

Artifacts tell story of life at Dry Creek century ago



WITH A FINE-TOOTHED COMB—Archaeologists from Oregon State University systematically sifted through dirt at Dry Creek, the intake site for the new Deschutes domestic water system. The patient researchers combed the earth layer by layer, block by block in a grid that was carefully measured and laid out. They were looking for evidence of turn-of-the-century habitation before giving the go-ahead to construction crews.



IF MY MEMORY SERVES ME RIGHT—Andrew David, longtime Dry Creek resident, assisted O.S.U. archaeologist Rick Minor by recalling local history and the location of dwellings. Minor and his crew found nothing outstanding—just common household items such as nails and glass. But anything the Tribes want, they are welcome to, he said.

Spilyay Tymoo Photos by Rangila

We may soon have a better picture of what life was like for Indians a hundred years ago on the Warm Springs reservation. University of Oregon archaeologist Rick Minor is in the process of researching and analyzing artifacts retrieved this September from Dry Creek, intake site of the Tribes' Deschutes domestic water system.

Minor said that this area of Dry Creek by the Deschutes was probably occupied around 1880. "It represents a period when the Warm Springs Indians were becoming more and more acculturated," using more whiteman's things, Minor explained.

"You can read about this period of time in history books, but they don't deal with artifacts. History books tend to talk about famous people while artifacts tell how the common people lived," said Minor. He noted that the way of life at Dry Creek was perhaps typical of Indian life on the reservation at the turn of the century.

Although the archaeologist and his team didn't find anything terribly exciting, they did uncover more than they had expected to. Minor said the articles are only valuable in terms of information—not money, but he plans to return them to the Tribes if they want them. Otherwise, he will turn the items over to the Mid-Oregon Indian Historical Society.

But Minor doesn't just rely upon artifacts to learn about the past. Part of his research will involve interviews with some of the older people and relatives of those who once lived in the area. He has already spoken with Andrew David who lives nearby, and he has a list of others he plans to contact when he returns to the reservation.

The archaeologist said the 1880 census shows that three families lived at the Dry Creek site and that Willy Leonard was the last resident.

Minor was particularly interested in analyzing items excavated from the remains of a frame house there, an outhouse and a cellar. It's around where homes used to be that we get most of our information about how people lived and what they did, Minor said.

Following three days of

excavation and systematic surface collection, the team came up with eight boxes of items, most of which were in fragments. Among the finds were miscellaneous metal parts, lots of glass, and square and round nails. Minor said the round nails were probably from about 1890.

They also unearthed some stone tools and stone flakes which were probably from an earlier period, before the house was built, according to Minor. Eating utensils, a variety of crockery, dishes, chimney glass and a variety of beads were collected as well as animal bones and river mussel shell. "We also found quite a few tin cans and all kinds of metal objects," Minor reported. He said that they don't pick up obviously recent things such as shot shells and bottle caps.

Despite the fact that nothing extraordinary was discovered, Minor feels that what was found tells part of the story of life at the time. Once cultural objects have been destroyed, they are lost forever. "Cultural resources are non-renewable—they're not like a tree," Minor said. "We're here to preserve what we can of evidence of older ways. When a planned project is going to impact an archaeological site, we try to get them to move it (the location). When they can't, we try to remove the objects."

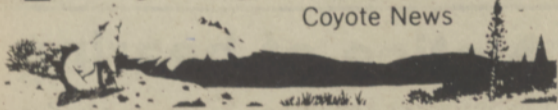
Minor is familiar with the reputation attributed by some to archaeologists coming onto the reservation in the past and carting off artifacts which were never returned to the Tribes.

"If someone claims to be an archaeologist, check their credentials," warns Minor. "They should be carrying a letter of authorization and a card saying who they are and who they represent." He said there is more awareness among Indians now than there used to be, so perhaps there won't be as many problems with so-called archaeologists or imposters carrying things off.

In a letter to the Tribes this week, Minor indicated that he was satisfied with the exploration and that construction of the treatment facility could be allowed to proceed. He advised, however, that an archaeologist should be on hand during the initial construction phase.

Spilyay Tymoo

Coyote News



SPILYAY TYMOO STAFF

Managing Editor Sid Miller
Assistant Editor Sandy Rangila
Photographic Specialist/Writer Cynthia Stowell

Reporter/Photographers
Roger Stwyer Donna Behrend

Priscilla Squiemphen, Secretary

FOUNDED IN MARCH OF 1976

Published bi-weekly by the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon, Warm Springs, Oregon 97761. Located in the Old Administration Building. Any written material to Spilyay Tymoo should be addressed to:

Spilyay Tymoo
P. O. Box 735
Warm Springs, Oregon 97761
Phone 553-1644 or 553-1161, Ext. 274
Subscription Rate \$6.00 per year

Police Report

Gun Shots reported around community

In the past two weeks, at least nine gun shots have been heard around Warm Springs.

Gunshots have been reported in several locations at West Hills, Tribal Garage, and the new trailer court. Tribal Police don't know who it is or if the people who were shooting the guns are on foot or driving.

If you should see the car or people who are shooting the guns, contact the police department.

Rifles, knives stolen

Over the weekend of September 22-23, Alvis Smith Sr.'s house was broken into.

Eight rifles of various calibers were reported missing along with two hunting knives. Burglars apparently entered the home through a window. The police have no suspects

and the burglary is under investigation.

Three accidents reported

Ray Holiday, 30, Warm Springs totalled his 1978 Z28 in a one-car accident after attempting to pass some cars.

On October 1, Holiday with one passenger was thirteen miles north of Warm Springs on U.S. Highway 26 when his car left the highway after hitting his brakes to miss an oncoming car. The car skidded off the highway and was going backwards when it hit a big rock and went back on the highway.

The car was a total loss and Holiday was cited for Driving While Under the Influence of Liquor or Drugs.

In a September 29 accident, a 1977 Ford 4 x 4 rolled after dodging from a deer on Tenino

Road, approximately 16 miles west of Warm Springs.

Lawrence Squiemphen Jr., 19, was driving the pick-up when a doe crossed the road in front of them. While trying to miss the deer, Squiemphen couldn't make the turn and left the highway, rolling once.

Neither Squiemphen or his passenger, Rod Wesley, 22, were injured.

Squiemphen was cited for having no driver's license.

A 1978 Dodge van received extensive damage after being in a one-car accident on Highway 26 approximately 14 miles north of Warm Springs.

Daniel Cunningham, 30, said lack of sleep was the cause of the accident. He was cited into Jefferson County Court for Driving Under the Influence of Intoxicants and Driving while suspended.