

In the fading years the remnants of what had once been many bundles of tule mats were taken from hillside cellar caches and used to cover long houses used for worship. There, Puck Hyah Toot, as Smowhala had done, recited the story of creation and of the Wanapum belief in the Creator. Chants of the old-day dreamers, such as Smowhala had introduced, were sung seven times each by the seven drummers as in the old days.

And after Puck Hyah Toot's death the services were continued in a wooden long house, lined with the remaining mats. This was after the Priest Rapids Dam had been built and the PUD, with the cooperation of the Atomic Energy Commission, installed and repaired a surplus building from the AEC, converting it into a long house. The PUD drilled a well to provide the water of life for the services, untainted by river pollution and set up Wanapum Park, a tract, for use of the Indians. Three houses which had been acquired from the Pacific Northwest Light Company were also repaired and the Wanapums lived in them, while working for the PUD.

In 1955, while Priest Rapids Dam was still under construction the PUD determined to name the upper dam, Wanapum for the River People. Puck Hyah Toot did not think this was proper, at first. It was his belief that the Creator had given names to all things and places on the land, and that these should remain unchanged until some unknown time when the Creator, upon returning to earth, would be angry if finding them changed.

On May 12, 1955, Puck Hyah Toot and his followers went to Ephrata, to the headquarters office of the Public Utility District of Grant County. They were dressed in ceremonial buckskins and some carried feather fans, but none wore headdresses, because this was not the custom among the Wanapums where chiefs were not recognized.

The littleband of Indians sang a religious chant, customary at the opening of important meetings. They heard a resolution of the Grant County PUD naming the second dam of the Priest Rapids Project, Wanapum, and it was interpreted back to them from the language of the suyapo or

white man, to the Indian tongue.

Puck Hyah Toot was asked if he had anything to say. He surprised everyone when he said he had something to talk about. He spoke then in the manner of his illustrious ancestor, Smowhala, noted for oratory. Puck Hyah Toot spoke simply:

"You know and I know that the white race, when they first came, looked upon the Indians as friends. We remember the first who came to the Northwest where they met the Indians and found them friendly and the Indians were respected.

"From White Bluffs to where the dam will be built the soldiers respected those Indians and did them no harm. Their dealings were attended by friendliness.

"We have carried on tradition and live peacefully without being bothered or bothering anyone.

"Going back, before the earth was born, the Mighty Creator made this world. That part of the district where we lived the Creator made. He made the earth. He spread upon the earth things for the Indian people so they could live.

"He gave them roots and berries, salmon he put in their streams and he caused wild fowl and wild animals to come upon the land. These were the foods the Indian has enjoyed, good food the Creator has given.

When I think of losing these things I think of losing my life!

"I do not feel that I should get angry or say anything that a dam is to be built. I feel that somehow I and my people will get by as long as we have friends like are here.

"The Creator predicted and directed that the light shall fall upon the earth and give warming life to everything upon it.

"The sun will brighten and warm the body of the Indian and will preserve the body. You and I get this living under that light.

"If any person does wrong to another race, the Creator will punish that person. That we believe."

The resolution, presented by the PUD, pointed out the necessity of providing more electric power to meet requirements of "the growing Northwest," and that "it has been determined that it is legally proper and technically and economically feasible for the district to develop the resources of the Columbia River in the reach between the foot of Priest Rapids and Rock Island Dam..."

It pointed out that "Whereas the peaceful friendliness of these people assisted and encouraged the expedition (Lewis and Clark) and those who were to follow and

"Whereas they have at all times since then maintained those friendly relations, meanwhile retaining their ancient culture, following religious ceremonials that recognize a Supreme Creator, believe in adhering to the soil on which their ancestors were born, and where they were buried near the relics which are sacred to them; and

"Whereas the few remaining members of the band continue to follow the customs and traditions of their ancestors, which customs and traditions have won the respect and friendship of all who have dealt with them:

"Whereas their friendship and cooperation have been of the utmost encouragement to us in our efforts in the development of the river,

"Now, therefore be it resolved that the dam to be located north of Sentinel Gap which is the gateway to the ancestral homes of this people, be named Wanapum Dam or Dam of the River People..."

Thus came to pass the naming of Wanapum Dam, and thus the fulfillment of some of the prophecies of the earliest river prophets handed down since before the coming of strangers to the land where the land did not know them. These prophets foretold of a time when the people would lose their hold on their culture, when dams would be built across the river and the salmon would come no more. And even before the times of the first explorers

Lewis and Clark, they foretold these things, and many more. Disasters and wars, these prophets forecast before there were any white men in the region. And they also forecast a time when there would be no more full blooded Indians, following the Creator directed ways, because of their sins.

After Wanapum Dam was named Puck Hyah Toot mourned silently about it in his own way, although maintaining friendship with non-Indians, since that was his way, the way of his ancestors. Then in the summer of 1956 he suffered a heart attack and paralytic stroke. For the first time in his life he went to a hospital, but it was not his wish. After a time he went to his family at a hop camp, because he was not improving.

A medicine man came and treated him, and he recovered his power of speech and the use of his right arm with which he waved an eagle feather to and fro and sung his religious songs, but then he would become immobile again. After one of the treatments, when he could talk, although in a whisper, he foretold his own death in a few weeks. The day he named was very close to the actual date of death, September 11, 1956.

Puck Hyah Toot died at the age of 79 in a room of his half brother, Sohapp, near Wapato. A long house was erected there for the funeral feast and burial services.

He did not return from the land of the dead with messages as some of the hundreds of Indians who gathered for the funeral believed might happen. So he was buried in the graveyard on the west bank of the Columbia, a few miles upstream from Priest Rapids Dam. And in accordance with one of his last requests, those building the dam halted their work and stilled the power hammers and trucks while the funeral procession passed near by and during the services.

The graveside mourners circled the opened earth and each threw in a hand full of earth as a parting gesture to the religious leader. In accordance with his request the lid of the plain pine box coffin was removed before the grave was filled so the body could return to its mother earth as quickly as possible.

Some of the Wanapums were bothered by troubled dreams and after a few months, because the dreams continued, the men went to the graveyard and re-buried the leader, turning the decaying coffin in the opposite direction. And those who had been dreaming were bothered no more.

Construction did not begin on Wanapum Dam until July 16, 1959 and it took five years to complete that part of the Priest Rapids Project.

Family Notes

Smowhala's last wife, and the youngest, who cared for him through his latest years of illness and blindness lived for many years after his passing and was the oldest of the Wanapums at her death in the early 1930s. Her name was Stongkee, which meant, Hair Cut Like Bangs. She hadm medicine power and understood little babies and children and could cure them when they were ill.

Other old Wanapums died, until only a few younger ones are left, although there are some kin who are old living on the Yakima Reservation.

Cy Tomalawash, the father of Bobby, died in February, 1953 and was buried in the hillside graveyard. He was one of three brothers, now all dead, who were drummers or singers.

He was one of the Wanapums who petitioned the Federal Power Commission for protection of the Wanapum graveyard and homeland relics. The petition was granted although he died before learning of the fact.

It was he who knew how to carve banded gambling bone talismen from the foreleg bone of a deer; how to fashion a barbed point for a long-shafted salmon spear and the double pronged speer with which to gaff white fish, suckers and small sturgeon. He knew what wood from which to carve a gorge for sturgeon fishing and where to hide the gorge when it was not in use, so the ssturgeon could not smell it when it was used. He also knew how to make p8Na, a fish trap shaped like a cigar and sunk in the right channel to entrap salmon. He made specimens of these things so some day they could be seen by everyone and thus perpetuate a small bit of Wanapum culture.

Like Puck Hyah Toot, Cy knew how to make ko-ko-lots, the Wanapum hand drum with a vibrant voice.

The Wanapums were friendly and shared these secrets so they could live on after those who knew about them had died.

Puck Hyah Toot realized this. He explained that the sun, moon and star have their symbolic significance and were used in religious decorations of porcupine quill and beadwork on buckskins.

Sun represented the body. The moon represented the heart. The stars, explained the old man, were "like your soul."

The thought of the Creator, that power alone, led to the creation of the world and man and all its birds, fish, plants and animals.

Smowhala's belief was that what we do determine what happens to us after death; that we have the power within ourselves to regulate our living, good or bad, and should use the power to "live good," so we can answer the handdrum "when we hear it call us."

Smowhala told his people that the handbell he used represented "calling from the heart," and the drums represent the "songs sung from the body."

Before Smowhala went on his power quest and had his dreams which told how to live, and before he received messages from the Creator, his people understood coyote and other animals or birds. They would tell the Indian what was going to happen. He would go into the sweat house in the morning and they would tell him where he could go to get deer or fish. These were the kind of Indians the Smowhala people pitied and looked down upon. They learned, through Smowhala's dreams, of their heart and soul and body and how to live and be good.

Smowhala told how, on his visit to another world while dreaming, he was instructed that the Indians should discontinue the practice of killing horses and burying them with the dead to accompany the spirits of the Indians to the spirit world. This revelation, preached by Smowhala,

caused the cessation of a long held practice.

Some burials have been found on islands along the Snake River where horses had been killed to accompany their owners, where horse bones were three and four feet deep.

It was during his dreams that Smowhala learned how to use the handbell.

Harry Tomalawash, the tragic or crippled brother, died by violence in a manner not yet solved by law officers of Wapato or Yakima County.

Johnny, the oldest brother, was the last to die, his death occurring when Wanapum Dam was nearly completed. Being the oldest, even a few days older than Puck Hyah Toot, he also knew many things, mostly now forgotten. He knew of historical incidents and customs and happenings unknown to the younger persons and historians. He knew more about the ancient prophet, Shuwapsa, than any of the others except perhaps Puck Hyah Toot, and he was one of those who went onto the reservation in later years. Since his wife was not a Wanapum she directed that he be buried in the Shawaway Cemetery, just below Union Gap when he died in 1965.

In the genesis of the Wanapums, narrated by Shuwapsa to Smowhala and then to Puck Hyah Toot, the island, just above the foot of Priest Rapids was Abalone Man's Island. Sun Man's Island was near by.

Once there was nothing but water and darkness and cold.

The Creator, through power of thought made the earth and regulated the waters. Then he called forth all animals, birds and plants. As they emerged they left their right "foot print" on a rock on the big island as a witness that they had been called. Salmon was the first called and others followed until the last, huckleberry. So it is in this order that salmon and food roots are taken as Communion at the feasts of thanksgiving to the Creator.

Puck Hyah Toot's mother lived in the River People's village of Chamna at the mouth of the Yakima River. Her name was Tsala-Mukht.

Puck Hyah Toot's father's name was Wat-Tas-Sachecht, which means

Standing Dancing, and his father was some relation to the Palouse.

Puck Hyah Toot's mother and Young Smowhala's mother were sisters.

Young Smowhala's wife was named Wa-Wallulamai and she came from Wallula. In time, after Young Smowhala's death she became the wife of Puck Hyah Toot.

Harry ~~Smishkin~~ Schappy, was a brother of Frank Schappy and a half brother of Puck Hyah Toot, but was enrolled on the Yakima Reservation in order to claim an inheritance. He lived around Parker, the home land of his wife. He died July 15, 1951, and was buried in the Shawaway graveyard. He was related to the Smiskins of near Kittitas.

Smowhala's song, which he brought back from his "first death" was a kneeling dance song. The song started with him and the drummers kneeling and then rising. This was a very old form of the Indian religious dance.

Cy ~~Toma~~awash's Indian name was Swauk Cum Cum.

Harry ~~Toma~~awash's Indian name was Twell Teko. He was crippled when he was young and thrown from a horse.

Frank Buck is the oldest son of Puck Hyah Toot and Rex Buck the youngest. Rex took his father's name in 1965 and it is now proper to address him by his Indian name of Puck Hyah Toot, since Indians now know him by that name.

Martha Johnny, daughter of Puck Hyah Toot (the elder) is the oldest of the three children. She is the chief root gatherer, in charge of feast preparations.

The buckskin dress-up or song jacket of Young Smowhala had stars on each sleeve, six pointed stars for the six days of the week leading up to the seventh, the worship day. Puck Hyah Toot also had a jacket with these stars. They were cut from the jacket when it was buried with him.

Outstretched hands were beaded on the front of the jacket and a sun and moon were on the back. These meant "your life and the way you live it is in your hands. It is up to you how you live. It is your life."

When Smowhala died, he brought back instructions that the men dancers for the washat should use white swan feathers. Women were given eagle feathers. These were waved two and fro with the dance rhythm and represented flying up to heaven. The religious leader keeps these old feathers in a box that was handed down, and distributes them before the start of the dance, afterwards he gathers them up and returns them to the box.

The color of the sun, in beaded work, is white. The color of the moon is yellow. The color of the seven pointed star is red. Puck Hyah Toot used yellow as his principal color. In the old days he and others painted their faces. He painted his face with stripes of yellow and white earth paint.

Smowhala was born a crippled, almost like a hunchback. He called Puck Hyah Toot by the boy's name, Squamie Thala.

Spring salmon, the first to run each season, the Blue Backs, are called ca_laugh. Steelhead are the next. Their name is sho-shitz. Dog salmon are the last. They are called I'ach. The general word for salmon is na-sau.

The name for Hanford was Chan'n'out, just an Indian name. There is an old graveyard there and is close to a part of the town and marked in a way. It is here the parents of Tomanawash are buried.

Three is a "bigger" number than the medicine number of five or the religious number of seven, since three represents the Sun, Moon and Star. "It takes three to make life."

Both Smowhala and Young Smowhala, when they danced, used two handbells instead of one at one stage of the dance, ringing a bell with each hand. No one has used two bells since that time.

It was Smowhala's law that preparations for the Sunday religious feast must be completed before dark on Saturday, that is, people must arrive at the camp, the food must be ready, firewood brought in, and all chores attended to before dark.

The Bird on the pole is erected before the first day and remains up day and night but the flag is only put up in the day time. Only certain men may put up the flag pole and "pack" the circle of the earth at its base.

All rubbish must be picked up from throughout the camp and disposed of. The long house floor is swept clean and fresh sand is put inside. Mats and old carpeting are put around the outside of the dance floor and no one should walk on the dance floor. Dogs are not permitted inside the long house.

None but small children are allowed to eat after the evening meal which is served at dusk. There is no late meal and no breakfast. The "fast" is broken with the serving of the feast Sunday, after the dance call is sounded by the drum and then the bell at high noon, and the washat song is sung seven times.

No one may hunt or fish or work on Sunday. It is a day in which to thank the Creator for food.

No language but the Indian language should be spoken inside the long house. Everyone attending the dance must be attired in Indian clothes, no clothes of the white man should be showing. They must be covered.

As late as the 1950s Puck Hyah Toot and his family kept sets of Indian clothing at the camp and when the visitors came, they had to discard their heavy white man's shoes and other clothing and wear only Indian clothing. Someone stole the trunks full of extra Indian clothing from one of the hop camps and other old papers Puck Hyah Toot owned. His pictures were also stolen.

There is no promiscuous talking inside the long house. Children are trained to obedience. The older men take the boys into a separate room during the morning, before services begin, and instruct them. They are stern with them.

Persons should not smoke the day before they lead worship services.

The oldest men are admitted into the long house first and go to the proper side of the dance leader in order of age, height and importance. This line dwindled down to the boys. The women are arranged opposite in somewhat the same order. They stand in groups wearing the same color of wing tip dresses, the colors are solid, not pattern.

Women root gathers, seven, have their own ceremonial and songs when they prepare the roots which they have gone out and dug, three days before. The roots are turned out onto a floor mat around which the women sit and prepare them for cooking while singing a song. Then the roots are put into baskets and the head root gatherer leads a procession around the inside of the long house and places the roots in a corner, covering them until time for them to be cooked. Men are not allowed to witness this ceremony unless they are ill or very old and resting inside the long house.

Children are not permitted to see it.

Children and women are not allowed to handle the drums.

The head singer is responsible for having the drums, usually his own, and they are seven in number. Before their use he dampens them and then dries them out, either in the sun, outside the long house, or by the stove inside, depending upon the weather.

The Wanapums ring the hand bell by holding it clapper down, from about the middle of the chest. Yakima religious leaders ring the bell holding it clapper up, raising the bell shoulder high or higher.

The bell is rung three times, then seven times, then pause, then seven more times, then pause, then seven more times. That means "come."

The people directly to the north of the Wanapums, although not close enough to be living among them, were called Wah-ta-nak. They lived just above Vantage.

Indian tobacco, ^{inick,} kinninick, grew around sheep camps and in the hills. White

stone for pipes was procured from White Bluffs. It was made with a bowl, and a stem protruding past the bowl. There was no tube pipes for many years. Women did not smoke. Smoking was a ceremony. Young men or boys did not smoke. This was done only at night, or on rare occasions, during the day.

Black pipe stone was obtained by trading with the Wenatchipums. The white pipe rock from White Bluffs was called Tip_a_lass. It comes in large pieces, mostly from one place there.

Many years ago the people had sun dances, and they also held them in the Yakima country. These were endurance dancers in which a dancer cut a slit in his back and looped a rawhide through this. The rawhide was tied to a dance pole. Then the man danced and danced until he was fatigued or pulled the strip of skin from his back. Some of the old men had scars in their back. This dance was about like the Blackfoot sun dance but was held inside the long house. The men were very old and have been dead many years, since about Smowhala's time, who had scars in their back. Informant indicated this was about the time of the Yakima Indian War and before.

The Wanapum word for canoe is wassas. The Yakima dialect for the word is wasees.

The Wanapum word for water is choos. The Yakima word is chees. (Natches, is literally, another water).

The people in the Kittitas Valley and out toward Vantage, but inland from the river, away from Vantage, called water "chees."

When Johnny Buck was a young man:

"There was an old man who lived at Cold Creek named What_not_tach. He is the only man I know who cultivated the soil. He raised yellow and white corn, growing it and hoeing it and selling it mostly at Ellensburg. It was the first corn I remember seeing and we used to get it from him.

"He lived five miles up Cold Springs from the Cold Springs Roundup Corrals.

"The Indians boiled corn. They called it sum mah na it. Billy Splawn used to have lots of wild horses in that part of the country. The Indians used to run down wild horses. One of the best at doing that was George Schappy.

"Billy Peters, who lives around Kittitas, six miles from Ellensburg, married a Wanapum woman. Her Kittitas name was Ho Ow Ani. Her Wanapum name was Twa Teelia, that mean's woman doctor. She had another Indian name, Teh Nupt. Her father was a Wanapum doctor. He used hot water and sucked to draw things out through the blood. She treated sick people the same way as her father with hot water and by sucking .

"Wah Noke at White Bluffs was where the Indians used to get white earth which they used to paint their faces and drums. It is on the river by the start of Wahluke Slope. Some of the Wanapum things are cached in that area and other places at White Bluffs, mortars and things like that, a canoe and also mats."

Wa-Teel Kas was a place five miles or more over the hills from the Wahluke Slope. There was a camping place there. It was on the way to the Palouse country.

Skunk cabbage, found in the Little Naches, was called Me Moan and was used for medicine, to cure rheumatism.

The mountains east of Raven's Roost were where the Wanapums went in late July and August for huckleberries. The place was called Pee Haut Too. The huckleberry field on the slopes of Raven's Roost was like an island. It was called Amow Wee, Like an Island.

On the other side, to the north, were other fields. These were called Wow Shee Too Nas. To the north, toward We Nat Cha, called Waie Nie Tcha, means water comes up, spouts up.

Lupin was called Wa Pee Eata. It is not good to eat. Kinninikik, found in the same area as the huckleberry fields grows low. It was called Saba Twa Toose.

Blueberries, at Naches, were called Cha_chak. They were dried and ground and eaten.

Cougar was called Qua Yow Ie. He and wolf were among the strongest medicines.

Chipmunk was called Mus-sis.

Wolf was called Howlish, by Indians all over.

Turtle was A-La Shick.

Canoes were seldom made along Priest Rapids unless the right kind of log floated down. There were no canoes made up and down the river for many miles.

The canoes were made about 10 miles above Vantage, or a little higher and back in the mountains a ways. They were made of cedar and fir logs. The log was chipped out a little and three fires were built in it and they were watched carefully so they would not burn out the side. Then it was chipped out again and more fires were built. When the canoe was nearly finished the Indians hitched a horse to the log and pulled it down the side of the mountain and finished building it there. Then put it in the water. Sometimes no fires were used in making a canoe. In the old days sharp rocks were used and were pounded with mauls. In later days iron.

Two or three men rode in a canoe. They were from 20 feet to 40 feet long. Poles were used mostly, paddles seldom.

The trip to White Bluffs took one day from Priest Rapids; the trip to Pasco another day. The trip up took a week at least. It was hard pulling against the current.

Later steamboats brought the canoes up the river, charging \$2 hauling charges. They loaded them on below. It took two or three days because the boats stopped along the river, sometimes half a day at a place.

The canoes weighed 300 to 600 or 700 pounds. It took one month of work by at least two men to make them.

Johnny Bick and the Tomanawash brothers worked on the Wanapum canoe. They used it to cross the rapids to the island where they fished.

They would put the canoe in upstream and ride down to the island.

Sometimes they brought bodies of those who died away from home down the river, hauling them to Vantage by wagon or buggy and then putting them in a canoe and coming down to Priest Rapids.

As Johnny Buck figured it, the canoe was made "about 50 years ago, maybe not so long." The wanapums had two other canoes at White Bluffs, three, but one wasn't very good. They disappeared. One was in a yard down there later but they never complained about it.