

Mystery of 'Cayuse Five' grave site could soon be solved

by Wil Phinney
Underscore News

After months of research, students at the University of Oregon have narrowed potential sites where they think five Cayuse men were buried or reburied after they were hanged for the death of missionary Marcus Whitman.

The burial locations have been unknown for generations, but students in the University of Oregon Clark Honors College have given members of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation reason to believe the sites may one day be identified. The Umatilla tribes include the Umatilla, Cayuse and Walla Walla tribes in eastern Oregon.

"While the five Cayuse men hanged in 1850 in Oregon City have come to be called 'the Cayuse Five' in recent years, we must remember their names and the importance of each of their lives to their families and our Tribes, then and now," said Bobbie Conner, director of Tamástslikt Cultural Institute, the museum and archive repository for the CTUIR.

The five men's names are Ti'ilaka'aykt, Tamáhas, 'Iceyéeye Cíluúkiis, K'oy'am'a Šuumkiín, Lókomus.

"The five executed men were closely related," Conner said. "Three were brothers and two were cousins.



Bobbie Conner (right), director of Tamástslikt Cultural Institute on the Umatilla Indian Reservation, in Oregon City earlier this year, with John Lewis (pointing), director of public works for Oregon City, and Howard Arnett, attorney for the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs and professor of American Indian Law at the University of Oregon. Students from the UO class "Searching for the Cayuse Five" are on the left.

ins. They are not forgotten and this work must continue for as long as is necessary."

In 1836, about a decade before what came to be called the Whitman Massacre, Dr. Marcus Whitman, his wife Narcissa Whitman, Reverend Henry and Eliza Spalding, and William H. Gray established the Whitman Mission, near Walla Walla. Their goal: convert the Cayuse to Christianity.

In the mid-1840s, Americans traveling the Oregon Trail carried diseases to which the Cayuse had no natural immunity.

Whitman, a doctor, was unable to effectively treat Native people sick with dis-

eases they had never before encountered. As a result, Cayuse children died of measles and other illnesses far more often than the sick white kids treated at the Whitman Mission. In the eyes of the Cayuse, Whitman was a healer who couldn't heal.

Tensions erupted on November 29, 1847 when the Cayuse attacked the Whitman Mission, killing Whitman, his wife Narcissa, and 11 others.

To the Cayuse, there was no question of their right to dispose of a doctor (medicine man, or tewat) whose patients were dying in droves. The incident sparked the

Cayuse War.

Two-and-a-half years later, five Cayuse men, accompanied by two Cayuse headmen, presented themselves to federal officials.

It's unlikely that the five men were themselves involved in the attack on the Whitman Mission, but the Americans demanded punishment in order to end the war.

"What happened is these five came together and decided that they would turn themselves in," said former CTUIR communications director Charles F. 'Chuck' Sams III. Mr. Sams is currently the director of the National Park Service.



Paintings of Ti'ilaka'aykt and Tamáhas by Paul Kane in the Royal Ontario Museum, Canada.

"Matter of fact," he said, "One of the quotes from, I believe, Tamáhas was: 'Much like your savior Jesus Christ gave himself up for you, we are giving ourselves up for our people in order to stop the Cayuse War,' that had promulgated because of the death of the Whitmans."

Federal troops shackled the five men and took them to Oregon City, which was then the capital of Oregon Territory.

The five warriors were tried by a jury of white men on a single count of murder for Marcus Whitman's death. The four-day trial took place in an Oregon City tavern, crowded with a few hundred onlookers.

The Cayuse Five asserted their innocence and said they only came to federal officials to recount what they knew of the deaths at Whitman Mission. The five men, speaking Cayuse, had trouble communicating during the trial, even though a translator was present.

The jury convicted the

men and a judge sentenced them to death. U.S. Marshals oversaw their hanging in June of 1850, despite promises from the new governor to pardon the men as soon as he took office.

They were buried near Oregon City, but knowledge of the exact location was lost.

"The fact that we do not collectively know the burial sites of the Cayuse Five stands in the way of the prospect of repatriation, of justice, of reconciliation, or whatever else we who are living may decide is the wisest course of action," said Michael Moffitt, the University of Oregon Law School professor and former dean who designed the UO course to search for the burial site.

Bobbie Conner, director of the Tamástslikt Cultural Institute, presented a Pendleton blanket as a thank you gift to Michael Moffitt, who taught a University of Oregon course called 'Searching for the Cayuse Five.'

Article and photos courtesy Underscore News

Interior strengthens role of tribes in stewardship of natural resources

The Department of the Interior this month released new guidance to improve federal stewardship of public lands, waters and wildlife by strengthening the role of tribal governments in federal land management.

New guidance from the Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service outlines how each bureau will facilitate and support agreements with Tribes to collaborate in the co-stewardship of federal lands and waters.

"From wildfire prevention to managing drought and famine, our ancestors have used nature-based approaches to coexist among our lands, waters, wildlife and their habitats for millennia. As communities continue to face the effects of climate change, Indigenous knowledge will benefit the Department's efforts to bolster resilience and protect all communities," said Interior Secretary Deb Haaland. "By acknowledging and empowering tribes as partners in co-stewardship of our country's lands and waters, every American will benefit from strengthened management of our federal land."

Trauma resilience is the key to advocacy

By StrongHearts
Native Helpline
strongheartshelpline.org

Resources, support and safety

When it comes to Native Americans impacted by domestic and sexual violence, advocates are faced with resource disparities beyond compare.

In StrongHearts' database, there are 272 Native-centered service providers compared to more than 3,500 non-Native service providers.

The picture is even bleaker when looking at shelters, where there are only 59 tribal shelters compared to more than 1,500 non-tribal shelters.

When advocates realize that they are limited by available resources, they develop an even stronger desire to provide emotional support and lifesaving safety planning.

In many cases, it's all they can do. It's what our relatives have done for centuries.

How advocates help

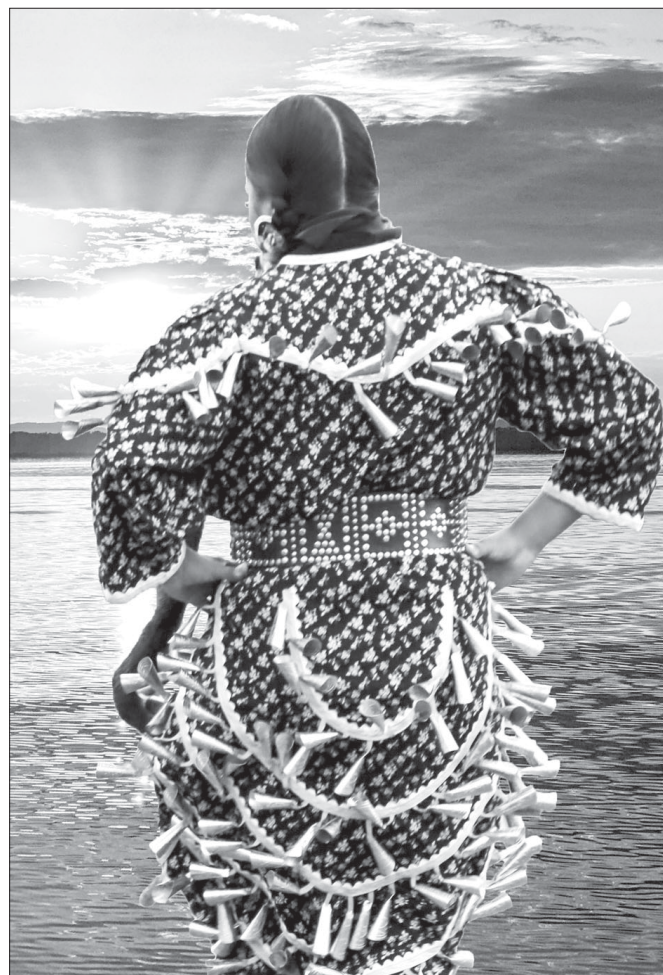
In the field of domestic and sexual violence, an advocate's work bridges the gap between a victim-survivor and service providers.

They help their contacts recognize abuse, assess the risk of danger and to plan for safety.

They offer peer support, crisis intervention and assistance locating resources. Ultimately, the work of an advocate can be lifesaving.

The impact and vicarious trauma

Advocacy may sound like a rewarding job because sav-



ing lives is undeniably an honorable profession.

That may be true, but the fact of the matter is the work of an advocate is steeped in trauma.

Those who work in the field may even be victim-survivors and their work can be triggering.

Nonetheless, advocates are committed to their work. Despite the risk of having to relive their own trauma—the desire to help others—is as important to them as it is to their contacts.

Vicarious Trauma is work-related trauma exposure.

It includes secondary stress, compassion fatigue and all the negative impacts of work-related trauma exposure.

It is often experienced by people in the fields of child

welfare and protection or domestic and sexual violence.

It can leave advocates feeling overwhelmed with worry but hopeful they did enough to help.

Resilience, transformation, satisfaction

By observing resilience in their clients and helping them to overcome challenges, advocates themselves can gain vicarious resilience, vicarious transformation and compassion satisfaction.

Vicarious Resilience: Survivors are hearty and their ability to move forward and beyond their experience can encourage resilience in the work of advocacy.

Vicarious Transformation is about the engage-

ment with survivors, what we learn and what we get out of it, and how it can transform us.

Compassion Satisfaction is about feeling good in the work of advocacy. It happens when advocates are able to help people efficiently and effectively. It may involve a policy change in the work environment that came as a result of an advocate's suggestion.

The benefits of vicarious trauma are a sense of strength and resilience gained only through contact with survivors, what we learn through them, and the difference made not to one, but everyone impacted by domestic and sexual violence.

Culture Is Key

"Trauma resilience is a common bond between Native peoples," said StrongHearts Chief Executive Officer Lori Jump (Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians).

"Our advocates have the shared goal to eradicate violence and to help our people find a path toward healing. Our people have come this far because it is our way not to leave anyone behind. Culture is key to ensuring a better future for the next generation."

About StrongHearts Native Helpline

StrongHearts Native Helpline is a twenty-four/seven 365 culturally-appropriate domestic, dating and sexual violence helpline for Native Americans, available by calling or texting 1-844-762-8483 or clicking on the chat icon at: strongheartshelpline.org

**BE SAFE
BE AWARE
BE RESPONSIBLE**

WHAT YOU DO AND
WHO SEES YOU,
MAKES A BIG
DIFFERENCE

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