



# Keeping Up with the Past: Cathlapotle Plankhouse July 2009

*“The ‘chief’ of all the berries, huckleberry has great power. ‘They are the same as good words from the other world,’ says Yakama oral tradition. ‘They know everything; they do nothing wrong, They do right all of the time, night and day.’ The huckleberries and chokecherries are sisters. Chokecherry is the oldest and holds great power in the lower country while the younger sister has power in the mountains. These sisters keep track of each day and each night. They keep track of all this is done, even to the sun. As long as the tribal people showed respect for wiwnu, taking only what they needed and giving thanks for the sacred food, the berries would return each summer to help them prepare the winter storage.”*

The words above were crafted by the Yakama people to describe the significance of the huckleberry. They are included in a pamphlet that discusses the area of a National Forest that was set-aside exclusively for the Yakama people to pick huckleberries based on a handshake agreement in 1932. This agreement is still in affect today. Rick McClure, archeologist for the Gifford Pinchot National Forest and the Mt. Hood National Forest, explained to visitors during July’s Second Sunday Lecture that during the great depression, non-tribal people came into the National Forest to pick huckleberries in order to sell them in the city and tribal people were upset about the violation of their treaty right. This discussion lead to the “Handshake Treaty.”

Rick also discussed during his lecture the process of picking, drying, and smoldering the berries. Cedar bark baskets would be filled with these berries and they would lay the berries out on tule mats to dry in the sun. Huckleberry gatherers would then find a log that had fallen and dig a trench next to it and start a smoldering fire. They would lay the berries out on the other side of the fire across from the fallen log, this log would act as a reflector so that the heat would be reflected towards the berries. The berries would be stirred until they had the consistency of a raisin and this would be the perfect state of the huckleberries for storage so that they did not mold while being stored. Rick also discussed the archeological remains of trenches that have been found. Charred huckleberries and twig samples gathered helped date some trenches back to 1800.

This was truly a fascinating discussion incorporating many ranges of interests. For those who love huckleberries, Rick relayed that they will be ready to be picked in 3-4 weeks so get out your cedar bark baskets and get ready to gather!



*Top: Visitors listen intently to Rick McClure during his discussion of traditional huckleberry processing.*

*Bottom: Visuals that Rick brought included photos of the huckleberry harvesting process, a tule mat, and a large cedar bark basket.*

# Save the Date!

## Upcoming Events at the Cathlapotle Plankhouse

### July 18: Volunteer Appreciation Barbeque

The Refuge will be hosting a barbeque **July 18** at **4 pm** to thank volunteers of the Refuge. The barbeque will be on the Bachelor Island Point Beach. Bring a side dish and the Friends of the Refuge will supply the barbeque goods. If you plan to attend and have not yet replied, please do so by calling Josie at (360) 887-4106.

Thank you for your hard work and we hope to see many of you there!



### July 23: Tule Harvest

It's tule time everyone!!! The tule is ready to be harvested immediately so join us **July 23** at **8:30 am** at the Information Center on the River "S" Unit and we will carpool to the harvesting site. Bring gloves, knives, and water. We will provide juice and snacks. If you can make it please let us know by contacting Katie Harrison at [katie\\_harrison@fws.gov](mailto:katie_harrison@fws.gov) or call (360) 887-4106.

### August 15-16: Flintknapping Workshop

Join us for a flintknapping workshop with Dennis Torresdale on August 15-16. Dennis Torresdale is an accomplished flintknapper who will also be participating in our Second Sunday Lecture Series on August 9. For more information contact Katie Harrison at [katie\\_harrison@fws.gov](mailto:katie_harrison@fws.gov) or call (360) 887-4106.



## Thank You Courtney and Welcome Katie!

As many of you know, Courtney Yilk, the current Plankhouse Coordinator, is leaving at the end of the month to welcome a new member to the family. She has been a great asset to the Plankhouse and her hard work and coordination are evidenced by this past spring's Artist-in-Residence Program, the Second Sunday Lecture Series, and the beginning development of the interior exhibit. Courtney has valued her time as a Plankhouse Volunteer and Coordinator and plans to continue her involvement - and we will hold her to it!

Courtney will be working with her replacement, Katie Harrison, through the month of July. Katie comes to the Plankhouse

with experience in museum education, interpretation and museum programs and recently completed the Museum Studies Graduate Program at the University of Washington. She is eager to assume the role of Plankhouse Coordinator and to develop programs, policies, and exhibits that will best serve the mission. Katie encourages anyone with questions or concerns about the Plankhouse to contact her at [katie\\_harrison@fws.gov](mailto:katie_harrison@fws.gov) or (360) 887-4061. She would also like to encourage volunteers to call or stop by and introduce themselves so she can continue these important and successful relationships!

# Second Sunday Lecture Series Update

## August 8-9: Traditional Technologies

Join us for a weekend of traditional technologies beginning with **Dr. Leland Gilson's** traveling exhibit of Native Technologies displayed at the Plankhouse both Saturday and Sunday from 12-3:30 pm. Dr. Gilson was the State Archaeologist for Oregon for 24 years and his exhibit includes an extensive collection of educational, replica artifacts and includes photos, text, and drawings.

On Sunday, August 9th, we will be joined by the following:

- **John Beard** who will demonstrate the art of Raven's tail weaving.
- **Adam McIsaac**, the lead carver during the construction of the Plankhouse, will demonstrate the art of Chinookan style carving.
- **Lyle Deschand**, a primitive technologist, will share peck and grind tools.
- **Dennis Torresdale**, an accomplished flintknapper, will demonstrate flintknapping. (Dennis will also be hosting a workshop at the Plankhouse **August 15-16**, contact [katie\\_harrison@fws.gov](mailto:katie_harrison@fws.gov) for more details).



*A robe made by John Beard using the Raven's tail weaving technique.*

*Small knives made from quartzite and jasper, one of the educational, replica artifacts from Dr. Gilson's traveling exhibit. Image from Dr. Gilson's Virtual Museum, [www.oregon-archaeology.com/museum/](http://www.oregon-archaeology.com/museum/).*



Visitors will also get a chance to test their atlatl skills by using a replica of the traditional spear throwing tool.

## September 13: Chinookan Archaeology on the Lower Columbia: New Findings

The Cathlapotle Plankhouse is honored to host a day of lectures sharing new research from the Cathlapotle excavations and from the Chinookan sites of Station Camp and Long Island, WA.

The lectures will start at **11am** and we are excited to have the following program scheduled for the day:

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| 11am | Dr. Kenneth Ames, "Reintroducing Cathlapotle, What's Old, What's New"                                      |
| 12pm | Dr. Elizabeth Sobel, "Post-Contact Shifts in Chinookan Trade: Obsidian Evidence from the Cathlapotle Site" |
| 1pm  | Dr. Cameron Smith, "Taking the Large View: Cathlapotle and the Lower Columbia River in Global Perspective" |
| 2pm  | Dr. Doug Wilson, "Exploring the Chinook Middle Village at Station Camp"                                    |
| 3pm  | Dr. Elizabeth Sobel, "The Evolving Role of Long Island, Washington in Chinookan Identity and Culture"      |

The Plankhouse will also have kids activities from 12-4 pm. For more information visit [www.plankhouse.org](http://www.plankhouse.org) or contact Katie Harrison at [katie\\_harrison@fws.gov](mailto:katie_harrison@fws.gov) or (360) 887-4106.