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## Klipsun Magazine, 1982, Volume 12, Issue 02 - January

Fred Obee  
*Western Washington University*

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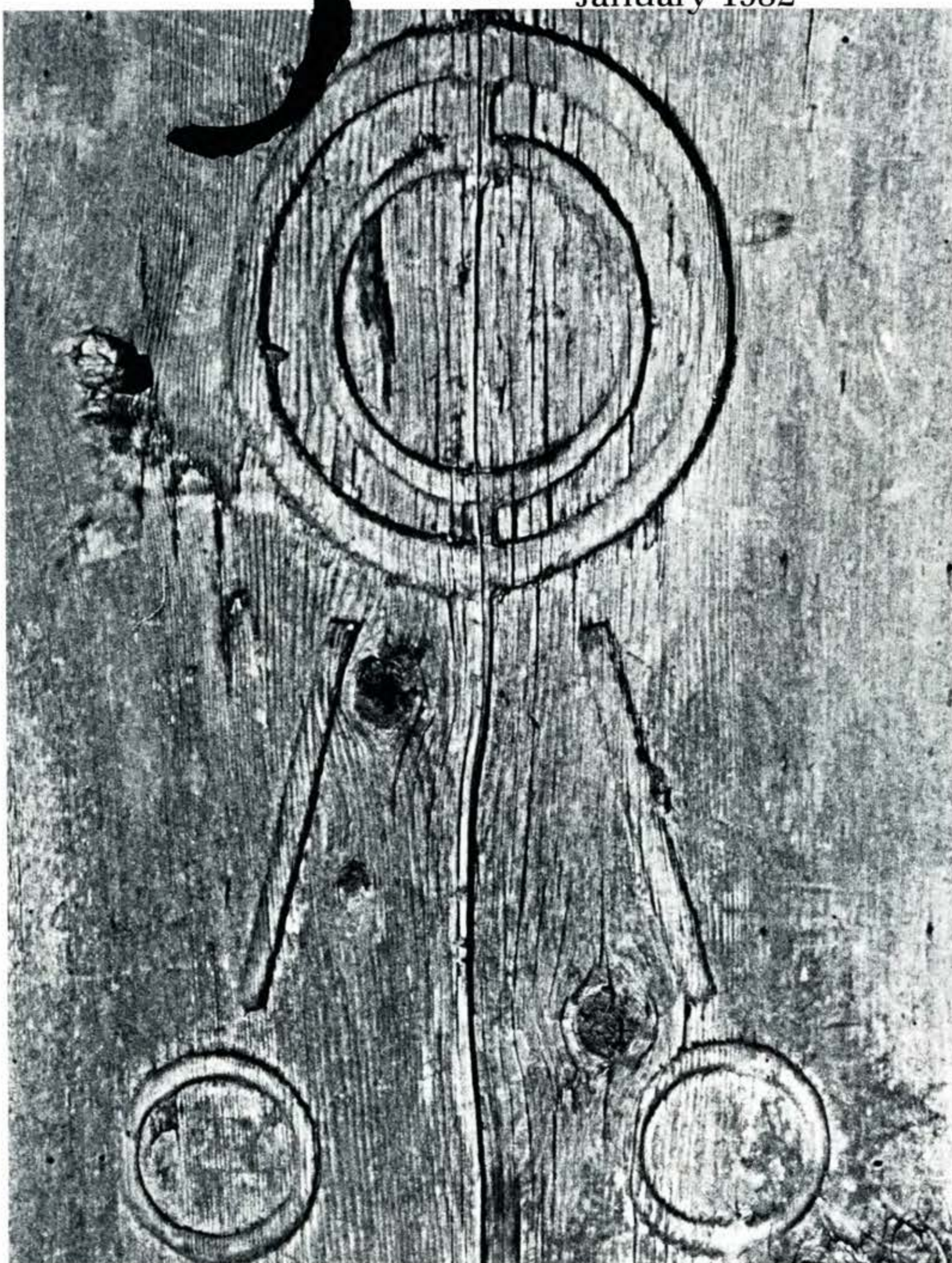
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# Klipsun

January 1982



Inside:

- Special Section: Lummi Indians
- Generic Books?
- Western's Inaccessible Island





Cover: A cedar house post fragment (circa 1850) from a longhouse at the present site of the Lummi Reservation.





# Klipsun

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## Editor's Note



Two women rugby players sat in the Klipsun office last quarter demanding to know why a story about their team was used in the November issue of the magazine.

They were upset, they said, because the story portrayed them in an unfair light. Their comments were used out of context, they said, and did not accurately represent the women's rugby team at Western.

The story used comments that were ribald in nature, and the lyrics of a song sung at rugby parties that represented the epitome of locker-room humor.

The comments were taken from an interview in which it was clear a reporter had come to gather information for a Klipsun story. But the women claimed much of what they said was ignored, while the licentious comments were played up.

They accused the magazine of pandering to the lowest common denominator and of emulating sensationalist tabloids that deliberately mislead the public by printing gossip and half-truths for the sake of sales.

For those members of the women's rugby team who feel they were misrepresented, I apologize.

I have the greatest regard for accuracy and truth in journalism, and because Klipsun is distributed for free and does not rely on advertising for publication, the decision to use the story was not based on an economic motive.

We used the story because it showed a role reversal from the locker-room activities that have been a part

of men's sports throughout history. The fact the women's teams would respond with humor in kind, as a satirical retort, made the story deserving of publication.

But the fact the women's comments dealt with sexual subjects in an off-the-cuff manner made it a sensitive subject.

We were aware that the kind of language used in the story would

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*'They accused the magazine of pandering to the lowest common denominator and of emulating sensationalist tabloids that deliberately mislead the public by printing gossip and half-truths for the sake of sales.'*

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offend some people. But because of the importance of speaking frankly, of not sugar-coating the university environment, we decided to print the story. But whether the story accomplished anything at all is impossible to tell.

Being frank about sexual matters can be healthy and create discussion about image and purpose and can help people define what their codes or standards will be. Many students at this university are only now developing such codes. Even our jokes, whispered in secrecy, have meanings beyond just plain fun.

The women on the rugby team are a credit to the university and have serious pursuits as athletes and de-

serve congratulations for their many accomplishments.

The fact that some of their comments — intended as jokes — were published, is not a reflection on their standards as human beings.

We are living in a time of great change. Some claim we are becoming morally bankrupt and our society is wallowing in the sins of overindulgence and selfishness. Concerned that we may be sowing the contemptible seeds of a society without values, people pull "Catcher in the Rye" from public bookshelves. We ban publications, and consequently thoughts, from the minds of people. We avoid dealing with important questions by building a wall between true feelings and a public conception of what is proper and good.

It is no secret that sex and drinking is evident in nearly all segments of the university. Few parties are complete without drug use and alcohol, although some notable exceptions exist, and it is vital that we are always ready to examine our objectives and our actions.

The women's rugby team has worked hard to build a reputable program. The fact that some team members attend rowdy parties hardly distinguishes them from a large number of students at Western.

It was with the intent of honestly presenting information freely given to the students without backing away from the sensitive nature of the subject matter that prompted our decision to run the story. ★

—Fred Obee



# Western's Island:

## A Limited Retreat

By Edie Zimmerman

On the west side of a tiny island in the San Juans, a reddish-brown, two-bedroom cabin stands vacant. The cabin belongs to Western, along with 13 acres of island property and could be a tranquil refuge for students, faculty and alumni. But it seldom is used.

Located two-and-one-half miles west of Lummi Island, access to Sinclair always has been limited, which not only explains the limited growth on the island, but also the infrequent use of the facility. Visitors average less than 25 a year.

Purchased for \$2,000 by the Women's Recreation Association in 1927, and now worth upward of \$250,000, according to Western Controller Don Sturgill, the 13.86 acres of island property were acquired by Western in 1960. H. P. Jukes, who held it in trust, turned the property over to the trustees of the college, recalled Margaret Aitken, of Western's P.E. department.

The island property, although not belonging to the Associated Students, is linked closely with this governing body through the WRA. Students could use the facility more often than they do, but transportation seems to be the main problem. The P.E. department, which administers the facility, charges \$1 per night per person to use the cabin.

The university does own various boats, but to sail most of them requires a license. This applies to boats that can be chartered through charter services at the Bellingham Marina.

The Sinclair property occasionally is used by aquatic studies classes under Jerry Flora. According to Flora, access to Sinclair is no problem because they have boats at the lab. The problem is the habitat; better places can be found that are more convenient.

The cabin, nestled in a stand of tall fir trees, is furnished with five bunkbeds, mattress pads, a dining table, four chairs and a variety of other household items that give it a cozy feel. Aitken said most of the furniture was donated by members of the WRA years ago. But the facility is rustic with no running water, electricity or indoor plumbing.

The cabin walls are decorated with pictures of Indians and maps of the San Juan Islands. The windows all have nautical-style curtains and the floor is dark hardwood. The huge rock fireplace sits to the right of the front door. Mounted above the mantle, a small set of antlers holding an empty bottle on one point and a beer can on another overlooks the room.

In the kitchen, two black cast iron pans hang on the wall and a charred old tea kettle sits on the counter. A white wicker table occupies one corner. Stocked only with empty kerosene cans, old bottles, cans of paint and even a roll of toilet paper, the pantry is no help to a starving visitor.

Behind the cabin is a grassy yard bordered by trees. In front, a path leads down a dirt bank to the rocky beach strewn with driftwood.

Sinclair Island was the subject of

an Environmental Impact Statement done by Western students in 1977. Further, a committee appointed in the fall of 1979 by President Paul Olscamp and chaired by Kay Rich, examined optional uses and development of the Sinclair cabin and property.

"The committee did not recommend building anything there in order to preserve the rustic, simple nature of the cabin as it stands," Rich said. She added that she felt conflicts would arise if improvements had been made with student funds because of the limited access to the cabin.

If improvements were to be made, "the cost would be incurred by the housing and dining system," said Tom Quinlan, vice president for student affairs. Quinlan also pointed out that, at present, the P.E. department is responsible for any accidents that may occur on the property.

From Bellingham it takes about two hours to sail to the island or about 45 minutes by motor boat. Just south of the cabin is a public dock, which is used by the island residents and visitors. Most of the islanders are seasonal and prefer the warmer summer weather. Their cabins dot the outer edges of the island and are connected by dirt roads. The island is self-sufficient because no public services exist.

Meanwhile, the cabin on Sinclair Island will stand vacant, a sad demise for such an idyllic hideaway; withstanding the weather and showing little sign of it.★



# OVER THE LIMIT

By Ric Lamoureux

*Two of Bellingham's finest check the speed of cars moving down Garden Street. Since speeding became a civil violation, ticketed drivers have fewer options in the courts, according to a local attorney.*

He leaves the apartment on Friday afternoon and heads south on Interstate 5 toward Seattle. He's not in a hurry but his parents expect him for dinner so the speedometer remains perched at the 60-mph mark. The car stereo is playing The Band and the traffic is light. It's a comfortable trip.

Rounding a curve near Lake Samish, he sees a tan car by the side of the road. After passing it, red lights come on and the Washington State Patrol cruiser closes in.

At the side of the road comes the inevitable question. "Do you know how fast you were going?"

The answer is 65 mph, or so says the Kustom Signals MR-7 Radar Unit. The trooper is a nice guy but stays firm on the charge. As the trooper's "contact" is asked to sign the citation, he thinks, "Is there anything I can do about this?"

"Speeding used to be a criminal violation," Michael Tario, a Bellingham attorney, said. "When you were charged with speeding, you had all the constitutional protections (such as) the right to a jury trial, right to call and confront witnesses and the right to proof beyond a reasonable doubt . . . all of your important rights.

"Last year, Washington changed the traffic code," Tario said. "What that meant is that speeding is no longer a criminal act."

At first, this sounds like a good deal, from the Interstate-5 speeder's point of view. But Tario explained that by making speeding a civil violation, the court need only show 51 percent proof, scrapping the "beyond reasonable doubt" clause present in criminal trials.

"In fact," Tario said, "you're not entitled to a trial at all." In a civil case, only a contested hearing is possible and the judge decides the case.







*He probably is asking you how fast you were going, but maybe you should ask if he's checked his radar lately.*

According to Tario, some judges allow hearsay evidence to be introduced. This means the arresting officer need not be present to have his report entered in evidence. Such a procedure is not allowed in a criminal trial.

So the options seem few to the would-be speeder. And according to Sgt. Russ Lybecker of the Washington State Patrol, the chances of disputing the radar reading are minimal.

"For every four contacts made," Lybecker said, "three are made using radar. It provides a very accurate check of speed on the individual. The radar unit is checked by the officer at the start and finish of its use."

Lybecker said the radar units also have fail-safe mechanisms built in that run two or three readings before being displayed to the officer.

But the radar unit is a tool, Lybecker said, and is only as good as the person operating it. For that reason, he said officers go through training sessions using radar equipment.

Tario, however, questioned whether police training is adequate.

"When I'm driving around and I see a police car, marked or unmarked on the side of the road, and I see that radar beam and the way it's focused, I know damn well that they're not set up properly.

"I know damn well that the radar unit has to be parallel to the road to work properly and I know that everyone they give a ticket to that day is probably not given an accurate reading," Tario said.

Tario also questioned whether the unit checks are reliable all the time. He said radar units are calibrated using a tuning fork and that the forks themselves can be inaccurate. But Tario does concede that if operated and calibrated properly, radar units are usually more accu-

rate than a speedometer.

That leaves the speeder on Interstate 5 with just three options.

First, pay the fine. Second, ask for a mitigation hearing, in which you admit guilt but are allowed to explain any extenuating circumstances, such as rushing a friend to the hospital. The third option is to ask for a contested hearing and try to prove either the radar unit or the officer was in error.

The third option is a real possibility, because, as Lybecker said, "I can't say that radar has the last word because there is a human factor. The unit is only as good as its operator."

Lybecker said an officer relies on his experience and training to verify that the speed displayed on the radar device corresponds with the car he pulls over. Lybecker said this is not that difficult as the radar beam is quite accurate and spreads out little as it travels.

But Tario said that, at a substantial distance, "It's impossible to differentiate." The only way an officer can tell for sure, is if the car is "the only one in their line of vision," Tario said. A radar unit, he added, usually locks on to the fastest moving car if the officer is shooting several.

Going to court prepared to question the error factor, however, will usually end in the speeder paying the fine, Tario and Lybecker agreed. But, less chance exists if the ticket is not contested at all.

A mitigation hearing offers the best opportunity for a reduced fine, Lybecker said, because it depends on the judge's discretion.

"We would be most happy if we didn't have to issue speeding tickets at all," Lybecker said. "But, unfortunately, that is not an option open to us at this time."★



# BOOKS, BY JOVE



## By Nancy Walbeck

What started out as a play on words will reap a half-million-dollar windfall for some enterprising entrepreneurs of schlock yock on Madison Avenue.

If you like dusty horse operas, ecstasy-filled, unconsummated romance sagas, things that go bump in the stratosphere or private guys with moxie, doxies and gats, No-Frills Books has the genre for you.

You can almost turn in your library card.

Capitalizing on the generic tendencies of the eco-cult, a handful of publishing types in the Big Apple descended on Jove Publications with an idea publishing houses love — tiny overhead, big bucks.

"Yeah, they came to me. I thought it was all right," said Terry Bisson, story editor for No-Frills Books at Jove. "It was conceived of as a joke, carrying an idea to a ridiculous extreme."

The concept was a set of four anonymous "novellas," in the popular areas of mystery, science fiction, romance and Westerns, packaged between black and white covers with frontispiece squibbs sarcastically deriding the quality of the product.

"The adequate gift for every occasion . . . after you've read one, you won't mind the others."

Take mystery, for example. A nameless private eye lives in a closet, stows his sleeping bag in the file cabinet (probably under "S" for shuteye) and rambles down the hallway to the public comfort station when nature calls. Nameless isn't low life; more subterranean.

*"I felt a tug at my left ear, and heard the ricochet of the bullet that had just missed my head. I ran until it felt like I had a sword in my ribs, ran until I saw the lights of an oncoming train. Then I hit the trench between the rails on my stomach, lying as flat as possible as the train rolled over me, passing safely over my outstretched body."*

Heavy prose it isn't.

"I asked the author to give me 60 pages of every cliché and stock character from Dash Hammett on up. And lots and lots of corpses," the Kentucky-born Bisson drawled. "I wanted him to take 60 pages and make it really outrageous."

Bisson said the authors, specialists in their fields, will remain anonymous but share equally in the total royalties even if one book outsells another.

*"Without waiting for an answer he dropped his hands to her waist and pulled her against him. She felt her legs melting under the heat of his thighs. His breath was in her*

*hair, and he was murmuring her name. Then his fingers wound themselves in the thickness of her hair and he tugged her head back, hurting her as he found her lips at last. Somehow the pain was the spark that ignited her, and she arched herself against him, all the primitive emotion she had buried engulfed her in its raging flame."*

And so it goes for Terri who "had been only a girl two years ago when she left Georgetown, (but) had come back a nurse."

Terri, an orphan, or course, does have her travails; among them a sickly child, a runaway horse and an enigma wrapped in a mystery called Ross Richlands. They are *always* called Ross. His bad temper seems directly attributable to sexual frustration as he only gets to commit bodice-ripping for several dozen pages.

With one \$500-ad in Publisher's Weekly and the usual barrage of press releases, No-Frills has garnered enough free publicity in recent weeks to make rival paperback publishing houses ill with envy. A full page in Playboy, a feature in US magazine, a front page mention in the Wall Street Journal as well as national TV news coverage has catapulted an in-house joke into the annals of cutedom.

*"Whistling a tune, he turned left and started walking south, angling across the street to the hitching rack beneath the trees, where he'd tied his mare within reach of a stone drinking trough, its inside surface lined with moss. Three men were approaching, making their way through the crowd leisurely, but with an air of purpose. Kid stopped. The gay tune died on his lips. One of the trio was black-mustached Marcus. And all three wore black hats."*

And when he isn't talking to his horse or aw-shucksing the local widdler lady, Kid Smith is doing his darn right American best to keep the West free of varmints. Sage City will never see his like again, I reckon.

And they all lived happily ever after, especially the accountants at Jove publishing after they learned the silver screen was beckoning.

"No-Frills Assoc. has optioned the movie rights on No-Frills Books with escalators of \$1 up to \$3 million contingent on all the authors appearing together on the Phil Donahue Show and any two getting married on the same program," Bisson said, drawling excitedly. And as far as he's concerned, they have just begun.

"We have this idea for a generic record . . ." ★





# LUMMI INDIANS



Just outside Bellingham lies an entire nation struggling to preserve an ancient culture in a modern world.

From beginnings as an affluent hunting and gathering society, the Lummi Tribe moved through the last two, turbulent centuries trying to adapt to the presence of the white man.

It has been, and continues to be, an unending battle. But as one tribe member said, "You have to work at recovery a little at a time."

*Lummi masks circa 1940  
Courtesy of Whatcom Museum of History and Art*



# Digging Up the Lummi Line



*Pictured at left are four examples of chip stone projectile points found on the Lummi Reservation. The artifact on the bottom, one of a stemmed variety, is relatively rare in the Northwest, according to Gar Grabert. He estimated their ages at older than 2,000 years.*

## By Jon Larson

When an environmental impact statement for a proposed sewer line required archeological evaluation, anthropologists at Western got a rare chance to delve into Lummi prehistory — a possible 3,500-year-old find.

“Gar” Grabert of Western’s anthropology department said that although much analysis of the artifacts found at six prehistoric sites during

The shell piles, called shell midden by archeologists, were formed when the natives discarded blue mussel and butter clam shells after removing the meat to smoke or dry. The Lummi shell midden have acted to preserve many bone tools such as harpoon points, and fishing gear and hooks, which usually are destroyed by acids in the soil, Griffin said.

Anthropology graduate student

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*‘A plentiful food source allowed the Lummis to develop a well-organized and complicated society, something of a rarity among non-agricultural civilizations.’*

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the four months of excavation earlier this year still remains, he thinks some of them may date back to 1500 B.C.

Field director Gene Griffin, who helped locate and excavate the sites along with Grabert and eight other Western students, said that thick layers of shells found in piles near ancient village sites indicated that a large population had inhabited the peninsula over a long period of time.

Kristen Patterson said that fishing equipment artifacts indicate that the Lummis gathered most of their food from the sea. They may have harpooned larger fish, such as sturgeon and halibut, and harvested salmon, steelhead, herring, smelt and bottom fish in traps and nets.

Patterson said that a plentiful food source allowed the Lummis to develop a well-organized and compli-

cated society, something that is a rarity among non-agricultural civilizations.

“They just had everything here and they used it all,” she said.

The opportunity to excavate prehistoric sites on the reservation arose when inadequate sewage drainage created a health hazard on the reservation, Sewer Administrator Bill Ballew said. The 12 to 18 inches of topsoil that cover the peninsula’s clay-like land do not provide an adequate drainfield for septic tanks, he said.

To solve the problem, a \$13 million sewage treatment and disposal system is being built. Major construction began in June of 1981, Ballew said.

But before construction could begin, the Environmental Protection Agency, which funds the project, required a report on the effects digging the pipeline’s ditch would have on prehistoric sites in the area, Griffin said.

Students searched records in the school’s anthropology department and the Washington Archeological



Research Center in Olympia and Washington State University for information about the Lummi's past, Griffin said.

"We compiled all this data and found that other than the work Dr. Grabert had done — he'd recorded about four or five sites — there were no records of archeological sites," Griffin said.

So teams of four and six persons set out for the reservation last winter to try to find potential prehistoric sites. Using shovels, coring devices to take soil samples and the "old basic trained eye," the teams followed the sewer line route and discovered 21 sites, Griffin said. Of these, the archeologists chose six sites that looked the most promising.

Then they began the painstaking



At the top, an antler splitting wedge; right, bottom half of a maul, or hammering tool; bottom, an antler chisel and left, the top portion of a maul.

At the right, two examples of perforated net weights found on the Lummi site. Gar Grabert said these artifacts are quite rare in this part of the Northwest Coast and he dates them to more than 2,700 years ago.

work of excavation.

"Once you dig through a site, you destroy, for all practical purposes, the archeological record," Griffin said. Working carefully using trowels, flat shovels to skim the earth's

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*"It's a good start for protection and evaluation of their prehistory."*

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surface, brushes, and an occasional dental pick when the job required it, the archeologists picked their way through layers of blue mussel and butter clam shells, bird bones and waste rock flake material left over from tool making. They recorded each artifact uncovered in their six-foot-square site and then sifted the material through a screen.

Excavation uncovered the broken stone tools of the Locarno Beach phase of Indian civilization (1500 B.C. to 400 B.C.) as well as the projectile points, woodworking tools, bone fish hooks and harpoon points of later phases.

"It's a good start for protection and evaluation of their prehistory," Griffin said.

With the excavation of the six sites near completion, students now are monitoring construction of the pipe-

line to see if the backhoe tractor turns up artifacts as it passes through sites archeologists did not have time or funds to excavate. ★



(From left to right) Fish spear with a design of crane's head carved into the barbs, circa 500 A.D.; toggling harpoon of the Marpole type circa the time of Christ; harpoon or arrow tip; needle or awl used in basketry, sewing and for similar tasks.





# L

ummi Indian leaders saw the development of the aquaculture program in 1968 as a way to improve the tribe's standard of living and provide from 200 to 600 jobs.

But while the fishery has improved the Nooksack River salmon runs for all fishermen, it has failed to provide the hoped-for jobs.

"We were a bunch of dreamers at the time," recalled long-time tribal council member Sam Cagey.

In the late '60s, the tribe was approached "almost every day" by entrepreneurs wanting to build garbage dumps, industrial parks and the like on reservation property, Cagey said, with the promise of Indian jobs as bait.

The tribe resisted and chose a fisheries program as an alternative. Cagey and Wallace Heath, a Western professor, were instrumental in obtaining federal grants for the project.

But Cagey became bitter when the federal dollars slowed before the aquaculture program was firmly established.

"(The feds) expected instant success — like a jar of instant coffee — turn on the tap and stir and you've got coffee," he said.

In 1975, at the height of the hatchery program, 200 persons were employed. Today, that number is down to 12 in the salmon fisheries and five or six in the oyster program.

In the early years, the Lummis raised trout, shellfish and salmon, emphasizing the latter.

The Lummis concentrated on "pan size" salmon, but found they could not compete with similar-tasting Idaho rainbow trout in the marketplace, Steve Seymour, fisheries manager, said. The Lummi salmon sold

for \$3.50 to \$4 a pound while the trout sold for \$2 a pound.

Cagey said the Lummis also met a "shadow resistance" to their fish in the marketplace. The salmon were "too moist, too dry or not the right color."

Further, the marketplace has a "great resistance" to letting federally supported projects get a foothold, Cagey added.

Then, in 1976, the Lummis scrapped raising salmon in pens and

that tells the fish where to return home. The other half are set loose from Skoocum Creek and down the Nooksack River.

Fifteen to 20 percent of the tagged Lummi salmon are caught each year, from Canada to the Oregon coast.

"That's pretty high," Seymour said. The state average for all fisheries is 12 percent, he said.

The largest quantities of Lummi fish are caught in Bellingham and Lummi Bay and the Canadian inland

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# A SCALLED DOWN DREAM

By Don Kirkpatrick

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fish were released for the first time, mainly to cut costs. Annually, 2 to 3 million yearling coho salmon and 2 to 4 million fall chinook salmon are released.

Today, half the coho are trucked to the net enclosures at Lummi Bay in a 4,000-gallon converted milk tanker, and then left there about a month for "imprinting," a term used to describe the instinctive process

waters east of Vancouver Island. Seymour estimated half of the Lummi fish caught are netted by Canadians.

With this year's estimates at 22 to 23 percent, 1981 will be the most successful run ever.

From \$20,000 to \$100,000 is taken in each year by selling unreleased fish, Seymour said. That pays for a quarter of the cost of the aquaculture



project. The Bureau of Indian Affairs pays the rest.

Because the Lummi-supported salmon runs bolster the fishing economy for all fishermen, Cagey said, taxpayers have no right to complain about supporting the Lummi fishery.

Besides, he asked, where do the Lummis go to spend their money?

"We don't have supermarkets, beauty salons. They get their tax money right back," he said.

Cagey said he would prefer to

break loose from the stranglehold of federal monies altogether by pooling the resources of the tribes across the continent in a giant Indian cooperative.

The Lummi College of Fisheries still trains people for fisheries work, and the program attracts students from Canada, Mexico and across the United States.

But on the Lummi reservation, Seymour said, few jobs exist. Those that have the jobs tend to stay, he

added.

"There's still a few Lummis (in the school), hoping," he said.

Seymour said he expects the aquaculture project to remain at its present level for some time to come. It has gone through a transition from the aim of providing hundreds of jobs to concentrating on preserving the salmon runs.

The Lummis had "a lot of high hopes at first — then reality struck," Seymour said. ★



*'Casey said he would prefer to break loose from the stranglehold of federal monies altogether by pooling the resources of tribes across the continent in a giant Indian cooperative.'*



# ACR F





# CROSS THE FOOTSTEPS OF GOD

By Laurie Sturdevant



It was a rainy, overcast afternoon as I drove out Marine Drive to the Lummi Indian Reservation.

I had been instructed to pick up a sacred tape recording of Isador Tom, one of the elder story tellers of the tribe, at the Lummi Education Center. Driving down the desolate country roads my heart began to pump faster. I was excited, yet frightened. Once before, I had been to the reservation, but never alone.

Turning a sharp corner, the scene suddenly changed from colorful, open fields to a scrappy array of torn down shacks. Garbage and beer cans lined the bumpy, mud-packed road. Old Cadillacs and junky Oldsmobiles, minus windows and tires, were haphazardly parked in the driveways. Slowing down to take it all in, I noticed three Indian men glaring at me from their yard. I reached back to lock my door. Feeling like an intruder, I stepped on the accelerator and quickly turned the corner.

Ahead of me was a faded sign: "Lummi Education Center." The whitewashed building stood alongside a church and another well-kept structure. Hurriedly, I jumped out of my car and ran inside.

Behind an old wooden desk sat a beautiful young Indian girl. As I explained my mission, she smiled as if expecting me — then handed me the tape.

Filled with excitement, I headed back to Bellingham to listen and learn of the Indian people through the words of the living, but hospitalized Isador Tom: "The spiritual part of life is the Indian way. When a child was growing up, the parents would send him to fast. And he would go out to nature, live and sleep out there and swim, sometimes three times a day. Then he would go back to the woods and walk around until finally he would ask God — The Great Spirit — for a gift . . . whether it be healing, interpretation, or to be a great leader. He stayed until he finally received the spirit. This was the way of the Indian people."

The voice of Isador Tom quivered with age and filled with sadness as he told of the devastation of his culture: "Today, not many Indians carry the gift of the Great Spirit. Older Indians do, but not the younger ones. Lummi children aren't going for it because they are receiving this education. Those little boys — they talk English language. They can't speak the Lummi language the way we did when I was a little boy. White man's way turns them away from the Indian way of life."

The following day, I was told of another highly respected Lummi elder who would be able to share his life experiences with me. His name: Joe Washington, religious leader for the Lummi tribe.

I felt nervous and anxious as I climbed the muddy, wooden steps and entered the living room. Joe Washington sat against the far wall in a big chair. Dressed in gray pants and a white shirt and wearing slippers, he smiled and greeted us warmly with a handshake.

It was a cozy room, dimly lit and decorated abundantly with Indian crafts and garments.

"Please, sit down," he said cheerfully. I pulled up the nearest chair and politely asked him to explain his spiritual life as a young Indian boy. From that moment, I was drawn into a world of beliefs and tradition I had never known.

"We believe in the Great Spirit and the Creator. There are footsteps where God walked as far north as Alaska and as far south as California. Throughout the Pacific Northwest, we the Indian people came across the footsteps of God. We were taken to these places and instructed to go to the footprints to seek a gift. We are really spiritual people."

Pausing for a moment to gather his thoughts he went on: "I was the last Lummi to experience a training period before the white man's law. Today it would be considered child abuse," he said.

"The first experience in my training that I remember happened when I first learned to stand. My grandfather picked me up in his arms and



whispered in my ear in the Lummi language, 'Only the strongest will survive, only the fittest will live.' My grandmother started to cry. She knew it was time.

"My grandfather carried me out to the bay. We got in the canoe and he paddled out to the straits. The whole time he was singing to the blackfish, 'Take care of him, he'll belong to you.' All of a sudden my grandfather stopped rowing and threw me into the bay. I saw a thousand blackfish stand up as far as the eye could see. I was sinking and drowning when a big blackfish swam underneath me and carried me out of the water and landed me onto the beach. I slipped off his back and the water spilled out of me. I don't know how I got back to the house after that."

Joe Washington sat in his chair with pride. The words he spoke were hypnotizing. I thought about how little white people are taught of the Indian culture. We only learn what the white man's history books have portrayed — a one-sided, distorted image.

"I come from an Indian speaking family — no English," he said.

"When I was about four years old, the policeman came to our house and demanded my brother and I go to school. The white man took me and my brother out of our home and shipped us to Fort Lapway, Idaho, during the Indian wars, about 1920. We were treated harshly because we couldn't understand or speak English.

"The white, woman teacher would light a match and stick it on our tongues. My tongue became very swollen. She also took scissors and snipped the tops of our ears off. One time she took me outside in the winter and stuck my tongue to a frozen pipe. From that, I was paralyzed for three years."

I sat speechless, staring into his eyes.

"A medicine man from the Nez Perce tribe was called upon to heal me," he said.

"When he came, he told the white doctor my Indian spirits had rebelled and he would have to bring my spirit back. I had to learn to walk and

speaking again."

I found it hard to believe Joe Washington had only a second grade education. He spoke clear English and appeared to possess an unbelievable determination for acquiring knowledge.

He winked at me. "Have you ever heard of the book, 'I Heard The Owl Call My Name?' That is the story of my life. As a child, I saw a little man. He was walking past me. I was leaning against a tree. This little man was moving his hand up and down behind his back as if holding a watch."

Joe Washington rose out of his chair and began pacing the living room floor imitating the little man.

"My grandfather taught me never to fear the unnatural, so I grabbed the little man's hand. Turning toward me, the man spread his arms and transformed into an owl. He hooted and carried me to the outskirts of town."

Joe said, smiling, "What really happened, you see, was the world

from the owl," Joe said as he sat back down in his chair.

"Now I am putting into practice the things of the Lummi culture. If you don't respect your beginning, there is no use living," he added.

I leaned back in my chair. His words echoed in my mind. Looking up, I saw he was staring at me.

"Write this down," he said, pointing his forefinger at my pen and paper.

"For every person that dies and leaves this world — most of us think of selfish desires and needs. Only until somebody gets sick or dies do we finally remember the Great Spirit. That's a sad situation."

I glanced at the clock. It was getting dark and time to head for home. I thanked him for sharing his experiences. I wished I could stay longer.

Feeling a special sentiment toward him, I leaned forward to give Joe a hug.

"That's the Indian way," he chuckled, "you know, heart to heart."



*Joe Washington, religious leader for the Lummi tribe, said he was the last of his kind to be initiated into the spiritual ways of the Great Spirit and the Creator. "Only the strongest will survive, only the fittest will live."*

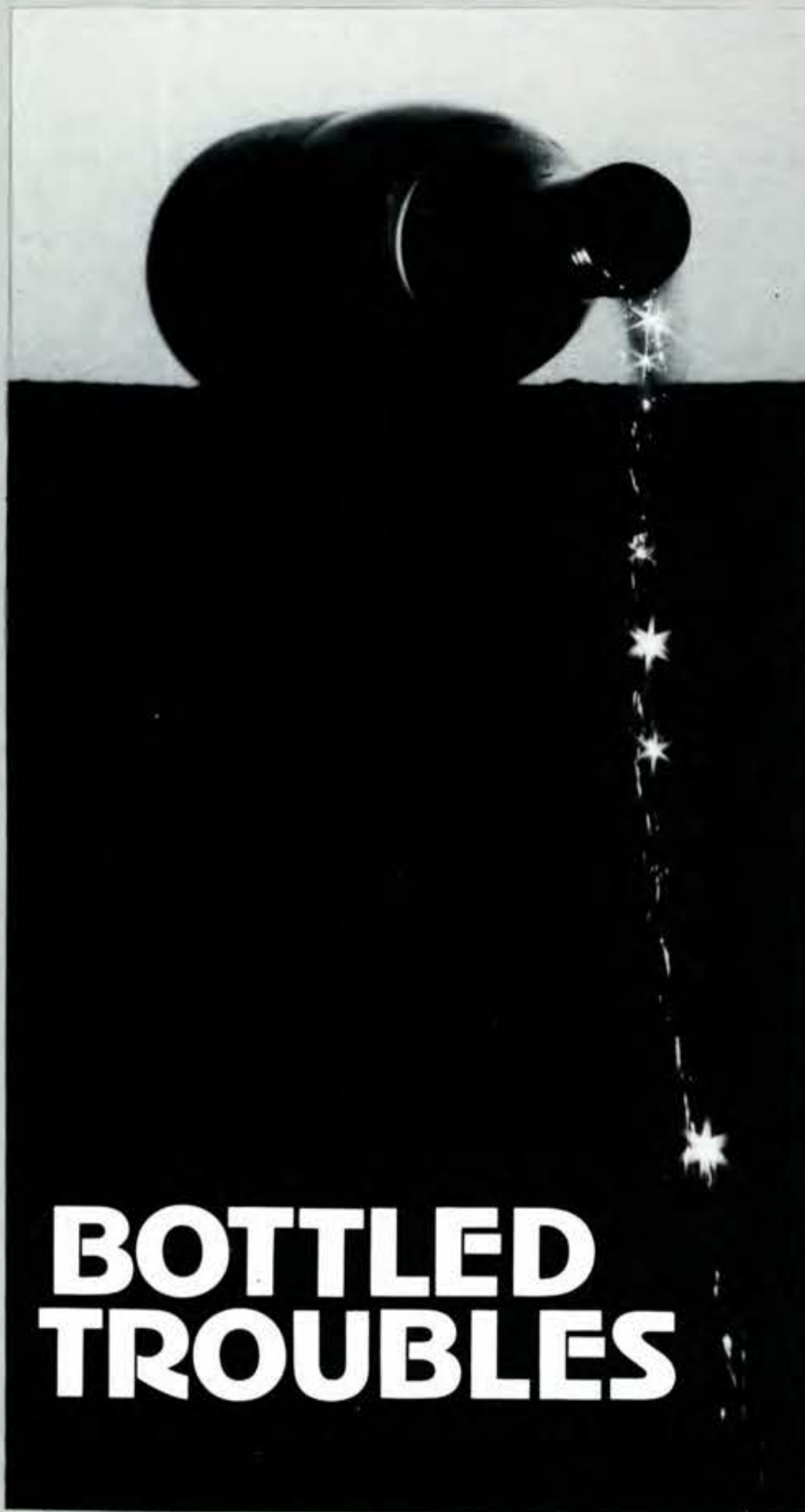
busted in front of me and I went into a coma, into the spiritual world to find the soul of somebody.

"The owl told me, 'I know the name of every man, woman and child who is going to the next world.'

"That is my duty today, my gift

Turning to leave, I remembered something special Isador Tom had said on the tape. "Thousands of years we have been living this way and now the white man say, 'Indian, you're doing it all wrong.' I don't believe that's fair."★





# BOTTLED TROUBLES

**By Jackleen Asmussen**

In a Bellingham tavern window beneath a neon Coors sign stands a 12-inch plaster Indian, wearing nothing but his age and a ragged blanket that wraps around him, chin to foot. The intent of the figure is clear. With his brown, overdone face creased and scarred from the ravages of alcohol, he is the proverbial "drunken Indian." The plaster caricature, which is crude and blatantly stereotypical, unfortunately still holds meaning.

Alcoholism has been identified as the number one major health problem of the Native American. According to the Washington State Alcoholism Plan for 1981 (WSAP), Native Americans rank twice the national average for alcoholism and the disease has reached "epidemic levels."

Statistically, WSAP reports that Native Americans make up 2 percent of the population while using 10

percent of alcoholism services in Whatcom County. The statistics for the state are slightly lower but comparable: 1.3 percent of the population is Native American, and comprises 8.5 percent of those using the state alcohol services.

Jacob Narcomey, director of the Alcoholism Care Program on the Lummi Reservation, says that 90 percent of the cases brought to the tribal courts are alcohol-related. More specifically, "half of those cases are because of violence in the homes, and the other half are children hauled into court because of illegal consumption and being disruptive."

Narcomey says, in his opinion, that while there are many factors contributing to alcoholism, he finds alcohol abuse to be a direct result of the disintegration of the family.

"Out of that comes a high rate of unemployment. There is no way for people to make a living on the reservation," he says.

There are no businesses on the reservation, Narcomey says, and not many Lummis work outside the reservation because "there are a lot of barriers in the outside world. Guessing, from the Indian point of view, they feel that they can't do that kind of work," he says, using examples of clerical and administrative work. "They have no models."

Bernie Thomas, Public Information Officer for the Lummi Tribe, says that since young people have no

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*'Native Americans rank twice the national average for alcoholism and the disease has reached epidemic levels.'*

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incentive for continuing through school, there is a high drop-out rate.

"People are envious of the fact that we can use our traditional resources (fishing). There is quite a bit of resentment (in the schools)," he says. Dropping out of school "leads kids to derive an income, usually from fishing."

But fishing, which has been the traditional economic base, no longer is a feasible support structure because of increasing regulations that barely makes it a seasonal proposition.

"It is the old way," Narcomey says, "to be a fisherman and nothing else." Although fishing no longer is a year-round enterprise, "fishermen are still encouraged only to fish and not engage in other kinds of work," he says.

High unemployment among men, coupled with the breakdown of the family structure, registers as a general state of lawlessness on the reservation, Narcomey says. Destructive activity isolates people from one another so that "we are not a community anymore. People don't feel protected from each other."

Some of the sociological problems stem from the isolation that living on the reservation augments, Narcomey says. The Lummi people need to integrate and flow with society rather than be a separate entity, he says.

"They (Lummi) are losing more and more because they are apart rather than a part of," he says. Integration



is important because "as long as we're isolating ourselves, we're becoming alienated."

To deal with alcoholism, Narcomey says, the center has drawn up a proposal to concentrate on preventative treatment of the disease rather than just working with chronic alcoholics. Alcoholism services would be provided in three ways, all dealing with education of teenagers and adults.

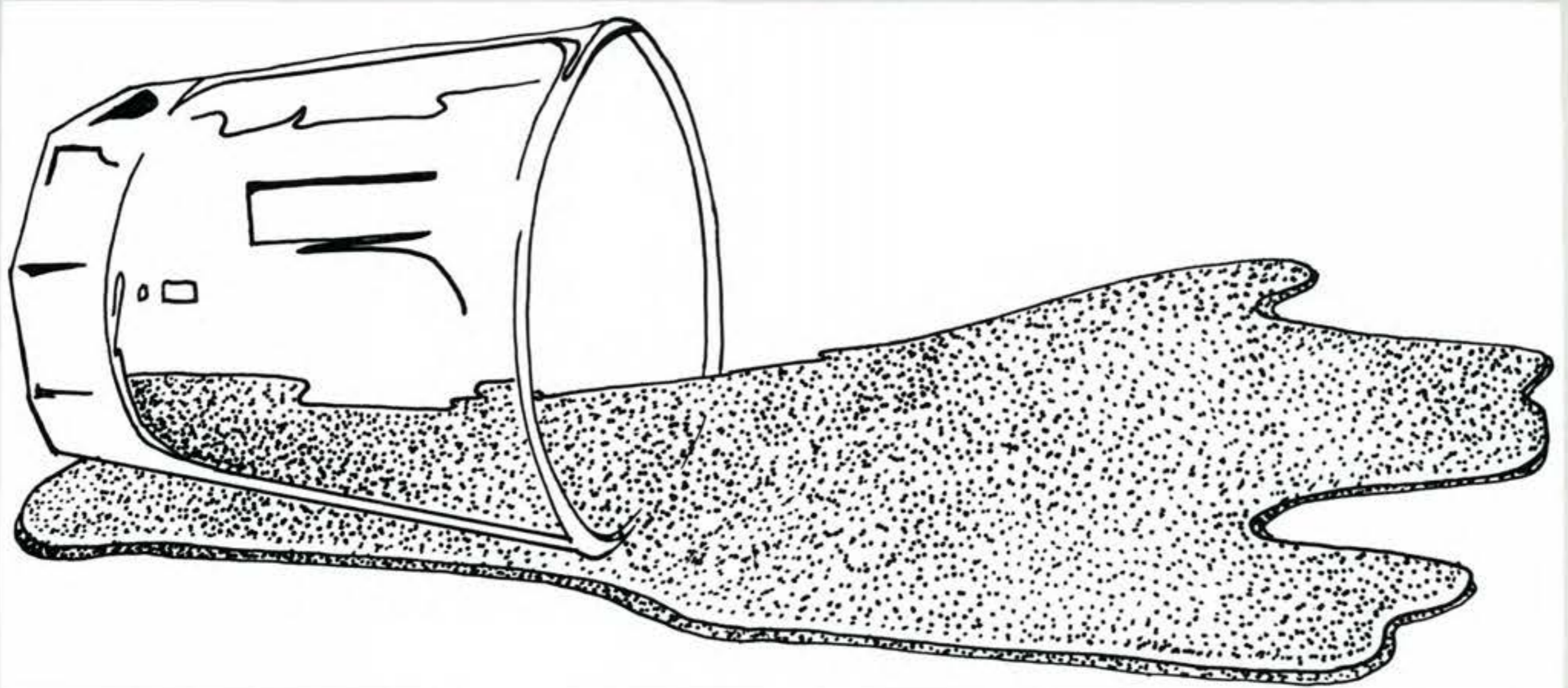
The first part of the program concentrates on preventative education where no problem is evident. The second portion is intervention, educating those who may be susceptible to alcohol, but haven't developed any symptoms. The third portion identifies potential high risk individuals and targets those personalities before alcoholism

becomes a serious problem.

Thomas says that Indians do not drink more than mainstream society. They just "get found out more. We are a very gregarious people," he said, which leads to being "more readily identified."

Thomas says that the Lummi now are in a better financial position to deal with alcoholism and are able to afford staff for treatment.

"The main problem (of the Lummi) is not alcoholism," Narcomey says. "You have to address the issues of lawlessness, alienation and broken families. The social problems are very important. It (alcoholism) has a lot to do with the sociological, not the physiological."★



# IMPROVING THE ODDS

By Mark C. Murphy

Tom Jones would be the first person to tell you that Native Americans living on the Lummi Indian reservation fight some difficult battles.

He would be the last person to tell you they aren't coming closer to winning a few of them.

As the director of the Lummi Tribal Community Services Center, Jones sees the tribe's basic problems at a grassroots level, and then does what he can to solve them from behind his desk.

"At times it may seem pretty desperate," he admitted, "but I don't get discouraged. You have to have long-range goals and then the smaller problems don't seem so difficult."

Jones speaks very softly, hardly ever varying his tone. He is a patient man working with often frustrating circumstances, but the tenor of his voice is calming and comforting.

Despite his master's degree in social work from the University of Washington, Jones is informal. He said he



tries to keep his education "under the rug" so others on the reservation won't hesitate to trust him. His long, dark hair rests loosely on a blue work shirt, and most of his sentences are simple and direct.

At a comfortable pace, Jones explains that what many people view as the main problems facing Lummi Indians — alcoholism, high unemployment, juvenile delinquency, a lack of education — are actually the lasting symptoms of a society that has been discriminated against and suppressed for hundreds of years.

"It's going to take time," he stresses. "We know that. These aren't problems that developed in the last year. You have to work at recovery a little at a time."

On a yellow legal pad, Jones sketches out a rough diagram showing how the bombardment of criticism and prejudice from missionaries, government representatives and even fur trappers, created some of the modern problems. He narrates as he draws little lines on the pad with a ball-point pen.

"If you have people on all sides telling you you're stupid and crazy all the time, it's gonna mess you up. It's the perfect example of Freud's abnormal psychology theory."

With a small staff, Jones eases the "symptoms" with projects ranging from a Senior Citizens' Center to a youth diversion program, while working the whole time to promote the Lummi heritage.

Funding for many of the programs comes from state or federal budgets, but Jones says dealing with the government offices and the Bureau of Indian Affairs often is the most difficult part of the job. A lack of communication between the agencies that distribute funds, and the resulting competition between tribes, makes it an ongoing battle.

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*'Sometimes it's like a "Catch 22" situation. They'll say you can't have money for housing unless you have sewers, and you can't have money for sewers unless you have housing. It doesn't make sense.'*

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"There's a lot of white tape (rather than red tape) to work through and it seems like you have to fight for everything," Jones explains with a sigh. "The problem is that the people aren't always equipped to fight. Education isn't really available, and so the skills you need to handle the hassles are sometimes scarce."

"Sometimes it's like a 'Catch-22' situation. They'll say you can't have money for housing unless you have sewers, and you can't have money for sewers unless you have housing. It doesn't make sense."

Most of Jones' long-term goals center on economic development and self-sufficiency — goals he sees himself coming closer to meeting each year. While working to help families cope with immediate problems, he's planting the seeds for future progress. The Community Service's food and nutritional program, for instance, helps Lummis to meet daily needs with a community garden. The program could someday provide the basis for a

larger operation. A farm or an orchard eventually could raise a profit to help the reservation fund some of its programs, and also provide some badly needed employment opportunities.

The senior citizen's center, operated by Community Services, helps preserve original arts and crafts work and valued Lummi art and heritage while keeping the tribe's elderly active and together. The program also has the potential of growing into a profitable venture as an arts and crafts store, Jones says.

None of these projects is going to produce any millionaires, but Jones explains that providing an opportunity for Lummis to help themselves can be encouraging as well as financially rewarding. "If we get a little money from some of our own projects," Jones explains, "then we

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*'Each tribe is its own nation, but when we work as a unit and fight together for what we need, we have the power to be heard. It's a beautiful feeling.'*

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can use that to help fund programs like our Child Welfare Service, to make sure it's able to meet the needs of the reservation."

On a larger scale, Jones stresses that an increasing sense of unity and tighter communication between tribes across the nation is helping them to accomplish things that individual tribes weren't able to do. The National Congress of Indians, for instance, lobbies for Native Americans in Washington, D.C., and provides educational opportunities that never before were available to reservation Indians.

"There are some things happening with Indians in this country that you would not believe," Jones says, sitting up. "Each tribe is its own nation, but when we work as a unit and fight together for what we need, we have the power to be heard. It's a beautiful feeling."

The sense of strength that comes with national organizing isn't only political. An increasing number of pow wows and festivals that bring tribes together socially are attended by more people every year.

"It gives everyone a really positive feeling to get together once in a while," Jones says. "We play all the old traditional games and it's always a real happy experience."

Tight communication between tribes brings a stronger sense of community feeling on the reservation. The native language is used more, and an increase in respect for the elders of the tribe is resulting in a stronger sense of pride. That enables the Lummis to work together and tackle grassroots problems as a group.

Jones has been committed to helping the tribe in any way possible all his life. He has worked for the Community Services Center as a social worker, counselor and now director.

"My father was a Lummi. I was born a full Lummi and I just know it's what I've got to do." He pauses for a moment, and then chuckles under his breath. "I've never thought much about doing anything else."★



# The Bone Game

## By Karlene Harold

When that old gambling urge strikes, don't think the only cure is a binge in Reno, a wager at Longacres or a hand of poker. Instead, place your bet on Slahal, a Native American gambling game where stakes, as high as \$8,000, ride on an "experienced" guess.

Before white men came and changed Indian practices, Slahal was an addictive game played with the same fervor and enthusiasm displayed at modern gambling games. Originating in the Northwest, probably in the middle and lower Columbian region, it was played as far south as California and north into Western Canada.

Money has replaced slaves, canoes and blankets as the most popular bet, but a nostalgic form of Slahal is alive and played today. Between April and November, tournaments are scheduled every weekend at different reservations throughout the western states. Attendance varies, but in the summer it's usually from 100 to 500 persons.

Have you ever hidden a piece of candy in one hand and then held out two fists and asked, "Which one?" Slahal is a complex variation of this

simple childhood game.

Two teams sit opposite one another. In tournament play, 10 members usually are on each team. But in open play, games played in which certain restrictions are dropped, many members of two or three tribes may oppose three or four members of one tribe.

The leader of one team chooses two players. He gives each a pair of bones, small barrel-shaped pieces of wood. One bone has a painted ring about its middle. It is the "male" bone. The other bone is unmarked. It is the "female" bone.

They place their hands underneath a blanket, scarf or coat that lies on their laps or behind their backs. Juggling the bones from one hand to another, they hide the unmarked one. When they're ready, they expose their hands, swaying them to the sound of the drum, criss crossing their arms across their breasts.

The leader of the second team chooses a "pointer" or "guesser." while the opposing team sings its gambling spirit songs to distract him, the pointer tries to find the female bones. When he thinks he knows the correct hand, he makes a pointing

motion with his hand, conveying by special sign language his choice.

Score is kept by passing "sticks," long striped pieces of wood, from one team to the other on incorrect guesses. If the pointer guesses both sets of hands correctly, his team gets the bones and it's their turn to hide them. If he chooses one right and one wrong, his team gets one set of bones, loses one stick and they continue to guess for the second pair. If both are incorrect, his team loses two sticks and they guess again. When all the sticks are lost, the game is over.

Not everyone can be a guesser, says Ernie John, 34, a Slahal veteran since age 14 and an "experienced" pointer. Most participate by hiding the bones or making the music. Only two or three persons take turns guessing. It takes a great deal of concentration to "psyche out" the holders, John says.

"You get this feeling inside when you feel that you're able to figure out the opposing team," John says. The guesser either senses the moves, decodes the other team's pattern or he "corrals" them. He tricks his opponents into hiding the bones where he wants them.

This is done by calculating each move, John says. The pointer follows a pattern in his guessing. When he feels that the other team sees his pattern and is hiding the bones accordingly, he abruptly "drops down" to a different guess.

The other teammates also use some trickery. The team holding the bones tries to fake-out the guesser. Individuals pretend to hold the bones when they actually aren't, hoping to confuse the pointer. Members of the guessing team distract the holders. Some make all the motions of a guesser, hoping the holder mistakes him as the guesser and exposes his hands early.

Being the pointer is a big responsibility, says John, who travels to games in Oregon and Eastern Washington. The bets made by teammates, obser-





*A Slahal game was part of the festivities in Ferndale's Pioneer Park in 1911. The ancient bone game, part of the social and cultural heritage of Northwest tribes, is still played today. (Courtesy of Whatcom Museum Photo Archives)*

vers and himself ride on his decision. The wagers are made prior to each game. Sometimes a person from each team records them, but much of the time it's much simpler.

The wagerer stands. Raising his arm in the air, he waves his money to and fro, calling out the amount he wants to bet. He waits for a response from another wagerer. When the bet is matched, both parties lay their money in front of them, placing it under an ashtray or empty tin can and, when the game is over, the winner collects.

No limit is set on the amount that can be wagered. Most bets range from \$1 to \$500. The only restriction is that the amount must be matched by someone betting for the other side. This gives each gambler the chance to double his money if his team wins.

In Eastern Washington, blankets and other valuables sometimes are used as bets. The person places a value on the item and then a wagerer for the other team accepts that value and matches it, either in goods or money. The total purse, both teams' bets combined, ranges from \$100 to \$8,000, says Geri Bill, a Slahal player on the Lummi team for five years.

Slahal can be a grueling test of stamina and concentration. One game can last 20 minutes or eight hours. It's not unusual for a team to start at 5 p.m. Friday and play until 4 a.m. Saturday, Bill says. This happens especially when a team gets on a winning streak. The same team may play until they lose a game.

When the Lummi tribe hosts a game, the team members remain around the clock and they usually take only two breaks during the

weekend to eat, Bill says. In non-tournament play, it's less restrictive. Players wander in and out as they please.

The Lummis host a game in June during the Stommish celebration and they sponsor two more games sometime during the season. Invitations are sent to the other teams about a month in advance, Bill says.

Everyone, white or Indian, is welcome to participate, either by betting or playing. A person of any age can play as long as he or she understands the rules of the game.

The next time gambling fever takes control, don't risk sacrificing that money on the odds of "psyching out" a machine, a horse or the draw of a card. Fine tune the vibrations to the human wave length — place the bet on Slahal!★



# MAKERS OF ANIMALS

By Jackleen Asmussen





**T**he black bear stares straight at the man, mouth open and wide, its tongue curled and framed by long and slightly yellowed teeth. Without hesitation, the man reaches inside the mouth and gently prods the gum with a small wooden stick. The animal doesn't flinch or blink — this is the finishing touch on a bear skin rug.

"You have to let it rest two or three days," he said, adding, "Then your eyes see a few things." He pointed out small cracks in the bear's amalgam.

Carl Akers has been a taxidermist for 40 years. He took an interest in the craft, as all kids do, he said, by reading about it in a book. A native of West Virginia, he came to Seattle, apprenticed for three years and opened a business in Bellingham. A soft-spoken man with graying hair, blue-gray-green translucent eyes, he is quietly proud of his work. But Akers would rather show the results than talk about it.

A "visitors welcome" sign hangs over the front door. A chimpanzee hangs by one arm from a ledge above the receptionist's desk. The large room to the left holds more than 100 animals of all kinds: moose, sheep and mountain goats look down from the walls; a small seal scoots along the floor; bears stand erect; fish, ducks and small furry animals are balanced on small wood logs or mounted on plaques.

Two storerooms off the main room hold shelves of folded lynx, raccoon or bear rugs. Like heads are stacked one atop another, eyes looking into the darkness.

Akers' feel for his work is directly translated into the expressions of the animals in the room that stand, fly or lie prone. The animals seem peaceful, not sad or aching with buckshot. One mink has a smile on its face. The animals evoke an impulse to stroke a soft fur nose or follow the curve of a sheep horn or claw with a fingertip.

Akers said that he has never hunted. "I like to do this mainly because I like animals," he said. "I really like animals. Sometimes they are easier to be with than people."

As if cued, an old bewiskered dog comes into the room, shuffling, sneezing and smiling, sits down in

front of Akers and waits for recognition.

"People don't realize, but taxidermy is an art. You have to be able to draw, sculpt, cast and paint. It takes three to four years of work with just one animal to master it," he said.

Illustrating, he picks up a piece of carved blue styrofoam and, pointing out the barely perceptible curves, says that this will be a grouse body. The bear rug that lies on the desk had to have the head replaced, he said. Picking up the old head from a box behind his chair and pointing to the hairless nose and patchy ears, he said

that the bear had suffered from sunburn and lost some of its fur. But nothing is thrown away, Akers said, as spare parts — ears, noses, tails — can be used for other animals.

Animals rarely are stuffed, unless they need extra support, such as the lion that stands in the exhibit room. Most animals are mounted on fiberglass molds and contoured to the particular anatomy of the animal.

The process begins with skinning the animal, removing all fat and meat and salting the skin, which cures it. Then it is tanned. If the piece is to be

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*Forever frozen in a landing pattern, a Mallard has been carefully restored under Akers' discriminating eye.*







*Animals are rarely "stuffed" but instead are molded from fiberglass models, such as the bear head above.*



*Bellingham taxidermist Carl Akers with two of his charges in the Bear Area.*



*A ring of eyes stares sightlessly; the finishing touch of brightness Akers will add to his many animals.*

a rug, it is stretched flat on the a board by nailing tiny nails around the perimeter of the skin. Then a mold is made for the head, the seams are sewn flush and the underside is trimmed with felt or sometimes leather. For a mounted piece, the skin is put onto a mold and finished.

Most skins are brought to Akers for specific work but some carcasses, like the chimpanzee and the lion, are donated. The lion came from a Skagit Valley Wildlife Reserve and the chimp was donated by a private zoo in Everett. Akers charges \$52 per lineal foot to work on an animal. The finished bear rug will cost \$234 and will take approximately five days to complete.

Repairing the animal is a crucial

portion of the work, which includes patching hairless underarms and compensating for sunburn or eye replacement. Akers brings out examples of eyes, representing an elk, deer and mountain goat. They resemble marble halves with iridescent brush strokes in black, green, yellow and brown.

"The elk eye is American," he said, pointing to the dullest of the three eyes in a line on the desktop. "The deer and goat eyes are German." Akers bought an entire stock of eyes in Germany a few years ago, which he said are collectors' items. Akers said that he will never use them — they aren't made any longer because they are so time-consuming and costly.

Taxidermy has no particular busy

season except the fall, when a lot of skinning is done. The business is a continuous cycle that begins with game animals in the fall, followed by trapped animals in the winter — wolf, coyote and lynx. In the spring comes bear hunting, a lot of which originates in Alaska, and then comes the fishing season, which leads into August, with sheep, goat and moose.

Explaining the philosophy of taxidermy, Akers said: "It's just like a stone. Some people see beauty in it. Other people see a rock. It's an art, something an individual can see and appreciate."

He dips the wooden stick in water, lowers his glasses to his nose and reaches inside the bear's mouth. The amalgam is almost right.★



*"Before" and "after" bears crowd Akers' work table in the Bear Area. The taxidermist restores patchy fur and the effects of sunburn through ingenious refurbishing techniques.*



# From Soused to Sober

By Dan Boyle

**F**rom outside, the large white and green house appears no different than the surrounding homes. In the spacious backyard, a volleyball court is set up near a horseshoe pitch. A stack of pamphlets on the receptionist's counter reveals the house's identity — "Olympic Center — Bellingham, A Beginning Experience in Sober Living." For 28 days, the center is home for people undergoing treatment for alcoholic problems.

In 1975, Whatcom County's alcoholism board estimated 4,000 alcoholics lived in the county, 8 percent of its population. The center's program is directed toward that group.

Once enrolled, alcoholics attend lectures, workshops and counseling sessions to help them stop drinking. Included with the program is a 24-hour nurse's station and 20 staff members; many recovering alcoholics.

In the dining room, a sign reads, "Who you see here/ What you see here/ When you leave here/ Let it stay here."

Far from any main street in Bellingham, the center's location lets its patients remain anonymous. Administrator Frank VanLandingham, himself a recovering alco-

holic, stressed the need for confidentiality.

"After a person has been out of here for a while, he doesn't mind admitting that he's an alcoholic," he said. "But the people here now are a little fragile. When you first come in for treatment, you feel like you're under a spying glass."

The center has grown each year since it began in 1977. In 1979, 198 patients underwent treatment. In 1980, 226 were treated. The cost for treatment is \$2,660 a month. However, many insurance companies will pay this cost, and low-income patients may be treated through government payments.

Ann, not her real name, went through treatment last March when she was 24. She said she was born an alcoholic because her father was one.

"I could go from one weekend to the next without drinking," she said. "But once I did have a drink, I wouldn't stop. Then I'd always pass out."

"I lost my self-respect, along with the respect of other people," she said. "I suppose I've been more fortunate than other alcoholics in that I never got a DWI or lost my job, although I believe my divorce was due to my drinking problem."

Ann said she did not accept that she was an alcoholic until last February. After a futile attempt to quit drinking on her own, she spoke with a counselor at Whatcom County's Community Alcohol Center. He suggested that she go through treatment at the Olympic Center. She agreed, but not without doubts.

"I was scared because 28 days was a long time, and I didn't know what they'd do to me. My head was spinning. The first night, Friday, I really had a hard time. Saturday morning I was thinking, 'What am I doing here?' I wanted to go out in the sun. I thought how I could be washing my car or something."

With a friend's reassurance, she remained in treatment and, more



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*Set in a quiet neighborhood, the Olympic Treatment Center provides a home for alcoholics attempting to overcome their addiction.*



than six months later, she has not had a drink.

"Still, I'm going to have to watch myself every day for the rest of my life," she said. "I know if I started today I'd start where I left off. It's a progressive disease, which gets worse and worse."

To complicate treatment, many alcoholics are addicted to other drugs.

"Seventy to 75 percent of the patients we treat have a poly-drug problem," VanLandingham said. "Twenty years ago you could have treated alcohol period. Those days have gone by."

For this reason, staff members will not give their patients any drugs, such as sedatives, which other treatment centers provide. Instead, they supply a nutritional diet, which includes many vitamins. Not even caffeine and sugar are served.

The nutritional program was set up for two reasons, VanLandingham said. First, alcoholics tend to get in poor physical condition. Second, a strong physical state helps the recovering alcoholics remain sober.

Carole, 35, had a mother who was an alcoholic. Because of this, "the booze was always there," she said.

"The first day I tasted booze I was nine, and I loved it," Carole said. "Then I started drinking heavily when I was 13. By the time I was 15, I couldn't go to school because I had lost interest."

"I didn't realize I was an alcoholic until I was 28," she said. "But now I know I was one when I was 14."

Carole quit high school in 1961. After going through treatment, she decided to finish her education. She now has a bachelor's degree in psychology from Western Washington University and works part-time as a counselor at the Olympic Center.

Having remained sober for more than five years,

Carole can look back at her troubled times with a sense of humor. She said she often drank a whole fifth of booze at one sitting.

"I didn't think anyone would notice," she said. "I also had to be sure that I always had a big enough purse to fit a bottle in. I soon found myself buying larger and larger purses."

"And all my friends drank heavily like me, because it was terrible hanging around social drinkers who would have one drink to every six of mine," she said.

When Carole realized she was dependent on alcohol, she decided to substitute drugs. However, after eight months, she began to combine the two.

In 1974, she began to attend AA meetings with only limited success. Finally, in 1976, she went through treatment at a center in Saskatchewan with methods similar to the Olympic Center.

She has never relapsed since her treatment. Today, she attends drinking parties with her husband, who is a social drinker. Most of her friends also are social drinkers.

"I don't think I could slip today," she said. "But I can't say that will be so tomorrow. What we teach at the Olympic Center is one day at a time."

"However, I'm past the hardest part of my recovery period. The greatest dangers in relapsing come in the first five to seven months after treatment," she said.

Although Carole has been sober for more than five years, Ann is just getting past the post-treatment danger period. But she has discovered how wonderful life can be without alcohol.

"Almost everybody I told about my treatment made some comment on how proud they are of me," she said. "Not that I'm some big hero, but it's a great relief to know why my life had been going so crummy before."★









