

Culture's New Manager

■ Tribal member David Lewis brings solid educational credentials to the job.

By Ron Karten

University of Oregon Ph.D. candidate and Tribal member David Lewis has been named to lead the Cultural Resources Department.

"It's very surprising to me that I'm in this situation," he said from his new office at the back of the second floor of the Tribal Education Building, although "a lot of the work coincides with the archival work I've been doing."

He cited the efforts of Cultural Collections Coordinator Lindy Trolan to "return and reclaim information for the Tribes, not just artifacts."

Thanks to these efforts, the department already has much information from museums including the Smithsonian, the University of Washington and the Hudson Bay Archive, said Lewis.

Lewis also has benefited Tribal collections with his participation in the Southwest Oregon Research Project (SWORP) at the University of Oregon (UO) that has now completed three research trips to the nation's capital, reclaiming some 150,000 pages of Northwest Indian history.

As readers of recent issues of *Smoke Signals* may recall, the project has been funded mainly by the Coquille Tribe and UO, and appropriate parts of the re-

claimed and collected material has been gifted to the Grand Rondes jointly by the Coquelles and UO (6/1/06 issue). Some now resides in "Our Story" in the Cultural Resources section of the Tribal website found at www.grandronde.org/culture/ikanum/, (9/1/06 issue).

The most recent effort, the third for SWORP, completed last summer, will bring some 50,000 new pages of information to the Coquelles, UO and much ultimately to the Grand Rondes.

The information, principally letters, contains reports about the reservations, projects, proposals, genealogy, history, investigations, court cases, allotment records and maps (one such map is reproduced in yellow as the background for this story).

Lewis is Director of SWORP this year, and was joined in August on the document search by Tribal member and Tribal Cultural Education Specialist Leslie Riggs, Dennis Worden (Coeur D'Alene) and Sandin Riddle (Klamath) — all students, or former students at UO. Worden recently was named the Spirit Mountain Community Fund's 2006-07 Hatfield Fellow.

Lewis sees his role in the department "to come up with new ideas to take the department further (in the directions it has already been going)."

There's a "natural crossover," he said, between the Cultural Resources and the Natural Resources departments, but there is still no liaison between the departments, he noted as one possible assignment for the future. He mentioned camas and huckleberries among dozens of "cultural use" items that fall under the assignments of both departments.

"I'd like to see more intensive work in that direction," he said.

Complimenting the job that Culture's Language Specialist, Tony Johnson, has been doing with the Chinook Wawa immersion program, he added, "I'd like to see a project down the line that deals with other Indian languages." He referred to the languages of the Umpqua, Kalapooia, Rogue River and Mollala Tribes.

"It is my understanding that there is no one alive that speaks these languages," he said, "but we do have the (written) resources to teach these other languages."

"There are lots of cultural things that we can do that we've developed the base for here," he said. He mentioned canoeing, something that "everybody used in the Oregon

Territory."

Although today, most Tribal members using the Chinook language are still learning it, Lewis looks forward to the time when "kids take that further, when we find a government use for it, when it is used for common conversation in homes. It's a point of pride."

"I see myself as just a link in the chain, going back to those who signed the treaties," he said. "Hopefully, my link will take us in a positive direction, like the link before me. It's just my time, now." ■



Tribal member and Cultural Resources Department Manager David Lewis

Photo by Ron Karten

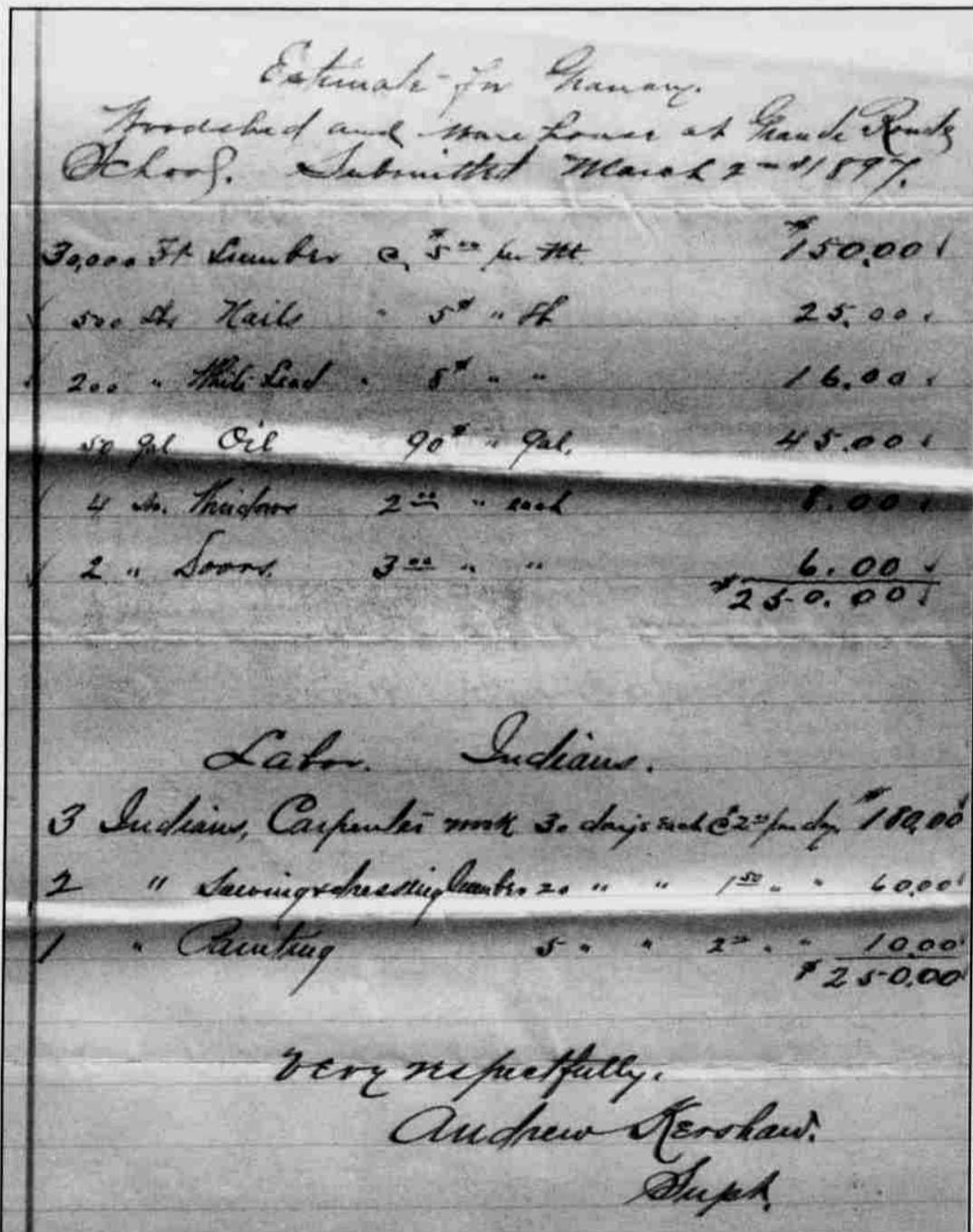
Recent Additions In Cultural Resources



Tribal member Daniel Haug now serves as the Site Monitor for the Cultural Resources Department. Here, Haug takes photos of Cascadia Cave near Sweet Home in an attempt to protect and record the cultural aspects of the cave.



Cultural Protection Specialist Eirik Thorsgard works closely with Tribal members Khani Schultz and Daniel Haug to help preserve cultural sites related to Grand Ronde's history.



An example of the documents brought back to the Grand Rondes.

Photo by Toby McClary

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Courtesy of David Lewis