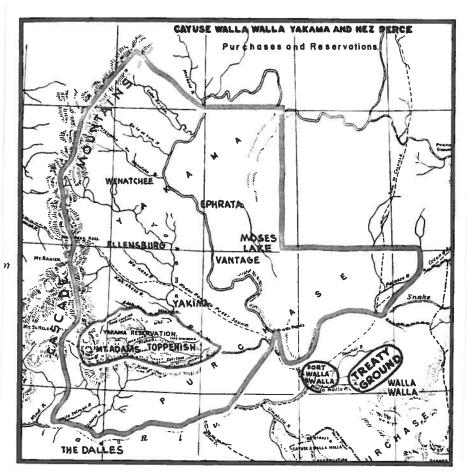
### Abstract

Many Indian lives have been forgotten and ignored by the American people. The continual confrontation of these two culters has diluted the traditional Yakama Indian culture, and in response the Yakama people have settled into a crevice. On one side, a small number of Yakama Indians have grasped the ideas and systems of America: capitalism, christianity, public education. The oppisite side of the crevice is a traditional life style that the elders of the tribe follow.



eas Ceded by the Yakimas kima Reservation 10,828,800 acres—16,920 square miles 1,200,000 acres— 1,875 square miles

### Introduction

To observe different cultures intermingling and overlapping is to observe life, and that is what history is. The merging of the United State's citizens on the confederated Yakama Indian Tribes and Bands is a prime field for research since the relationship has been stereotyped for so long. The misconception of cowboys and Indians always fighting was fed by popular books and movies of long ago.

The Yakama Indian Nation represents 14 tribes and bands (family groups) that were unwillingly forced by the United States' government to unite under one nation. The Yakama people were a nomadic people that traveled along the Yakima River to the food available during each season. This lifestyle was changed by the expanding interests of the Western culture. In 1855 the skirmishes between the Yakama Indians and the American soldiers came to a climax which ended with the Treaty of 1855 (not ratified until 1859). Over 15 000 miles of land was ceded from the conquered Indians. Their children were also taken away and put into boarding schools by the United States' Government. The Yakama Indian Nation was confined to a reservation with only 1 875 sq. miles of land (see map), and it was not until 1924, a century and a half later, that the Yakama Indians were granted American citizenship.e

It interested me to try and understand how well the Yakama Indians were able to deal with the pressures of a merging culture; the 1950's and 1960's were a good check-off point. Since the pre-treaty days the Yakama Indian Nation, although quite bitter, has made an effort to learn the "American way" in almost all aspects of life: economical and political areas more so than educational, religious and social areas. In addition to this assimilation it is important to explain that the Yakama Indians did not abandon their own view points; they still continue in the ceremonies and traditional customs, and fish in the rivers for salmon. During the 1950's and 1960's the Yakama Indians seem to have been living in a middle world between the olden days and fast moving western culture.

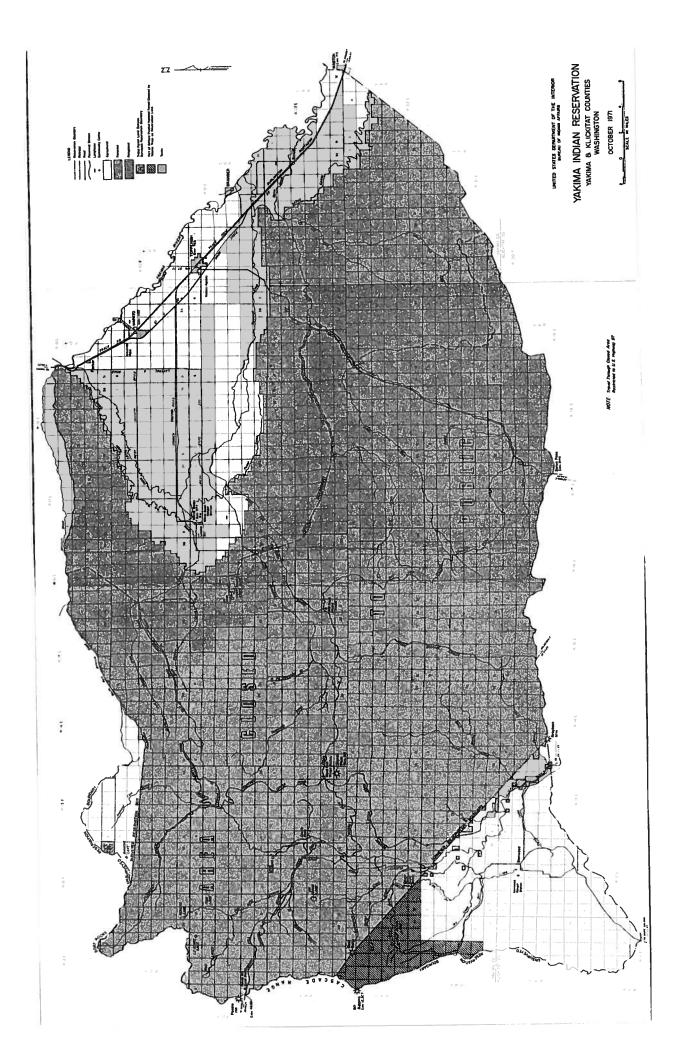
### Data Collecting

The researching for this paper was like a treasure hunt; I would find a clue from reading a book and that led me to ask someone a question which in turn unfolded a whole new set of data and so on. While going back and forth from books to interviews, it was exciting to make connections that intertwined the treasures that had been unveiled to me.

A big thank you to Mr. Kenneth Capp, my advisor, for all his help and enthusiasm. Also, I would like to thank the Director of Academic Skills at Heritage College, Mary James, for setting me up with some Yakama Indians that I could interview: Virginia Beavert and Patricia Zach (the questions that I asked during the

.t the end). My last gratitude goes to my faithful God that gave me the time and energy to accomplish this assignment.

By no means will I pretend to be an expert in this area. I have spent less than a year on a project that should take a life time, yet this is what I have found:



### **Economics**

The base source of food and trade for the Yakama Indians in pre-treaty days was salmon, hunting, and berry picking.4 The meat was dried and buried in caches and was saved for food in winter.a Patricia Zach called it a "rich life".g During the 1950's and 1960's the three major economic sources were logging (90% of the annual income)4, hunting, fishing, and cattle. This shift made the Yakama Indian Nation one of the wealthiest Indian Nations in the United States, although the majority of the Yakamas are unemployed and poverty stricken, and those that have accumulated the wealth have not done a thorough job spreading the wealth to those in need.

The Indians' economy was continually bombarded by the Americans. First their land was taken away so they could no longer move with the seasons, but had to build homes and not everyone could afford them. To receive money some Indians leased their land to Non-Indians who own 10% of the most productive land on the Reservation. In 1950 there were 2 300 leases made which brought in \$750 000 annually. The Indians were losing even more land from the law made in 1946 which stated that the relatives of a deceased enrollment Indian (a Yakama Indian having at least 1/4 blood) were only entitled to 1/2 of the promised land.

Cattle grazing and farming are two important sources of income for the Yakamas. In 1950 12% of the Reservation land was used for agriculture, that is 150 000 acres. Ten thousand cows could be seen grazing among the 1/2 million acres of land set aside for cattle (26 000 sheep, 445 hogs & 670 horses). Livestock organizations were made to make cattle grazing a fair deal; the biggest being the Klickitat River Cattle Association which brought 39 cattlemen and 217 587 acres in agreement (started in 1953).6 These figures and the map to the left show that the Yakama Indians were able to quickly (after less than a hundred years) change from a total tribal people to a semi-development in terms of western civilization.

A few Indian entrepreneurs were using 398 900 acres of the Yakama Reservation for commercial foresting. The calculated boarded feet in 1963 was 90 million which brought home \$3.6 million.<sub>15</sub> The Western Pine Region is filled with Ponderosa Pines and Douglas firs and creates about 720 jobs which include harvesting, processing and transporting the lumber. (Not all 720 jobs are filled by Indians) The rest of the forest (61 100 acres) was left for game grazing, root and berry picking, and recreation.<sub>15</sub> Despite the wildfires and damaging insects (pine beetle) the Yakama lumber managers have successfully replanted in order to keep the industry running.

If it had not been for the rich forest, the Yakamas' economy would have been in despair; the salmon was the center of the Indian life. Again the needs of the non-Indians conflicted with those of the Indians. Coming out of the Great Depression, the U.S. government, as part of the New Deal sponsored the construction of dams along the Columbia River.7 All it took was seven dams to destroy the salmon subsistence of the Yakama Indian Nation as well as other Indian tribes in the area. Three miles up from the Dalles there was a dam constructed (1952-57) costing \$348 372 000 that dropped the salmon runs by 90%, ruined the fisheries at Lake Celilo and flooded sacred land. The 1954 agreement was made to give over \$15 million as compensation (some of which was put in an education trust fund), but the long term damage was seen when unemployment increased by  $45\%_{10}$  upping the figure to  $70\%_{.g}$  (It should be noted that salmon runs were also affected a little by poor logging, over-fishing and pollution).3

Economically the Yakama Indian Nation has done a thorough job learning the capitalist system thanks to the few entrepreneurs who struck the opportunities, but the high unemployment rate and poverty shows that most of the Indians either do not understand, do not approve of, or can not find a place in America's economy. In response to the economic hardships some went back to an old lesson from Mother Nature to be like a willow who bends but does not break.

### **Politics**

There is general agreement that politically the Yakama Indian Nation had assimilated by the 1950's and 1960's. Democracy was adopted by the Yakama people. Indians are elected to the Tribal Council and serve as Congressmen for four years. Interest groups lobbying to get their own way is a usual activity in the Tribal Council just like in the U.S. Senate and Congress. Also the United States Bureaucracy system can be found in the reservation by looking up all the programs made for alcohol and drug rehabilitation, unemployment, the police department, etc. in the Yakima County phone book. The government that the Yakama Indian Nation has followed so closely has been quite fickle throughout the years. The 1950's and 1960's were a transition period: moving from "parental guidance" to "self-determination".

The Yakama Indian Nation was denied the right to external sovereignty in the Treaty of 1855, but in the Public Law 280 and the Termination Act passed in 1953 the internal sovereignty was taken away as well.<sub>3</sub> So by 1963 Washington State took control over:<sub>10</sub>



- 1. Compulsory school attendance
- 2. Public assistance
- 3. Domestic relations
- 4. Mental illness
- 5. Juvenile delinquency
- 6. Adoption proceedings
- 7. Dependent children
- 8. Operation of motor vehicles on public streets, alleys, roads, and highways.

Many other tribes were terminated and in return each member was given money. Yet the Yakama Indian Nation resisted the state's complaints of ending the promised payments for the ceded land probably because they were a bigger tribe. The Public Law 280 was amended in 1968 with the Civil Rights Act which stated that if both sides agree, the 1963 jurisdiction could be repudiated, but the Washington state denied the Yakama's request.3

The Yakama Indians were given a chance in 1969 to fight for their fishing rights in the Sohappy vs. Smith case. The state was not allowing the Indians to fish with nets, but this was a law that was contrary to the fishing rights indicated in the treaties.<sub>3</sub> Fortunately, the Federal district-court judge was on the Indian side this time. Judge Robert C. Belloni ruled that the State could not regulate Indian fisheries except for conservation measures. He stated that the Indian fishermen were allowed to have a "fair and equitable" amount of fish.<sub>10</sub>

As for voting participation there was a survey taken in 1956 and these were the results: out of the 3 108 Indians of the reservation 1 037 members were eligible to vote, and 85%, 890 Indians, exercised their right. The others did not vote because they could not read or write the English language or protested the voting procedure. (The traditional way was done by a show of hands rather than the secret ballot because then there could not be any tampering of the results.6) The individual was very important in the tribal days, so the high percentage of voters could definitely have stemmed from each Yakama Indian used to making decisions.

The political unit of the pre-treaty days was the village, but it did not exercise much authority over the family. The chiefs were mostly active with making pacts and warfare with other chiefs; whereas, problems with criminals were solved by the family.4 So it is interesting to see that the tribal government had changed by the 1950's and 1960's from a weaker to

a stronger unit in the tribal community.

### Education

American education was not a high priority for the Yakama Indians during the 1950's and 1960's. Because of the boarding schools the Indians rebelled against the school system, and the 50 & 60's were the tail end of the silent struggle. Although some movements were made toward more education, overall the Yakama people stayed behind the times.

The statistics for the Indian children in public schooling during the 1964-65 school year are quite startling. More than 70% of the children between kindergarten and 12th grade dropped out, and of the ones that stayed in school the average grade was a "D".<sub>12</sub> There were 153 withdrawals from kindergarten to eighth grade alone. These numbers can be accredited to English reading deficiencies<sub>12</sub>, cruel remarks from classmates<sub>12</sub>, and a lack of support on the parents part.<sub>d</sub>

On a positive note, the Yakama leaders were trying to encourage education by having a scholarship fund and a promotional camp. \$100 000 was budgeted annually for those who desire to continue their education and need financial assistance. In 1961 an Adult Educational Program was developed so that the older Indians could work for their high school diploma or their General Education certificate. 13 Indian children between third and ninth grade attend Camp Chaparral designed to encourage higher education and the Sahaptin language. 13 For six weeks the kids participate in activities like arts and crafts, group counseling, and recreational games. 12

In the 1960's the U.S. government started passing laws like the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, but only the following years did the Yakama Indians begin to understand the meaning of education. Education began to be looked upon as the key to "keeping the culture alive". Virginia Beavert is a prime example of this. At a young age her step-father stressed education in a public school as a way to get along with other people. Virginia continued her education and became a teacher of the Sahaptin language at Heritage College.

### Religion

On the Yakama reservation during the 50's and 60's there were church buildings that stood to represent the different religions. Some have



James S. Rayner
Preparing salmon for spring feast at Celilo, 1954.



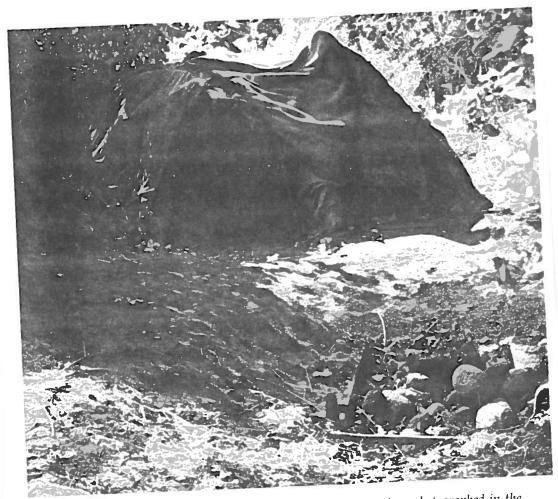
Sunday services and thanksgiving feasts perpetuate the religion of the people and their affirmation in a Creator, a Supreme Being.

practiced the traditional beliefs like the Waashat religions while others find a mixture of the western and traditional ways in the Shaker Religion, and still other churches are filled with converts to the Protestant or Roman Catholic religion. The Yakama Indians have spread out on a spectrum, yet the heaviest side being the Washani religion holding 60% of the Yakama Indians' devotion.g

What is emphasized in the church buildings explains much of the belief systems. The Waashats meet every Sunday, as do the others, yet in one of the traditional-style long houses, wearing their traditional Indian clothing.g(see picture) They believe that everything that the Creator created is sacred and should be respected. Because of this the middle of the long house floor is left open for the dirt of the ground as respect to Mother Earth.g The Shaker religion is broken into two parts: one believes in the Bible, the other does not.f The altar, crucifixes and the Virgin Mary seen in a Shaker Church resembles quite directly the Roman Catholic Church. Prevalent symbols hanging on the walls of a Protestant church are the cross (representing the death and resurrection of Jesus), a picture of a dove (symbolizing the Holy Spirit), and a sword (which stands for the Word of God: the Bible).

The Last Prophet, Smohalla, warned his Indian followers against the coming white- men, who he called The Greedy Ones, and when the United States government went against the Treaty of 1855 by forcing the Indian children to go to boarding schools, his prophecy came true. The merging western culture tried to rip the traditional life from the Indian children by cutting their hair, teaching them English and Christianity. The Waashat religion can not be experienced or understood in any other tongue than Sahaptin, so when most of the children lost their native language at the boarding schools part of the traditional religion was lost also.

There are still Indians that observe the ceremonies of their ancestors yet they don 't follow exactly the traditional way and many youngsters are losing interest. The Salmon Feast and the sweat lodge are two examples of holding on to Indian culture. Every April, as in tribal days, the Indians gather to give thanks to the Creator, (same as Creator in Bibleg) for the gathered salmon and to pray for more to return the next year. (See figure top left) The men enter the long house first, followed by the women entering according to the arrows. Once the Floor Walker has made sure everyone is in their appropriate place, the high priest, standing next to the drummers, rings a bell and everyone recites the principles of their theology like a litany service. The command, "Take water, " then "Now drink" is given by the high priest then the others obey. "Now the salmon,"



A sweatlodge on Toppenish Creek on the Yakima Indian Reservation, photographed in the 1960s. Sweatlodge bathers sprinkled water on heated rocks just inside the entrance to fill the lodge with steam. After building up a sweat, the bathers dove into a nearby stream, a ritual that cleansed them physically and spiritually.

"Now eat, " again the Indians follow the instructions given. The final command is, "Now help yourselves, " and the celebration begins. All have their fill of singing, dancing, and eating. Here are three things in this ceremony that has changed since the influence of Western civilization: Red, white, or yellow paint used to be seen on faces, but no longer; they now sit on chairs rather than on the floor; thirdly, there are now 7 drummers instead of the three drummers seen in the diagram which could stem from seven being a sacred number in the Christian faith.7

Another vital part of the Indian's culture is the sweat lodge believed to have been given to them by the Creator for purification, for communion with the guardian spirits, and for a healing process. It was also used five mornings before hunting in order "to respect the spirits of your prey".7 The structures (bottom figure) are made of arched willows, the coverings are made of matting, and reeds of grass and green firs (believed to have strong medicine powers ) cushion the ground . The blistering steam is created by pouring water on a pile of fired coals. After sweating away impurities, worshipping the Creator, and/or sharing deep secrets, the sweaters plunge into the cold river for a drastic change from the extreme heat inside the lodge. They sun bathe to dry off and repeat it all over until it is time to stop.<sub>13</sub> There have been documented stories of sicknesses like cancer being cured, but the epidemics that came from the white men were only tragically hastened by this intense procedure. A daily shower to us would be like the sweat lodge is to the Yakama Indians, yet the sweat lodge cleanses the mind, soul, and body. bSo it is another Indian sacrifice to the host culture when the sweats can not be done every day because of the busy work schedule that comes from the "American way".

Here are two stories from two Yakama Indian women who have had to deal with living in two cultures. The first is a lady that was raised by a missionary father; the second is a daughter of her mother who was spared from going to a boarding school.

Her father was raised a Shaker for the first seven years of his life, then was taken into a Methodist boarding school in White Swan. Many children became bitter because the teachers talked about the love of God, yet they were beaten if caught speaking Sahaptin amongst themselves. Patricia's father on the other hand accepted the Christian faith of Jesus dying for his sins, and her shy father, at age 14, started to preach. Then around 1955 he founded the McKinnley Indian Church(presently called McKinley Church of Christ) on the Yakama Reservation. Because of his effective speaking and his preaching in the native tongue, the Indians as well as the elders, enjoyed listening to him preach the Word of God and were sometimes



changed by his words.

I asked Patricia what she had gained from Christianity, and her reply was, "A healthier outlook. God is my continuous source of strength. When I am happy, sad, grievous, or even mad, He is my source of power to even me out. He helps me keep a smile on my face."

Virginia Beavert lost her mother and decided to follow the traditional funeral. "I couldn't eat fresh meat for 90 days, only dry or frozen food because the Yakamas believe that the loved ones left behind are flesh of her flesh while her body is fresh in the ground and to eat fresh meat is like eating her flesh." Virginia also replaced her clothes and blankets with all dark ones then after a year the dark clothes are exchanged for all fresh white apparel. The Yakama Indians believe that ghosts of the deceased haunt the living because of their loneliness and that the close relatives are in great danger of losing their own lives. So Virginia also gave up going to Pow-Wows and other social events for one year. This funeral commitment is preserved by social pressure and is followed in order to keep sicknesses away.

Virginia mentioned that the younger generations do not follow or understand the customs of their ancestors. Time has shown the effects of the pressures from the American religions, but Virginia Beavert, along with others, have kept a little of their heritage alive.

These two women like the church buildings represent different sides of the religious spectrum. The Indian heritage was always kept by passing it down to the following generation, but when America took the children away the culture was halted. Some children like Virginia 's mother were hidden and taught the Yakama Indian traditions and that certainly helped keep the Indian spirit alive. So religion has only semi-assimilated: some chose to denounce Western religion, and some decided to convert; still others wanted the best of both.

### Social

This is the section where the Yakama Indian Nation information is at a personal level rather than just numbers. It is sad to see what some of the Indians have fallen into as a result of the continuous pain and loss of identity. Many values and beliefs have also been lost in the shuffle.

Smohalla once said, "My young men shall never work. Men who work cannot dream, and wisdom comes to us in dreams...the work of the white

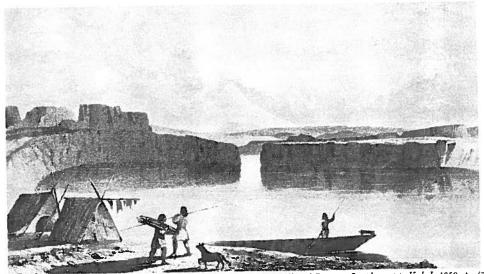
man hardens soul and body. Nor is it right to tear up and mutilate the earth as white men do."7 If he could have seen his Indians since then he would have been appalled at Indians tearing up the forests and working regular "white man's work", yet they needed money and food; how else could they have survived.

A lot of taboos of the olden days have not been observed by the younger generations. There once was a time when a hunter could not kill salmon, game or anything while his wife was pregnant because you could not take life from another when your child was beginning a life. Also it was bad to look into another person's eyes too long for fear of casting a curse on the other, but in the American society it is essential to have eye contact to let the other know that you are trustworthy.

The Yakama Indians found several ways to deal with the pain of losing so much. Many turned to alcohol and drugs to try and cover-up what has happened. Others have found peace from the bitterness by believing in the personal God of Christianity as Patricia Zach has. Another thing that has kept the Yakama Indians from giving up is a sense of humor: like the otter who takes time to play, the Yakama people believe that a light heart keeps everything in proportion.

Mixed-blooded children came from the interracial marriages that helped break some walls between the Indians and non-Indians. I asked Virginia Beavert if those children were accepted well into the tribal community, and her response was that their status was more dependent on their attitude rather than their blood. As long as the half-breeds did not act arrogant because of his white blood he was respected in return.

"I like to think of America as a salad bowl rather than a melting pot. You see, a salad bowl does not taste good unless a lot of different things are present", Patricia Zack told me. It seems that some Indians have become a part of the melting pot by forgetting their heritage but others have seasoned the United States by trying to observe their customs. Either way, the more productive and successful Indians, as with all human beings, are those that have chosen to live without bitterness and resentment.



Pacific Railroad Reports, Supplement to Vol. I. 1859, p. 47

Primitive Indian fishing camp at The Dalles.



Yakimas salmon fishing at Celilo Falls.

### Conclusion

Considering all this information pertaining to the 1950's and 1960's, here are the evaluations of how Yakama I responded to the pressures of the merging culture.

- 1. Some entrepreneurs ventured to use the rich natural resources (lumber, good soil, etc.) but poverty was haunting many.
- 2. Most understood the importance of following the governmental procedures in order to keep their rights, yet the United States went back on their word many
- 3. Rebellion is the word to explain education during the 1950's and 1960's.
- 4. The majority kept their religion because what is in the soul is the one thing that no one can take away.
- 5. It is sad to see so many Indians resorting to alcohol and drugs to run from their bitterness, but still others have been able to overcome the pain by trusting in the Creator.

The Yakamas have accepted parts of America and have held onto some of their own culture. But can the Yakama people continue living in both worlds? If they had to choose one world, which would it be? Click Relander, a renowned author, believed that termination will happen to some tribes more rapidly than others, but the Yakama people have survived this long, and only hope will keep their culture alive.



Nine uniformed officers carry out Law and Order work for Yakima Tribe. From left, back row are James Shike, Ray James, Chief of Police Wilson LaMere, E. W. Gunnyon and Casey Watlamett. Front, from left are John Mesplie, Pete Eneas, Eddie Mesplie and Burdette Kent.

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### Interviewees

- a. Beavert, Virginia Tiltle: translator for Yakima Indian Council
- b. Desgroseillier, Tom Title: a non-Indian high school student who has contact with the Yakama Inian Nation through boys scouts.
- c. Rau, Zach Title: part Yakama Indian math teacher at A.C. Davis High School
- d. Mr. Green Title: Head Counselor of Job Core for the Yakama Indian Nation in Toppenish, WA
- e. Neaman, Brycene A. Title: Curator at the Yakama Nation Museum in Toppenish, WA.
- f. Suttlict, Susie Title: Counselor at Job Core for the Yakama Indian Nation in Toppenish, WA
- g. Zack, Patricia Title: Program Coordinator of Graduate Education/ Psychology at Heritage College in Toppenish, WA

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accountable for his misbehaviour. "The modern way has obviously failed, and we are following Spilyay's predictions."

## CELIA ANN DICK, age 65

COLVILLE (Wenatchapam-P'shwanapam)

P'shwanapam, and she recollects legends and landmarks conveyed to her by her Celia is presently involved in cultural education with secondary schools. She A direct descendant of the Wenatchapams, her father was the Chief of that tribe. Her grandmother was from Nanum (Ellensburg). This tribe was called grandmother. She thinks that if the landmarks are taken away, the stories will disappear. "I could not recall the stories if it were not for the landmarks." portance of teaching Indian culture to our children because she feels they will lectures and demonstrates the native culture and crafts. She expresses the imlose their identity. "People should know who they are." Celia resides in Nespeem on the Colville Reservation.

### ISABEL ARCASA, age 84 COLVILLE (Columbia)

Corps of Conservation Camps for many years, and then she worked in various restaurants as a cook. She is very active in church activities. Before the hospitals were built on the Colville Reservation, Isabel assisted the Government Nurse for the U. S. Indian Service. She was a midwife, and she delivered 28 babies into this world. She raised five motherless children. She is still raising one She was born and raised on the Colville reservation. She was a cook at the eight and one-half year old, who is her grandchild. At her age, she is still preparing to go root digging in the mountains.

# LILLIE (LELA) YOKE WHITEFOOT, age 65

Yakima Tribe

Lillie has lived in White Swan all of her life. She is active in the community, and has cared for many grandchildren and foster children. She is interested in their welfare.

### MOSES GEORGE, age 66-67

Colville Tribe

Mr. George is a descendant from one of original bands of the Wenatchapam tribe. He is a retired land surveyor. He was employed as an engineer-surveyor at Saint Mary's, is a graduate of Chemawa Indian School, and also of Haskell Institute of Lawrence, Kansas. He served on the Colville Housing Authority for for 35 years, and he also taught surveying for several years. He attended school approximately three years, is a veteran of World War II, and served in the

1970 where he is presently residing. He is active in promoting cultural an historical programs on the Colville Reservation, and is a well-known lecture Corps of Engineers for two years. He resided in Wenatchee, Washington fc 20 years with his wife and family. He returned to the Colville Reservation i

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### COUIE WAPATO

Winachapam-Chlálpam

Is the oldest living resident in Chelan. He was born there, and he is still re siding on Indian land. He attended local schools in Chelan, and he graduate from Carlisle Indian College in Pennsylvania. He is still active in politic nvolving Indian rights and laws. He is a historian.

# Tribal Illustrators

Lucy Eneas

Johnny Jim, Jr.

Bobby Maldonado

Nathan Olney, Jr.

Julie Saluskin

James Telekish, Jr.