold; nor to take it down, I feel it should have stayed to teach all of us a lesson. People with power make the decisions with all that means -

(It will interest me to learn what will ultimately happen to the sticks which were once the Scaffold - They were to be burned, but apparently the decision was made not to do so. I wonder when or if that will happen & if I will know about it. The sticks have no power at all now - They are just sticks)

As I write, I remember a visit to the International Peace Garden in North Dakota/Montana perhaps 2009.

It is a wonderful serene place, off the beaten path.

I was by myself, walking, and off the path I saw what looked like a pile of junk. I walked over to it, & it was a pile of girder from the World Trade Center 9-11-01. In a Chapel were newspapers from 9-11-01. I followed up on that memorial to permanent War in that place of Peace.

For some reason, what I saw that pleasant summer day has some analogies to your present situation. On the one hand, never forget; on the other, never remind....

I'll link the post I did about that visit at my June 2, 2017, Post about the Scaffold. It is #55, July 23, 2009

Your Sculpture Garden is nice, a peaceful place.
But....

C: BRIAN CLADDOOSBY, PRES
JACQUELINE PATA, EX. DIR.
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In Peace
Dick Bernard.