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NW

By RYAN HUME

Clatsop [klat•səp]

noun

1. a native Salishan people of the North Oregon Coast that once occupied the area below the Columbia River and north of Tillamook Head around present-day Seaside and Gearhart. Today the remaining 200 members of the Clatsop Tribe have been subsumed within other local tribes, including the Clatsop-Nehalem Confederated Tribes of Oregon and the Chinook Tribe.

2. the extinct dialect of the Clatsop people, part of the Lower Chinookan language

3. a county situated on the northernmost point of the Oregon Coast. The county seat is Astoria and the population is 37,039 according to the 2010 U.S. Census. The term *Clatsop* has been affixed to many place names within the county including the Clatsop Plains and Clatsop Spit

4. *Clatsop Community College*: an accredited two-year public college serving both northwest Oregon and southwest Washington since 1958. The historic main campus on Lexington Avenue in Astoria, located on a hill overlooking the Columbia River, has been built up around Towler Hall, the former site of Astoria High School. Satellite campuses include the Marine and Environmental Research and Training Station on the east end of Astoria and South County Campus located in Seaside



PHOTO BY PATRICIA BECK-FRIES

Gray Memorial Chapel, commonly known as Pioneer Presbyterian Church, is located in the Clatsop Plains. Though the current building was constructed in 1927, the congregation was established in 1846 and is the oldest, continuous Presbyterian church west of the Rockies.

Origin:

From the Salish language family, specifically the Clatsop dialect of the lower Chinookan. Recorded alternatively throughout the 19th century as *Chat-sops*, *Chad-sops*, *Clasops* and by Lewis and Clark as *Clat-sops*, the term originated as a place name, a modification of the Upper Chinook *tlaak'eelak* to the Lower Chinook *lät'cap* or *la t cap*, which means "place of dried salmon." Clatsop District was created on June 22, 1844 by an act of the Provisional Legislature.

"It is to be hoped the Legislature will not forget the case of Clatsop county, in the multitude of other important matters they have in hand. The redistricting and apportionment by the last Legislature was extremely unjust to Clatsop county. While other counties having a smaller population have a full Representative, Clatsop is left without one. According to the census of 1870 Clatsop county had at that time a population of 1,255. Since then the population of that county has

increased very rapidly — probably at a greater ratio than that of any other county in the State."

—"Clatsop County," *The Morning Oregonian*, Tuesday, Oct. 6, 1874, P. 2

"What used to be known as the Clatsop Plains and which is now growing into villages and towns such as Warrenton, Hammond and Flavel is

a stretch of level country twenty miles long and with an average width of three miles. . . . Clatsop county is simply teeming with possibilities for the enterprising man with small means who wishes to become independent and form the foundation of a lucrative business."

—"A Land of Unlimited Resources," *The Morning Astorian, Investors' and Homeseekers' Edition*, Sunday, Feb. 23, 1908, P. 4



COURTESY OF CLATSOP COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

A historical photo shows the former Astoria High School below a quarry on Jerome Avenue, where Clatsop Community College was established in 1958.



PHOTO BY DANNY MILLER

The new welcome pole carved by artist Guy Capoean and created in partnership by the Clatsop-Nehalem tribe and the city of Cannon Beach is at NeCus' Park in Cannon Beach.

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