



WEBFOOTER EXTRA

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Remembering the Wild, Wild West



Remembering the Wild, Wild West – Land of the Chinook – see page 2.

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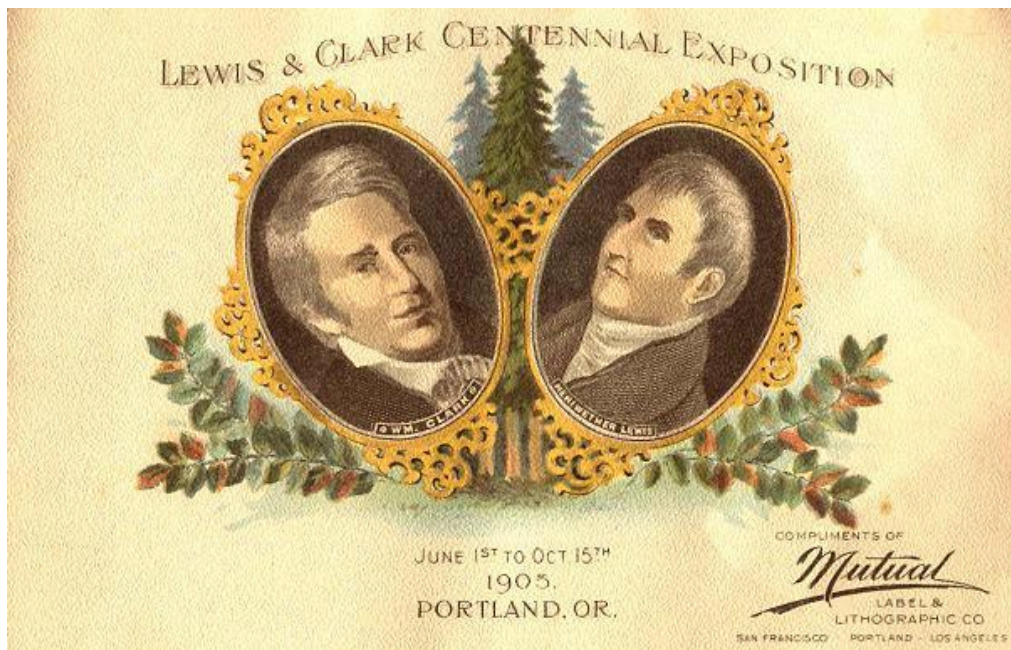
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Remembering the Wild, Wild West The Land of the Chinook

It is believed that settlement of North America and the Pacific Northwest began several thousand years ago when indigenous people from Asia made their way to the American Continent. Here in the Northwest, they discovered the mild climate and economically rich forests, prairies, wetlands and rivers. They also discovered an abundance of mammals, waterfowl, fish and plant life that developed and grew over thousands of years.

By the time Europeans made contact with these inhabitants in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the area we now call Portland was one of the most densely populated of the North American Pacific Coast. Most of the Portland Basin was inhabited by Upper Chinookan speakers, including the Clackamas and Multnomah peoples. The area known as Washington County was inhabited by Kalapuyan-speaking Tualatins and Salish-speaking groups clustered near St. Helens.



The first to document the area's native inhabitants in any detail were explorers Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, who in 1805 and 1806 noted several large Chinookan villages and smaller encampments on Wapato (Sauvie) Island (northwest of present-day Portland) and along both sides of the Columbia in and near present-day East Portland. Lewis and Clark traded with several groups and made note of their impressive plank houses. In their journals, Lewis and Clark described various aspects of their language, appearance, customs and material culture.

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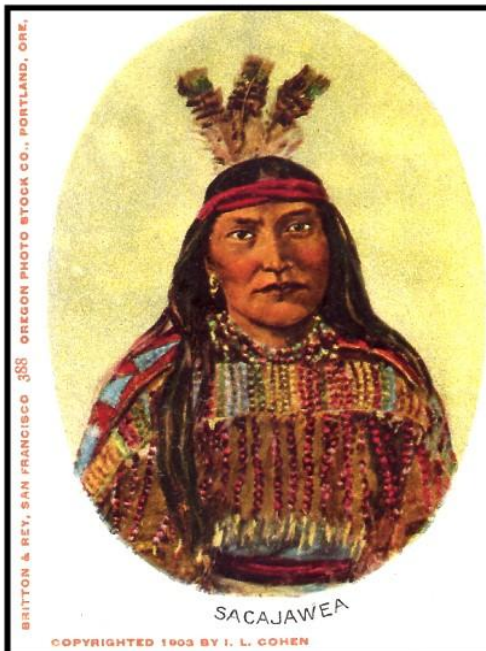
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510 SACAJAWEA—LEWIS AND CLARK FAIR, 1905



THE LEWIS & CLARK CENTENNIAL
PORTLAND - OREGON - 1905
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Sacagawea journeyed with Lewis and Clark as their guide and appeared with them in illustrations on postcards and other publications for the Lewis and Clark Exposition and Western World's Fair held in Portland in 1905 to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the Lewis and Clark Expedition.



BRITTON & REY, SAN FRANCISCO 388 OREGON PHOTO STOCK CO., PORTLAND, ORE.

SACAJAWEA

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Sweet as the scent of the cedar and pine
And the wild flowers decking the mountain,
Charming the senses with odor divine
As dear as the springs from earth's fountain.
Joy bringing—bright as the sight of the ocean
Appeared to the wearied ones, Lewis and Clark
When guided by thy never flagging devotion,
Enraptured they gazed o'er an empire sublime
Adding thy name to theirs for the fullness of time,
SACAJAWEA

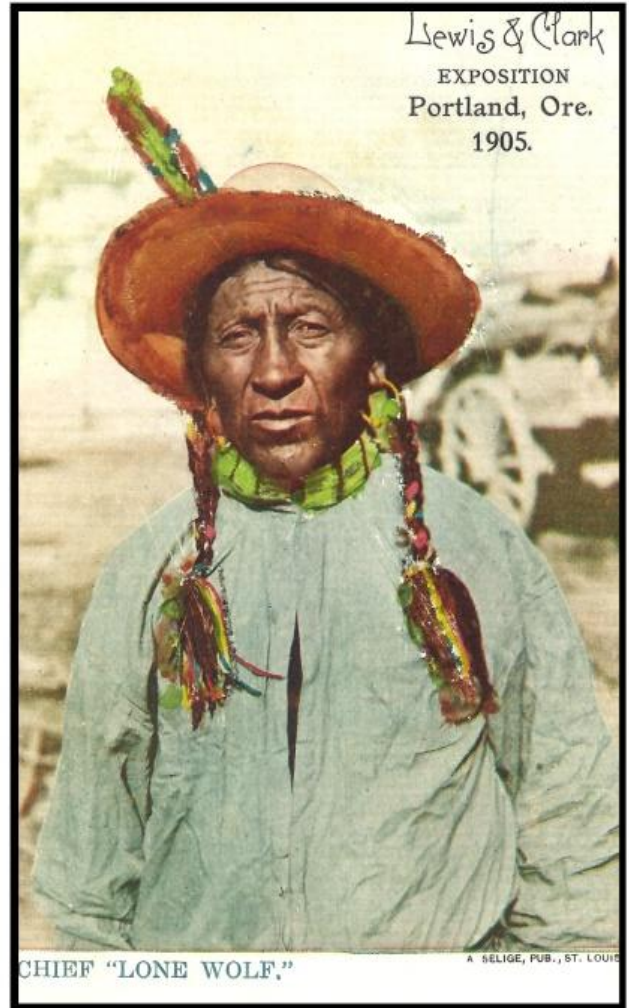
"SACAJAWEA" AND FLOWERS OF OREGON
THE NEW OREGON PERFUMES
MANUFACTURED SOLELY BY
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On April 2, 1806, William Clark wrote about a temporarily vacated 30 ft by 40 ft Chinookan house near what is now the Portland International Airport. The next day on April 3rd, on a visit to the village of Ne-cha-co-lee (translating to "Stand of Pines"), Clark recorded their exploration of a 226-foot long plank house near Blue Lake, near present-day Fairview. It consisted of seven apartments about 30 feet square. The house was covered with two layers of white cedar bark.

Inhabiting a large area from Alaska to California, Chinookans were described as complex hunter-gatherers who came together to harvest the abundant salmon, game, plants and other resources in the area. They were also skilled craftspeople who created their own artistic style of clothing, and these styles were also represented in their basketry, tools, architecture and various items of wood, stone, bone and shell.

Chinookans played a big part in the fur trade and they developed a Chinook Jargon known as the "hidden language of the Pacific Northwest," that incorporated words from English, French, Nootkan and other tongues was widely accepted in trade circles, military forts, missions, reservations, households and multi-ethnic work places such as fishing boats, canneries, lumberyards, hop fields and mining camps.



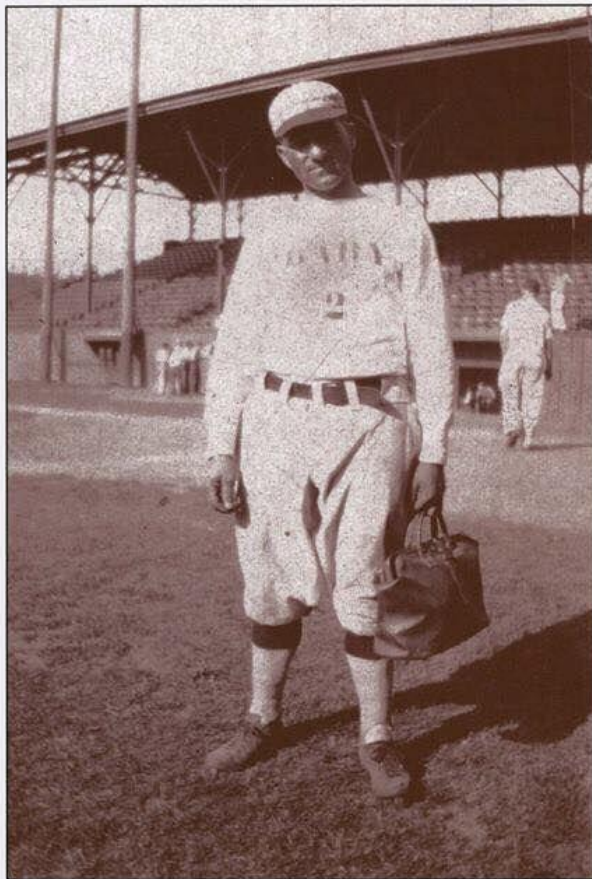
Native inhabitants were somewhat migratory, moving periodically throughout the region, to fish, hunt or pick berries when the season was right. The story is told of Old John, who lived from about 1800 to 1893, and was reportedly present at Ne-cha-co-lee, west of the mouth of the Sandy River near Blue Lake, when Lewis and Clark visited in 1806. In the last half of the century, Old John fished, tanned hides and labored on farms along the Columbia Slough from what is now Fairview to Parkrose. Old John lived in the woods, watched the homes and cared for the cattle when farmers were away. He was highly respected and protected by the white inhabitants at the time.

Further to the south and away from the river, early settler accounts tell of other locations associated with Native Americans such as "Indian Rock" a natural amphitheater near present-day Foster Road and 100th Avenue in Lents. It was a long-established location for ceremonial activities until some of the young white settlers took potatoes and tomatoes as weapons and threw them at the dancing Indians. The Indians never danced there again.

It is believed that Indian Rock was later quarried for road paving stone as well as channel liner for nearby Johnson Creek which had been an important fishing source utilized by Native Americans in the area. It is said the area was littered with arrowheads before it was intensely developed.

If you have ever wondered why some of the major arterials in the area such as Foster Road, Sandy Boulevard, Cully Boulevard and parts of Powell Boulevard don't fit the normal grid in traffic patterns, they all follow the routes of major Indian paths established prior to White settlement. It is believed that the Grotto, a natural rock formation near present-day Sandy Boulevard and 85th Avenue, served as a rock shelter.

White settlement profoundly altered the way of life for Native American people. Native societies in the Northwest were decimated by diseases introduced by Europeans and Americans between the late 1700s and the 1850s. Their populations decreased by as much as 90 percent by the time of the civil war due to sickness and the appropriation of their land and resources, as well as forced relocation and assimilation policies. It is important to note that the Native people and their rich cultural heritage were not eradicated. According to the census taken in 2000, more than 37,000 Native Americans were living in Multnomah County.



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Donald R. Nelson

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