Friends of Little Spokane River Valley, Inc.

FLSRV Newsletter

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It costs you nothing!!



Colbert Road Trail Mark Case

Last spring we discussed putting in a trail along the north side of Colbert Road, from Little Spokane Drive to the Colbert bridge, so I sketched up a plan and sections and called about a dozen contractors. We only received one bid, due to the high volume of construction this past summer.

We are still planning to get the trail built before the snow flies . . . the contractor keeps telling me we are next, just not sure what we are next to!

Annual Meeting

Mark your calender!

2018 Annual Meeting and Dinner/Auction

Friday, february 23, 2018 Wandermere Golf Club

Doors Open - 5:30pm, Annual Meeting - 6:30pm Dinner - 7:00pm

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- In Memoriam -

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Daniel Eugene Forsyth

The Little Spokane River flowed throughout his whole life as he lived along its shore. The stream's presence, history, its timeless beauty - and his fondness for it - will always be appreciated. He remains a true friend of the Little Spokane and its valley.

A true Friend of the Little Spokane River Valley

Thank You, Daniel!

Mark Case New Board Member

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I was born and raised in Bremerton WA and raised 3 boys in Woodinville, WA. I went to school for architecture but ended up working at an engineering firm in Seattle. I worked my way up to be a designer doing grading and drainage plans, mostly for landfills all over the country.

My hobbies include restoring old cars, canoeing, hiking, and working around our property, as this is a beautiful place to live. I designed and built our home with my wife, Laura.

I joined the board (mostly due to pressure from Harla Jean) to help out with the trail system.

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FLSRV Newsletter

is a publication of:

Friends of Little Spokane River Valley, Inc. P.O. Box 18191 Spokane, WA 99228 Phone: 509-951-2084

For article suggestions or comments, contact Harla Jean Biever

Board of Directors

Dave Maccini President Martha Schaefer, V,ice President Lindell Haggin, Secretary Harla Jean Biever, Treasurer Mark Case, Director Michael Kennedy, Director Kirk Neumann, Director Tina Wynecoop, Director Lance Pounder, Director

Earth Day Clean-Up of Our Valley 2017 Michael Kennedy

Friends of the Little Spokane River Valley held their annual cleanup day for the valley on Saturday, April 22, 2017. This cleanup happened to be on Earth Day! This year we had two outside groups to volunteer for the cleanup, home for those who helped out. A big thank you to those responsible for a great meal: Lindell Haggin provided the chili and drinks, Martha Schaefer brought the cornbread, and Harla Jean Biever made the cookies. Thanks to all who helped with both cleanup and the cooking!

Please mark your calendars for next year's cleanup scheduled in April, 2018. We will set the exact date this winter. We need your time and your continued sup-



Boy Scout Troop 218 with Richard Parish Scout Master and the Spokane WA. North Stake group from the Mormon LDS Church. It turned out to be a great cleanup day with around 35 to 40 people, and we had enough volunteers to cover all the routes.

Thanks to everyone who did show up! Our goal each year is to clean up most of the major roads in the valley from Wandermere to Perry; Shady Slope to the top of the hill; Dartford to Hazard Road; Hatch Road to the pool; and Golden Road, Midway, and Colbert Road including some new area along US 395.

We collected a lot of paper trash, miscellaneous wood, carpet, bottles, etc. Estimated total trash was one of the largest hauls we have had in years. Great job and thanks again to the Boy Scouts and the North Stake group !!

After the cleanup, an annual chili feed was held at Bart and Lindell Haggin's

port to help to keep our valley roadways clean. This is also a good way to get to know your neighbors!

October Board Meeting Harla Jean Biever

Dr. Thomas Rockefeller, superintendent of the Mead School District, and his assistant, Jared Hoadley, were guests at our October FLSRV Board Meeting. He shared important information regarding the growth in the number of students attending our schools. Each year several hundred new students are added to the Mead system, consequently, there is an ongoing need for more and more facilities to educate these young people.

One facet he explained is the renovation and development of the site where the old Mead Junior High School is located at Market and Farwell. The building, constructed in 1915, will be removed and a large area around that building that is owned by the district will be turned into a community activity spot for our children. Athletic fields for many sports will be constructed. One of the special things this offers is space for our Marching Bands to practice. He emphasized how encouraging it is that parents, grandparents and friends are supportive of the many activities of our students.

We discussed the upcoming vote for the school bond and levy that takes place in February 2018. Dr. Rockefeller told us with the new way Washington State is funding education if BOTH the bond and levy are approved the amount people pay in school taxes will actually go down by 9%. We are now taxed \$7.28 per \$1000. of assessed value, with the upcoming vote we will be taxed \$6.64 per \$1000. of assessed value.

Your board urges each of you to be sure you are registered to vote so that we will be able to support our high quality schools.

On another note: Your board is planning the Annual Dinner/Auction get together in February. The auction that takes place is a fund raiser for our trail system that is constantly expanding. We need quality items for this auction so if you have something to donate please contact Harla Jean Biever.

hjbiever@earthlink.net



Living Water: Salmon's Presence

Tina Wynecoop

We walk side by side with our history. We would have had to be centenarians to have witnessed the extraordinary salmon runs in the Little Spokane River. Spokane Riverkeeper, Jerry White, Jr.'s description of the fish is perfect: "Chinook salmon with tails the size of tennis rackets and weighing up to 100 pounds returned every spring, [summer and fall]." The male Chinook salmon (King) in the photograph left the Pacific Ocean, traveled up the Columbia River, swam eastward into the Spokane River, and bumped into a concrete obstacle where it could migrate no further. Little Falls Dam (1911) blocked its passage. "It gather to pray on the banks of the river and remember what once was...letting the salmon know they have not been forgotten, and telling the salmon that great efforts are being made to enable their return – efforts to restore and maintain the health and diversity of native fish in the Columbia basin. It is a poignant ceremony because salmon still gather at the foot of dams - instinctively driven to return home yet unable to hurdle the great walls imposed across their watery highways.

In many places in the vast Columbia River watershed (the Little Spokane River is one of the great river's many tributaries) it has been noted that the salmon swam upstream so thick during spring, summer and fall runs, that one could "walk across their backs to the opposite bank." This is a common refrain repeated



was caught immediately below the dam, during the summer of 1938, the year before the Grand Coulee Dam blocked salmon migration into all the Upper Columbia Basin. The fish looks like a male...because it appears...to be starting to develop a spawning kype (hooked upper snout) and is starting to develop spawning colors." (Allan Scholz - personal communication). This behemoth salmon's destination was to one of the tributaries of the Spokane River.

Perhaps the Little Spokane River was calling him home.

A "Calling Home the Salmon" ceremony is conducted every June at traditional fishery sites along the Columbia River. Native peoples gather and pray, and, by tapping cobblestones together, imitate the sound the river's water once made as it streamed over gravel spawning beds. Indians over and over again: The Lewis and Clark expedition of discovery first encountered the Columbia River in 1805. Their journal records that "nearby streams were so thick with salmon that you could all but walk across on their backs."

Bernard DeVoto, who edited the L&C journals, wrote, "Everywhere the Corp of Discovery saw evidence of how the Indian's salmon economy was organized: weirs, spears, nets, caches of dried fish." He added, their notation for October 14, 1805 states with relief: "Everybody [in our group] was heartily bored by living on fish and for the first time in three weeks [we] had a good dinner of Blue wing Teel."

A Colville tribal member re-membered her elders saying "they were so thick you could walk across the river on their backs."

Celebrated author Sherman Alexie (Spokan/

Coeur d'Alene) wrote: "My grandmother said the salmon once swam so thick in the Spokane River that she could walk across the water on their backs."

Salmon, in their former abundance, were the major food source for the Indians who found them palatable and nourishing. Preparations for catching, preserving, and storage were precise. Even the salmon's skin provided needed nutrients. I have found photographs of moccasins made entirely of salmon skin.

The 35 mile-long Little Spokane River and its watershed encompassing 710 square miles drains the northeastern portion of the 2,400 square miles of the Spokane River sub-basin. Both the Big and Little Spokane Rivers and their tributaries are part of the vast Columbia River Basin. The "magnitude of the former fish runs in the Columbia River's watershed were estimated to be as high as 35 million fish." Annually.

Included in EWU biology professor Allan Scholz's forthcoming book (spring 2018) are guotes of numerous historical accounts and interviews: In the late 1800's Little Spokane landowner Ben Norman purchased his property, located at the confluence of the Little Spokane River with the Spokane River, from the Northern Pacific Railway. The railroad company was selling off extraneous parcels of land "gifted" to them by the federal government. Certainly there was little consideration for the aboriginal people who respected but did not "own" these lands in the current sense. Mr. Norman recalled: "The site was a great fishing place . . . the Indians had fish traps across both the Spokane River and the Little Spokane . . . and there was fish for everyone. When I first settled there the fish were so plentiful . . . I have seen salmon, big ones weighing many pounds lying noses together one above the other closely packed in their efforts to reach their spawning ground at the head of the stream."

From another account: "In 1882, 40-50,000 salmon/steelhead were seen on drying racks at the Indian encampment on the Little Spokane...By 1883 the Indian catch was only about 2,000 fish."

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There were/are many reasons for this stark decline in fish stocks: salmon canneries on the lower Columbia, agriculture, livestock grazing, mining, lumbering, urban development, industrial and sewage (raw) pollution, ignorance, and the construction

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of dams of all sizes. All have, blow by incremental blow devastated the prehistoric salmon runs. Restoration, though, is more than a wish - it is a goal. The research being accomplished has depth and breadth and possibilities. A simple query on the Internet brings up floods of scientific data. FLSRV members Lindell Haggin, Chris Dudley and I contribute in a small but significant way to this collection of data. As volunteers we take monthly water quality measurements at three sites in our reach of the LSR: these include Little Deep Creek, Deadman Creek and the Little Spokane as it flows past Haggin's farm. Our reports go to Spokane Conservation District staff for analysis.

We have never seen a salmon as we conduct measurements in an area of such cultural significance to the indigenous people. We are aware we stand in their history: Anthropologist Verne Ray wrote, "Middle/Upper (Central/Eastern) Spokans... maintained a weir and fishing platform station at the junction of the three streams at the base of Shady Slope. Near the mouth of Deadman Creek was a permanent

village, a major fish-gathering site called $\check{c}'\check{t}\check{c}'m\check{u}le?x^w$ (where a creek skirts the foot of a cliff). [The Indians] stood on this platform to spear Chinook salmon, Steelhead trout and Mountain whitefish that were abundant." By the late 1800 and early 1900's, before Little Falls Dam blocked salmon runs on the Spokane River, settlers in the Little Spokane Valley said that farmers used pitchforks to harvest Chinook salmon that had migrated up the Little Spokane River to their farms. Unlike the Indians who ate these fish, the farmers considered these fish to be inedible ... and used them instead as food for their pigs or else used them as fertilizer by scattering the carcasses over agricultural lands." (Scholz)

In 1893, ichthyologists Charles Gilbert and Barton Evermann reported extensive damage to the Little Spokane as a result of [settler] activities: "The character of this stream is being materially changed by the advent of [post-contact] civilization, a fact which is, or has been, true of most streams in this country. The cutting away of the timber and brush on the immediate bank and the cultivation of the land within the drainage area of the stream



have greatly increased the surface erosion and, in consequence, the impurities of the stream."

The grandson of the fisherman who caught the Chinook salmon pictured in the photograph remembers these "impurities of the stream" in his boyhood attempts at "swimming" in the Spokane River as it sluggishly flowed along the southern boundary of his reservation. He said, "During the 1940's one had to dive through horrible layers of green foamy crud to reach the water." Existence for any living thing downstream was hazardous to health. And, to add insult to injury, because of the damming of the traditional fishery sites, an elder Spokan said, "Your houses are filled with light, but our stomachs are now empty."

In the Dartford area I interviewed Colville tribal member Jim Tomeo, a long-time resident of the LSR valley. He shared with me conversations he had with John W. Stoneman (1900-1996) who lived and farmed at Dartford. Mr. Stoneman told him, "The salmon were plenty. Whenever they came through the bears and cougars came down to the river's edge and would wait to snatch a salmon for a meal." Tomeo said Stoneman remembered when he was very young that Nez Perce Chief Joseph would camp along the Little Spokane at Dartford while traveling between Nespelem on the Colville Reservation and his family home in Idaho. It is said he never went back to his birthplace but he actually did go back and forth. He and his small group would come and camp during salmon runs. He stayed at Dartford and upstream where the Wandermere Golf Course is situated.

In preparation for their leader's arrival. young men went ahead of Joseph's group to catch, smoke and dry salmon and prepare enough for their own travels and for trade. Tomeo spoke of the different ways the captured salmon were preserved. The stone tools (lithics) in the photo are from the Dartford area and may have been utilized in processing salmon. The tools are sturdy reminders of the history of our Little Spokane. (Of note, there was a 'burial" near the golf course - a traditional Nez Perce method of taking care of their deceased: an infant was placed in its baby board and tucked high in a conifer's branches. The tree is gone and with it a poignant reminder of a sad event happening when the Indians were passing through. A similar committal of an infant was found in a tree at a fishing/campsite located at the mouth of Tshimakain Creek, also a favored stopover of the Nez Perce which was located on what is now the Spokane Indian Reservation.)

On its surface our Little Spokane River appears untouched and pristine. Beneath its surface there is a different story. One that tells of incomprehensible destruction and loss for the indigenous peoples who

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once thrived along its banks - and loss for those who came later. Although the Little Spokane River has never been dammed there have been feasibility studies to do so. Earlier attempts at manipulation are described in an article in The Inlander titled, "Progress Be Dammed: How Spokane Tried Its Darnedest To Stop the Grand Coulee Dam From Being Built." Investigative reporter William Stimson writes: "In 1918 there was a plan to divert waters from the north of Spokane to central Washington via gravity (known as The Gravity Plan) ...in this plan, the Pend Oreille River would be grabbed at a point between the small towns of Newport and Priest River and steered, via 130 miles of existing waterways - such as the Little Spokane River (emphasis added) - across the Spokane River at Dishman and through tunnels under the Spokane foothills to the Columbia Basin." Although not without great cost to the people who staked their lives on the abundance of migratory

salmon, it was determined that the Grand Coulee was a better site for a large dam.

In 1973 Spokane Tribal Chairman, Alex Sherwood spoke: "I remember this river so well as it was before the dams. My father and grandfather used to tell me how it was before the white man came...it was beautiful then...the fish! The fish sometimes so thick that it seemed that they filled the river...I ask, "River, do you remember how it used to bethe game, the fish, the pure water, the roar of the falls, boats, canoes, fishing platforms? You fed and took care of our people then. For thousands of years we walked your banks and used your waters. You would always answer when our chiefs called to you with their prayer to the river...

Sometimes, I stand and shout, "River do you remember us?" We thank you for these things, bring us again, as you have every year, the salmon that keep us together as a people and feed us through the winters. Remember!"

An award-winning reporter who witnessed and recorded the successful removal of the Elwha Dam near Port Townsend. and the salmon's subsequent return, aptly concludes in a way that could be said of the Little Spokane River and the surrounding watershed as well, "We busily built a civilization and, while we were at it, undercut the natural balancing capacities of our world. I agree that our human works are now greatly at risk-but also think our situation is not hopeless. Ultimately, this is about relationships. With one another, with future generations, and with the other living beings with which we share the planet, now and in the future, with value all their own." (Lynda Mapes)

There is remembrance and there is hope.

*A bibliography of excellent resources related to the subject will be posted on our website www.flsrv.org.

A River Captured: The Columbia River Treaty and Catastrophic Change **By Eileen Pearkes**

Reviewed by Jack Nisbet

Anyone who reads Eileen Pearkes' regular column in this magazine understands that she has a deep interest in the history and fate of the Columbia River. She has been a tireless voice reporting on the Canadian half of the great river's story, as well as insisting that consideration of the drainage as a whole, stripped of the international boundary, will be key to any healthy relationship between people and water going forward.

Pearkes' new book, A River Captured, tells the story of the dams created by the Columbia River Treaty (CRT). After laying the groundwork of fur trade contact with indigenous peoples of the river, she describes how the salmon-stopping wall of Grand Coulee Dam in 1941, followed by the huge flood year of 1948, ushered in a secondary wave of dam construction on the great border-straddling circle formed by the Kootenai and Columbia Rivers. The heart of her book is a blow-by-blow account of the creeping decisions that led to the creation of the system we live with today, especially the Libby, High Arrow (now called the Hugh Keenleyside) and Mica Dams.

It is a challenging treatment at all levels. Pearkes faithfully recounts the often tortuous political discussion within the province of British Columbia, across the vast reach of Canada to Ottawa, and between the U.S. and Canadi-

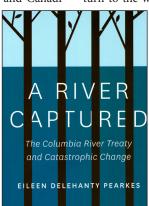
an governments that led to the CRT and the flood control plan carried out the 1950s and '60s. Along the way, she weaves in personal investigations of this landscape in present-day time, the deep past of the tribal cultures that lived along the river, accounts of early white settlers, and the aching sense of loss among both farmers and native peoples whose lands were drowned by CRT reservoirs.

While this approach some-

times leads to footnotes than run across pages and transitions that bounce around in time, a willing reader soon comes to share Pearkes' sense that it is the only way to tackle such a grand river. She needs to tell as much of the

whole story as she can, piece by piece.

A River Captured contains a host of maps and photographs that help to drive home the fact that a drainage, once altered, can never return to the way it was. While Pearkes remains



fully aware of that fact, she also understands that the upcoming renegotiation of the Columbia River Treaty offers at least a chance for a new direction. Her history of how past decisions were pounded out between political parties and governments with little sense of landscape or long-term consequences clearly shows how the next version of the treaty will require a much more comprehensive vision - an understanding based on

shared compromises involving real science and real people.

Most importantly, Pearkes writes, "Let's not forget to ask what the River wants. Or what it needs."

Article originally published in December issue of The North Columbia Monthly. Reprinted by permission.



Friends of Little Spokane River Valley, Inc. P.O. Box 18191 Spokane, WA 99228



The stalwart little pine tree (at left) growing next to the FLSRV sign at the base of Mill Road/Little Spokane Drive gets decorated for Christmas each year. *Thanks be to the Decorator!*