

you eat one appreciate it. Don't think of wild salmon as your right—it's a *treat*!

"We have to allow wild salmon to get to habitat and lay their eggs. Farm fish are a reason any wild salmon are left. The animosity between fresh and farm salmon should end. The more people buy farm salmon they not only help preserve wild salmon but gain an appreciation for the difference.

"People should not be denied the health benefits of salmon because of prejudices against propagating the species by salmon farming, and they would appreciate wild salmon more.

"The way we can keep fishermen working is pay more for the wild salmon.

"Unless each option of what is happening in our environment is explained to us in detail we won't know what to do. So each option should be explained in detail; what it will cost and its impact."

(Uriah Hulsey is owner/cook of the Columbian Cafe, where salmon is a house specialty.)

**ROBERT WILSON:** "When you're talking about preserving the salmon run you're dealing with breaching the dams, and the only question is which dams are going to go because some have to. It's a sacrifice — But what are we going to do about the salmon?"

"Reforestation which concerns erosion: I think the approach is good about reforesting private land but it's not moving fast enough to prevent suffocation of salmon eggs due to the erosion of topsoil into the river.

"Regulating fisheries: I hate to see the gillnetting industry disappear altogether because we have put money into raising fish. Pen fish return to their pens. The fisheries do deserve the salmon. The first fish hatcheries were in the lower river basin.

"Shipbreaking: You are bound to have toxic chemicals when you take apart ships — and that is a major pen area where they want to break ships. It's a manmade basin put there for the the Navy's 'Mothball Fleet' after World War II. We now use it as an extension of Tongue Point. We alternated the area for one purpose, use it now for another, but it has been used as an estuary ever since it was made. Things come in but don't flush out, instead settle down to the bottom. The fishpen system is a pretty big operation over there, and they have deal with Caspian terns (10,000 pairs) on Sand Island. This is the area they want to break ships!

"There never used to be as many sealions in the river, but we have so desecrated the fish population that even sea lions are driven ashore."

"I admire the salmon. It has a big heart and spirit. Indians who made their cultures on eating salmon cherished the salmon for its courage. We tend to look at things only from a human perspective and wear blinders to every other species we share the planet with — to the causes and answers to problems we have created. We shun the overall picture we have created because our only question is, "What's in it for us?"

(Robert Wilson is an Astoria resident and commercial fisherman. He has a degree in Marine Science and has created illustrated charts of Pacific Ocean life. Versions of his charts have appeared in the NCTE, *Fishes of the Pacific Coast* in June '89 and *Sea Creatures of the Pacific Coast* in Dec. '93. While being interviewed for this article he brought out a chart he had made a few years ago of the area of the river where the ship-breaking company plans to locate.)

**DON RISWICK:** "We have net pens right where they want to put the shipbreaking, and they are being increased upriver. Dredging is another big joke.

In 1938 Col. Walsh of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers decided he was not going to play nursemaid to a bunch of fish and had not planned for fish ladders at Bonneville Dam. He lived to regret it. Fishermen went to a hearing Portland and stopped the colonel because a summer run of thousands of fish were coming up the river. The colonel had to knock a hole in the



RACHEL WYNN

## RIVER

*I have so many dams  
the poor fish can't get over  
the ladders between synapses to spawn.*

*They peter out  
(it's no wonder)  
get confused  
from exhausting repetition,  
asphyxiation, go  
over and over  
the same steps,  
losing their place  
becoming pawns.*

*And then the fishes are so many  
they crowd the streets and valves,  
die for the squeezing,  
and are lost to me.*

~GERRY FOOTE



## Ship Inn

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earthen part of the dam to let the fish through. He put in a make-shift fish ladder but better ladders eventually developed.

"In 1941 Grand Coulee Dam came on line without any fish ladders which destroyed the 'Royal Chinook' run — called 'Royals' because they were put in barrels and sent to Europe's royalty. They were big fish. We called them 'June Hogs'. They were big because they needed energy to get up to Canada. Grand Coulee wiped out the run. The fish beat their heads against concrete for nine years and never came back.

"It was Grand Coulee that destroyed 40% of spawning of Columbia River salmon. You can imagine what would have happened if they hadn't put ladders at Bonneville.

"The dams killed the big salmon runs but we commercial fishermen were blamed, especially by the private fishermen who want to get rid of us. They are the very same corporate people who built the dams that killed the fish.

"We started the *Columbia River Gillnetter* to stop the lies by *Oregonian* sportswriters who were bashing commercial fishermen for the lack of fish. We had to start the paper to tell the truth.

"The Corps of Engineers ruined the river in 1938, now they're going to do it again. They're going to blast, dig and channel that river so the big Portland companies can make money — and in ten years they'll have to do it again. They ignore everything we downriver have to say about the destruction of environment, habitat and our own way of living. We are going to make mistakes now because we refuse to acknowledge earlier mistakes.

"We used to get a lot of pollution and grease downriver from the cities. The freshet would clean it up at the end of May and June before the dams were built.

"Sealions used to stay at the mouth of the river. They never came upriver like now."

(Don Riswick has spent his long life as a commercial fisherman and he is the editor/publisher of the *Columbia River Gillnetter*, which celebrates its 30th anniversary in the upcoming Spring 1999 issue.)

**AUGUST FUNKHOUSER:** "Everybody has different ideas about the salmon. Seldom do I run into anybody who talks about off-shore fishing. In the 1950s and '60s foreign fleets took copious advantage of offshore salmon. I think the salmon will resurge if we stop taking them — give them a chance to spawn and come back. I have seen so many fishboats in Oregon City you could walk across the river on them.

"I think ship dismantling should be allowed here because we need the jobs. Fishing is virtually defunct, logging's below par and the tourist trade doesn't produce enough jobs or wages.

"Dredging the river fattens the pockets of the rich. Only a small percentage on the upper river will profit from it while it will seriously damage the environment downriver. Dredging will interfere with the salmon runs and will agitate the mess lurking at the bottom of the river. It is an insane idea."

(August Funkhauser is a former Eastern Oregon farmer who now lives in Nasselle, Washington.)

**GAYLE STARR:** "It would benefit the salmon to have no fishing for a couple of years to allow them to rest and replenish. The more we live off the fish, the more the fish have to pay for it.

"Sometime back in the '80s lots of people wanted to come here with clean industries — didn't Steinway pianos want to build here? Why don't we want clean industries in Astoria? Why can't we entice clean industry instead of a dirty industry for maybe 10 years of employment? They'll be out of ships by then. Shipbreaking means oil and gas sludge, asbestos. Why not ship building instead of ship breaking?"

"Are they going to hire me? No! I don't see a job in that industry. I can't see myself carrying 30 or 40 pounds of steel on my back."

(Gayle Starr is an Astoria artist.)

**PEG DEVEREAUX:** "When we talk about shipbreaking I thought it would be great to have maritime jobs for local people. All I know is we have been told that it is environmentally sustainable but the record is that it destroys the environment."

(Peg Devereaux lives in Astoria.)

**JOE MURRAY:** "What we can do is damn the dams. If it ever is decided we can only save the salmon by demolishing the dams the power companies will do everything to prevent it.

"What we can do is save the salmon run from Astoria to the Dalles — from right now with the Endangered Species Act. We can save the salmon runs, but not like they used to be.

"We must keep polluters away from the fish!"

## Downtown COFFEE SHOP



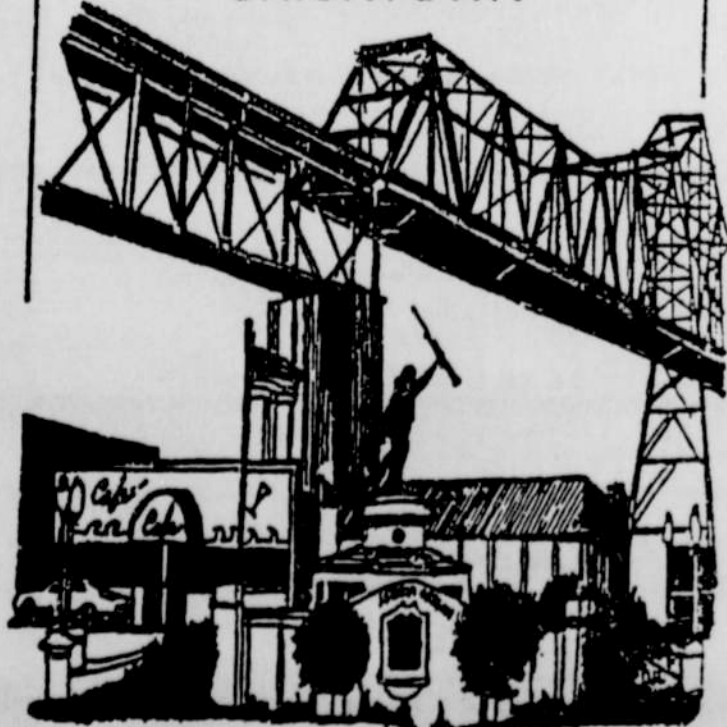
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