

The Lions That Guard the Fuzhou Ting at the Tacoma Chinese Reconciliation Park

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Conditions of the Lions



Shown in these photos are the female lion (left) and the male lion (right) as they were first installed. Photos were taken on September 21, 2011, the day before the Grand Opening and Dedication Ceremony of the Fuzhou Ting.



Vandalisms to the Fuzhou Ting including the lions had been observed and reported ever since the dedication of the Fuzhou Ting in 2011. These photos show the conditions of the lions as of September 4, 2014, where the female's (left) tongue was mostly broken and the male's (right) tongue was half chiseled and upper teeth chipped.



The City of Fuzhou sent a delegation of technicians to Tacoma in August-September 2015 to help us repair the weathered and damaged Fuzhou Ting, including the lions. These photos show that the lions were repaired as of August 31, 2015.



On April 25, 2016, the lions were found vandalized again (likely over the weekend). This time, the damages were more devastating and, without the materials and the local capability to repair, irreversible. As shown in the photos above, both lions' tongues were totally broken, upper teeth chiseled, upper lips notched, and the balls stolen from the mouths.

Background Information

The Fuzhou Ting (“Ting” being the Chinese word for “Pavilion”) at the Tacoma Chinese Reconciliation Park was a donation from Fuzhou, China, one of Tacoma’s 13 sister cities. Building materials were fabricated in China and shipped to Tacoma for assembly on site. Construction began in August 2010 and was completed in July 2011. The Fuzhou Ting was open to the public in September 2011.

As seen in many traditional Chinese mansions, gardens or pavilions, the Fuzhou Ting has a pair of lions – a male and a female (with a cub) – sitting at the entrance to faithfully safeguard the property. Their job is to cast out the demons and block the bad energy from gushing in.

Each lion was individually carved out of a single piece of granite, and the ball in the mouth was carved and shaped from within, not fabricated and put in from outside. It is hard to put a dollar amount to the lions. They really are priceless.