

## NATIVE NEWS FROM ACROSS THE NATION

### Mystery of Kennewick Man's Missing Femurs May be Solved

YAKAMA, WA. (AP) — The mystery of Kennewick Man's missing thighbones may have been solved.

Detectives cleaning out the Benton County Sheriff's office evidence vault spotted a shoebox-sized container with bones inside.

The pieces probably are from Kennewick Man, based on a preliminary examination, said Robbie Burroughs, an FBI agent in Seattle. An expert will study them more thoroughly and make a final determination. Then they will be turned over to the FBI, which has been investigating the disappearance of the bones since 1998.

The 9,300-year-old remains represent one of the oldest and most complete skeletons found in North America. The collection of 350 bones and bone fragments was found in the

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~ Sheriff Larry Taylor



Photo courtesy of AP

KENNEWICK MAN

shallows of the Columbia River in July 1996 at Columbia Park in Kennewick.

Benton County Coroner Floyd Johnson was one of the first people to examine the bones, before they were turned over to the federal government for safekeeping.

Sheriff Larry Taylor said the box was labeled "Columbia Park" and was in the coroner's cabinet.

"The coroner basically didn't know what he had in his own little vault," Taylor said recently.

Johnson declined comment when contacted by The Associated Press.

In March 1998, the government acknowledged that substantial pieces of Kennewick Man's femur bones had disappeared, bones that are valuable in assessing stature,

size, age and ancestry.

The loss disturbed scientists, who are suing in U.S. District Court for access to the bones for study, and five American Indian Tribes seeking the bones for reburial.

U.S. Magistrate John Jelderks in Portland, Ore., is expected to issue a ruling in the case later this year.

Sheriff's detectives don't usually go poking around in the coroner's locker, but the evidence vault is being cleaned out before its razed under a new construction plan, Taylor said.

When the FBI receives the remains, it will hold onto them until a decision is made as to where they should go, Burroughs said. The agency will look into the circumstances under which the bones were found.

The bones are now stored in the Burke Museum in Seattle.

### Papers Buried in East Coast Archives Offer Tribes Links to Their Past

EUGENE, OR. (AP) — After digging through hundreds of thousands of pages of forgotten documents tucked away in Smithsonian Institution archives, George Wasson has a view of how American Indians were treated by settlers that isn't found in history books.

"There was a soldier's comments about marching people from Port Orford to Yachats," Wasson remembered. "An old woman was walking barefoot. He gave her cloth to bind her feet, but it didn't help. He wrote that he could tell when she was ahead of him, he could see her bloody footprints, climbing over the rock, climbing over the (area of) Sea Lion Caves."

The Coquille Tribe and the University of Oregon co-sponsored the project, and copies of all the documents are being housed in the university's Knight Library Division of Special Collections.

Wasson, a member of the Coquille Tribe and a recent doctoral recipient, first got wind of a possible treasure

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trove of documents in the mid-1970s when he traveled to the Smithsonian to do research.

Wasson said he never forgot "the vast amount of information held back there" on Indians.

An Assistant Dean of Students at Oregon, Wasson retired and returned to graduate school. In 1995, he secured funding from the university to establish the Southwest Oregon Research Project. He used the funds to take Tribal researchers and a group of students to the Smithsonian.

The group searched paper and microfiche documents, marking everything that referred to Indian Tribes who once populated the Southwest Oregon Coast. Although told they

"wouldn't find much," they unearthed 50,000 pages of documents.

On their return, the group gave copies of the documents to the library. They also presented copies to seven Oregon Coastal Tribes, distributing the papers at a potlatch (give-away ceremony), the first held in the area in 150 years.

A return trip in 1999 yielded 60,000 more pages of documents, this time with a geographical reach that extended into Southern Washington, Central Oregon, Western Idaho and Nevada.

The group held a second potlatch a few weeks ago, presenting copies of relevant documents to representatives of 44 Northwest Tribes.

Jon Erlandson, professor of anthropology, called Wasson the "godfather" of the research project.

"These documents have been hidden and inaccessible to Indian people and other scholars for decades, sometimes 100 years," he said. "Now Indian people can read them, use them and rewrite their own histories in their own communities."

Erlandson said the documents paint a different story than that found in history books, giving details of such events as the coastal Indians' forced removal from their homelands and the Supreme Court's refusal to accept the testimony of Native Elders in determining land ownership.

"It's a very emotional process of discovery," he said. "For some, it's too painful to continue. For others, the opportunity to right the wrongs of traditional history is very compelling."

So far, aspects of the research have been the focus of six doctoral candidates and six master's papers.

### Tuscarora Indians Seek Federal Recognition

LUMBERTON, N.C. (AP) — Four groups of Tuscarora Indians in North Carolina are seeking federal recognition as a Tribe.

The groups have formed a committee called the Skarureh (Tuscarora) Nations Rights Restoration Committee.

Unification of the bands would allow the Tribe's voice to be heard by government officials, said Marilyn Meorado-Livingston, the bear clan mother of the Southern Band of the Tuscarora Bertie County.

Groups involved are the Bertie band in Winton as well as the Eastern Carolina Skarureh Nation Territory in Pembroke, the Tuscarora Nation of North Carolina in Maxton, and the Tuscarora Nation of the Kautanoh in Shannon.

Nearly 2,500 pages of documentation have been gathered by the group showing its ancestry from the Tuscaroras who once lived in Bertie County.

The Tuscaroras inhabited land from the Virginia border to South Carolina.

They were forced onto a reservation in Bertie County in Northeastern North Carolina after the Tuscarora War in 1713. They migrated to New York and in 1722 became the Sixth Nation to join the Iroquois Confederacy.

Tribal members who stayed in North Carolina were scattered.

"The Tuscaroras have been and are in North Carolina," said Meorado-Livingston. "We are not extinct. We want to clarify our status as Tuscaroras of North Carolina and not New York."

Federal officials only recognize the Tuscaroras of New York as a sovereign nation.

Federal recognition would establish the Tuscarora Tribe in North Carolina as a sovereign nation.

The four bands are asking Tuscaroras from across the state that haven't joined a group to get their names on the rolls.

"We are inviting them to come home," Meorado-Livingston said.

### Bill Would Revive Native Languages

SALEM, OR. (AP) — American Indians would be allowed to teach their ancestral languages in public schools without full teacher certificates under a bill that recently passed the Senate.

The proposal, introduced on behalf of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, is intended to help revive interest in the languages, which are dying quickly. Some Native American Indian languages in Oregon are spoken by fewer than a dozen, mostly Elder people who are unlikely to attend college or get a traditional teaching certificate.

The first licenses to teach under the program could be granted by 2002.

The version passed was a compromise between the Tribes and the state teachers union, and says the Indian instructors must be mentored by a certified teacher with three or more years of classroom experience.

The certified teachers would observe the Native language teachers, assist with lesson plans and offer, "other assistance intended to enhance the professional performance and development of the American Indian languages teacher," the bill says.

American Indians had initially resisted this provision, saying the monitoring would insult Elderly Native speakers.

"We found it somewhat offensive because even I don't correct an Elder, because in our culture that's not done," said Myra Shawaway, a Warm Springs Cultural Heritage Director.

The Native languages Wasco, Paiute, and Sahaptin are spoken by just a few people and are in danger of disappearing. Only 10 people speak fluent Wasco, and most of them are at least 70.