

20 Years of Restoration

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bered the bake sales and garage sales and passing the hat at meetings, all ways that Tribal Elders raised funds for travel expenses to lobby the likes of Senator Mark Hatfield, Congressman Les AuCoin and Congresswoman Elizabeth Furse; all, as Kathryn Harrison said, "to take our rightful place in the community of nations."

"I was raised as an Indian," said Tribal Council Vice Chairman Reyn Leno. "That was the idea that drove Restoration."

"We never let die the knowledge of who we were," said Tribal Council Chairwoman Cheryl Kennedy, "what it means to be a nation of people."

But neighbors remained hostile to the idea. Historian Stephen Dow Beckham, Professor of History at Lewis & Clark College in Portland, was active in the effort. "I have vivid memories about the events prior to Restoration," he wrote by email. "I was teaching at Linfield College in that era and often was called upon to answer questions in Yamhill and Polk Counties such as: 1) Are these people tied in with the American Indian Movement (AIM)? 2) What more do these people want — they got citizenship? 3) What will it cost if they are restored?"

As early as 1973, Beckham went to Washington, D.C. on behalf of the Terminated Tribes in Western Oregon along with representatives from the Small Tribes Organization

of Western Washington "to try to 'get the ear' of any Congress member who would listen."

"The more we worked," said

"It (termination) was right after the war at a time when the U.S. was trying to save money. The federal government did not want to be in the Indian business."

~ Elizabeth Furse

Kathryn Harrison, "the more we could see what we could provide to future generations. A lot of people



Katie Chintele, known as "Mollala Kate," was a Mollala Indian and an ancestor to many families in Grand Ronde today. She was born in 1842 and died in 1939, and lived most of her life in Clackamas County and Mollala Prairie, where the town of Mollala, Oregon, stands today.

contacted us. They wanted to come home."

As the struggle for recognition continued, Tribal members found small grants — government and charitable — that kept the effort

alive.

"I don't know that there was a real turning point," said Reyn Leno, Tribal Council Vice

Chairman. "A lot of people stayed in Grand Ronde and kept the idea of the Tribe alive."

"That's the legacy we wanted for our children," said Cheryl Kennedy, "not giving up."

The effort might not have moved forward without powerful friends in high places. "We can never thank Congress enough," said Kathryn Harrison. "Thank God for Susan Long (aide to Senator Mark Hatfield and strong supporter of Restoration)," she added. "After testimony (in Congress), 'there was always a markup period. Elizabeth (Furse) stayed behind for the markup sessions and to answer any questions. She was very thorough.'"

"I remember that we did not have any pattern for Restoration," said Senator Hatfield. "Each became a case of a problem within itself." But "the time came finally to make good on our commitments to Indians."

To get an idea of what an uphill battle this fight was, Furse noted that only 500 of some 10,000 bills introduced in Congress each year become law.

Grand Ronde was only the third Restoration bill passed, but Hatfield credits four features of "the groundbreaking models" that went before for the success of bills for Grand Ronde and others: recognition, a land base, revenue flow and opportunities to restore Native culture.

On November 22, 1983, President

Ronald Reagan signed HR 4143 which became Public Law 98-165, The Grand Ronde Restoration Act.

"The day the President signed the bill, health care was restored to all Tribal members," Furse said. And the benefits ex-



Photo by Peta Tinda

panded from there.

It made possible the restoration of 9,811 acres of the original Reservation to the Tribe, and began what has become the development of one of Oregon's strongest Tribes.

The meaning of that law was simple. For Reyn Leno, "Restoration allows you to bring your people together as a family."

It opened the door to self-sufficiency, but the struggle continued. Cheryl Kennedy was one of the Tribe's first three employees, and in those days, she worked out of the cemetery building, the only building the Tribe had at the time.

"I felt (the cemetery) was like sacred ground," she said. So, as soon as feasible, the Tribe purchased the local depot building to use for office space. Out of the struggle came strength, and it fostered the development of the wide range of projects we see today, in the areas of governance, social services, cultural resources, housing, education, healthcare and the protection of our natural resources, all leading toward self-sufficiency for the Tribe and its nearly 5,000 far-flung members.

The lesson of Restoration is remembering, according to Cheryl Kennedy: "to bring all of our ways back again."

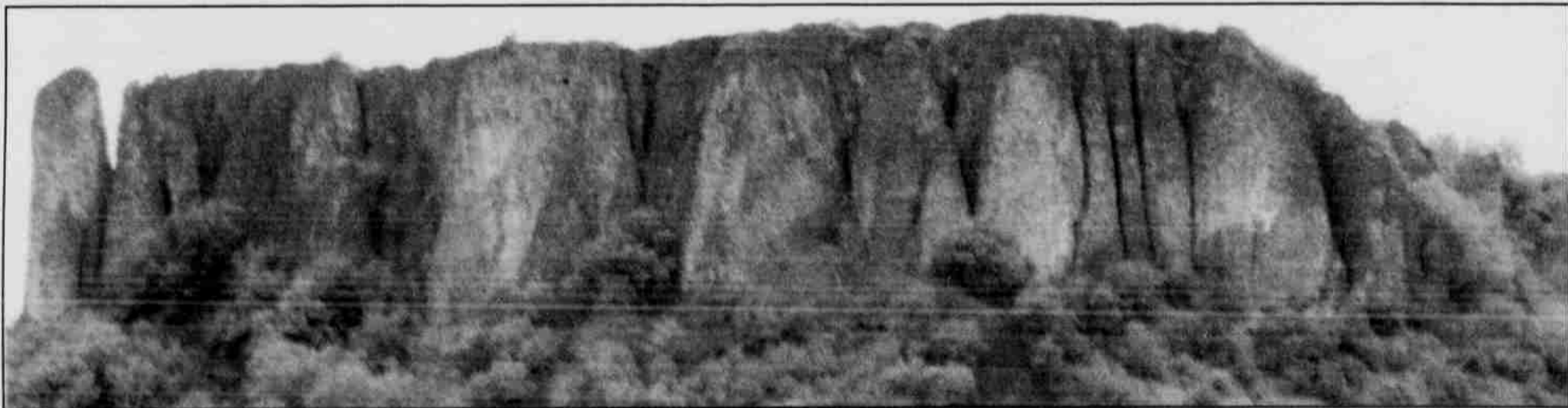


Photo by Brent Merrill

Table Rock Today — The people of as many as 25 Native American Tribes were rounded up by the Cavalry and walked under armed guard to Table Rock in 1856. The area was then known as the Table Rock Indian Reservation and was used a temporary gathering place for Native people before the 33 day journey north to the Grand Ronde Indian Reservation on February 23. Today, Table Rock is the site of a park and visible from I-5. In February of 2002, Tribal member Steve Bobb walked the 265 miles from Table rock to Grand Ronde as part of a fundraiser for the Tribe's Veterans' Memorial in Grand Ronde. Bobb completed the walk in 14 days and averaged about 20 miles a day.

The 20th Anniversary of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde's Restoration Celebration will take place on Saturday, November 22 this year at Spirit Mountain Casino. The celebration event will include history of the Tribe and the process toward restoration, honoring ceremonies, dinner, and live Native and contemporary music. There will also be a parallel event for children, including a magic show, traditional storytelling, food and childcare. Please contact Charles G. Haller II, Tribal Council Relations Coordinator, for more information, at 1-800-422-0232 extension 1309, 503-879-1309 or charles.haller@grandronde.org.