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THE CONFEDERATED TRIBES OF THE GRAND RONDE COMMUNITY OF OREGON ☆ December, 1991

The History of Restoration

By Willie Mercier

The Grand Ronde Tribe consists of many small tribes that were all put together on one reservation established in 1855. Before they were put on the reservation, the tribal land ranged from the Columbia River to the top of Northern California, and from the Pacific Ocean to the Cascade Mountains.

Of course, this was all the tribes' land put together, so not just one tribe occupied all of the land. Over 20 different Indian tribes are put together in the Grand Ronde Indian confederation. Some tribes were in the coastal area like the Nehalem, Tillamook, Nestucca, and the Salmon River Tribes. They had a fully developed coastal fishing culture. Further inland, were the Cascades, the Multnomahs, Wappato, and Clackamas Tribes who established a fishing and trading culture off the lower Columbia River system. The Willamette Valley housed the Kalapuya Indians, a band of many tribes such as; Tualatin, Santiam, Yoncalla, Yamhill, Ahantchuyuk, Calapooia, and Chelamela. The Western Cascades were the home of the Molalla Indians. From Southern Oregon and Northern California came the Rogue River, Shasta, and Umpqua Indian bands.

The North and Northwestern part of the reservation was good grazing land for the Indians' horses, sheep, cattle, and goats. The Southern and Southwestern land was filled with timber and a good growth of live timber, chiefly fir because it was good lumber for house consumption and local trade.

At the turn of the century, government policy prohibited the Indians from selling the timber on their land, but they were allowed to remove dead and down timber for farming purposes. The reservation went from being about 60,000 acres to only about 33,000 acres in individual allotments, leaving approximately 26,000 acres which the federal government declared as "surplus". The government kept 440 acres for its own purposes. At this time, the declared "surplus" land was sold under an agreement James McLaughlin established.

In 1936 the Grand Ronde Tribe elected to be part of the Indian Reorganization Act and the tribe was able to purchase land for homes and farms for residents of the reservation. This effort came to an abrupt end with termination in 1953; however, many of the Grand Ronde Tribal members stayed in the Willamette Valley.

The tribe was restored in 1983 on November 22 when the president of the United States signed the Grand Ronde Restoration Act which provided the tribe with federal recognition and eligibility for federal benefits. Except for hunting, fishing, and trapping rights the 1983 legislation restored all of the rights and privileges of the tribe and its members under any federal treaty, executive order, agreement, statute, or any other federal authority, which may have been terminated under the 1954 legislation.

Tribalism: A Priority After Restoration

By Cathy Cline

Restoration of The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde was a dream that became a reality only eight years ago.

The Grand Ronde Tribe was restored its political, spiritual, and tribal identity with the signing of the Grand Ronde Restoration Act, Public Law 98-165, on November 22, 1983 by Ronald Reagan.

In commemoration of this historic event, a day of festivities were held at the St. Michaels Church on Nov. 23, 1991. The traditional feast was followed by speakers and a powwow.

The inspirational message of the keynote speakers was that now that Restoration is complete the tribe must make tribalism a priority.

Chuck Kimball, the Klamath Tribal Chairman, said "Tribalism means to strengthen the tribe to be political and to support the tribe in identifying and recognizing other people who will benefit you."

"A dream is not just a dream; when everyone sticks together to accomplish something it becomes a reality," he said. Togetherness, planning, and hard work is what brought about the Restoration Act, but that was only the beginning."

Supporting tribal representatives in Congress is one way to keep the sovereignty of the Native Americans.

"There is great pressure against tribes," Elizabeth Fuhrse, a 1992 candidate for a seat in the House of Representatives for District 1, the district of the Siletz and Grand Ronde Tribes.

Fuhrse played an important role in the restoration process of the Grand Ronde Tribe. "Only Indian people can take care of Indian people," she said. "and to remain a sovereign nation you need to first, be responsible to yourself; then, be responsible to the tribe because it is always there; and lastly to all Indian tribes as a whole."

GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING

GRAND RONDE ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL
DEC. 1, 1991
11:30 AM



MEAL PROVIDED

TEEN CABERET
PERFORMANCE
TO FOLLOW



Shawn Thomas, 11, dances with other children at the 1991 Restoration Day Powwow.