

Mr. Byron Fish,

Oct. 25, 1955

The Seattle Times editorial rooms,  
Seattle, Wash.

Dear "By" -

No Wanapum, full-blooded or Wanapum because he has virtually adopted a tribe, (or band) would let your Wanapum Indians in trouble Because of Early Peacefulness slip by without offering you a big puff from the tribal peace pipe. Thanks.

We'll admit to most of the accusations. Your idea of putting a fee on a peace treaty is a good suggestion. It is expressed with your usual keep appraisal and sharp wit. However the fight is over, the council has been held and it looks like we've missed a bet.

In explanation, I am enclosing for you a copy of Resolution No. 252.

Thanks to good words from good friends like you, the Wanapums have gained the ear and attention of others.

I believe if you keep your ear to the ground, come another two weeks you'll hear that the Federal Power Commission has granted a construction permit for the Priest Rapids Project. The lower dam will be built first, then construction will start in about two years on the larger upper structure, the Wanapum Dam. And as you no doubt know, the word originates from Wana, river and Pum, generally people River People.

The Grant County PUD which I suspect may end up by furnishing power, generated in Wanapum territory, to such neighboring villages (Indian) as Seattle has been sincerely aware of the Wanapums. The Federal Power Commission inserted a protective clause in the original exploratory permit and no doubt that is being retained in the construction permit when and if it is issued. Anyway to show its sincerity, the Grant County PUD has made itself clear that it will protect the graveyard of the River People, remove rock carvings and paintings from an island in the river at Priest Rapids which lies on the lower dam site and will move the Wanapum Long House to a nearby place of safety so the ancient culture of these few people may be perpetuated.

We should hold a pow wow and make you a member of the Wanapum Long House, but shall content ourselves with thanking you for a nice job. [I'm still wondering where you got the slant for it or the tip]. And we'll promise, come a half dozen or so months in the future when we expect to be in Seattle, to acquaint you of that fact and personally meet you.



The occasion will be the publication of Drummers and Dreamers which started out with newspaper writings because everyone ignored the Wanapums, and then developed into a book that could not be published, without upsetting things till the dam came.

And although I'm really a private power boy myself at heart, I could not let the occasion pass for giving credit where credit is due to the Wanapums, who interposed no bar or block to the dam, nor the Grant County PUD which has taken such a sincere interest in their welfare.

There can be no further help for the few old men and others until construction is under way. I do believe that at the proper time, and with a more complete explanation of these people's story in Drummers and Dreamers that small legislation may be forthcoming that will give them a small bit of security before the last of these very interesting people cease to exist. The only copies of this book that I am acquiring myself is to place in such hands as may help that come to pass, without opposition. And with your permission, when we come to Seattle, we will personally bring your copy. Puck Hyah Toot, the leader and last prophet of these people will be happy to put his thumb print or his X mark in the book for you.

And I am sending, to the same address and under separate cover, a copy of 1855 1955 The Yakimas, which I was asked to edit and write a few sections for the Yakima Tribe. (Lucille McDonald had some nice remarks about that last July) You may want to add it to your collection of material.

Might drop in sometime when I'm in Seattle to say hello. Haven't had a chance to get acquainted with many in the profession since I came here 10 years ago from California. When I'm not tied down on The Yakima Daily Republic city desk I've been stuck in the Wanapum Long House or some other isolated place.

Sincerely

Click Relander