

3701 Commonwealth Rd.
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Feb. 16, 1966

Mrs. Marshall Dana, [Margaret McKeown]
15725 Dana Rd.,
Portland, 22, Ore.

Dear Mrs. Dana:

Much water has flowed "down the Columbia" since I have been in touch with you, and much has happened to both of us in many beneficial ways.

On rather infrequent occasions I have asked our Indian friends about you and have managed, at least that way, to keep somewhat remotely in contact.

At the moment the occasion for writing is to say I've seen Flora and Chief Henry, and it was Flora who gave me your address.

As you may have seen in one of the Oregon papers (the Oregonian had an 8-col reproduction of Quigley's mural for Wanapum Dam, things are finally jelling there a little for the Wanapums. The Grant County FUD, although the dam is in production, has finally determined to construct an immodest tourist center.

I was called in on this of course because of the sculpture, which I had long plugged for and finally convinced them that nothing could be better than to convert the heads of Buck-Hyah-Toot, The Medicine Singer, Chief Tommy and Alice Slim Jim Charley into bronze. I also designed a salmon climbing or Ladder of Life fountain centerpiece and then worked up two 18 inch figurines, The Last Drummer and The Fisherman.

Last September I loaded my casts and the centerpiece for the fountain, it was five feet high, into a U-Haul trailer and to the only suitable art bronze foundrymen I could locate, who know the lost wax process. This was in Southern California. And the seven pieces are there now, due for delivery in mid-March.

The FUD has always been friendly to the Indians, and is one of the few going concerns not afraid to say so.

A dedication date for Wanapum Dam and opening of the Tourist Center has been set for June 4.

I had previously told Henry of plans afoot, and had dropped a note to Flora, acquainting her with the honor for such enduring preservation.

One purpose of Flora and Henry's visit to me here was to indicate Chief Kuni's head should be at Celilo.

I have explained to them how this "spreads" out his honor to places not now known, etc. and the impossibility that the head could be anywhere but where the PUD constructed, and "it is their party," etc.

They said they understood. I suspect Flora was hoping it could eventually be at Celilo, although there was no place when I had it in my control, and most importantly that I didn't have the money to convert it into bronze. A head in the round isn't cheap, you know, and I guess you can determine from your experience with plain, flat plaques.

The PUD has asked me to help arrange with the Wanapums some Indian participation in the dedication, atmosphere more than talking etc. We are going ahead with plans, not yet crystalized.

I have suggested to the Wanapum head man that Flora and Henry should be guests of honor there, although they plan to have no more than a dozen Indians and their children, in costume, a few tepees and a mat lodge.

I would personally pay transportation for Flora and Henry and they would probably be with the Wanapums and perhaps an upper Columbia descendant of Chief Moses, in the Indian section on the platform, would be introduced as the program unfolds, and have a chance to meet new friends and make new friends. And it might be that on the morning of the dedication, tentatively scheduled for 1 p.m., there would be a little "unveiling" ceremony in the tourist house where the heads will be.

So I am hopeful, when you see Flora, you can lend your "good wishes."

This is not a money proposition for me especially, for had I not had to talk the project up and presented it as a sculptor with casts which were going to pieces with time etc. and wanted to preserve them, the PUD would not have authorized their casting.

So much for that.

I see that "Come to the Feast" and "Linda's Indian Home" continue on sale here at the two local book stores and I think they will be in publication for a long while. I, of course, have been so tied up for a year finishing up the fountain, the little figures etc, casting and "repairing" the heads, I've had no time for writing. And I've still my regular job to take care of.

I'm going to do some writing to help the Wyams along with their long house hopes and dreams and perhaps we can encourage some of the Yakima Valley friends to lend a little help, as Flora told me the BIA took a rather distant view. (of the plans).

I'm still interested in old Northwest books, looking forward to the time I can continue some research and writing. Found some rather interesting references to the block house at the Cascades in some Harney documents and the Cram topographical report.

Understand that Alice has been in a rest home at Hood River. She must be quite feeble now.

I was divorced some time ago...too many trips ~~xxxxxx~~ to Europe, for which I guess I cannot blame the second party in view of my prolonged Indian research etc. which must have bored her. And three years ago I remarried and have an understanding, although much younger, helpmate. (and I do need help).

Flora said you had been ill. So I am hopeful that this letter finds you recovered.

And though our paths have frequently closely crossed, I've never met Mr. Dana, to whom I extend my best regards. And, may I add, most fortunate.

I'll keep you posted on developments regarding the dedication. I don't wish any strained relations with any Indians, especially with old friends like Flora and Henry. But I suspect wherever there is a dam there's a natural suspicion that someone is trying to profit, from the Indians. And it must be very deep in the case of Flora and Henry and others at Celilo.

So, this rambling letter I trust brings you up to date on Helander and his latest "Indian problems."

Most Sincerely

Click Helander