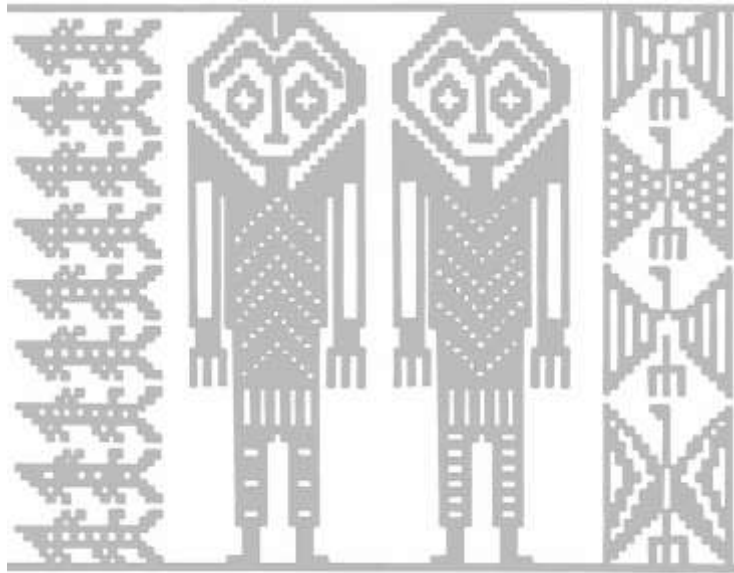


# Indigenous Peoples of The Dalles Region

Historic Photos and Objects  
from Maryhill Museum of Art



## Indigenous Peoples of The Dalles Region

Maryhill Museum of Art is situated in what is often called the “middle” Columbia River region—that portion of the waterway that extends from above the mouth of the Snake River to near present-day Bonneville Dam. Local Indigenous people refer to the Columbia as *Nch’i-wána*, or “the big river.” Their ancestors lived and prospered beside the Columbia and its tributaries for generations, enjoying the generous resources that it provides.

Treaties negotiated in 1855 established the Yakama Reservation in what is now Washington and the Umatilla and Warm Springs Reservations in present-day Oregon. Under the Walla Walla Treaty, Middle Columbia River peoples residing north of the river were among 14 tribes and bands assigned to the Yakama Reservation. Groups living generally southeast of the mouth of the Snake River—Umatilla, Walla Walla, and Cayuse—were assigned to the Umatilla Reservation. The Warm Springs Reservation was created for seven bands living south of the Columbia as created by the Treaty with the Tribes of Middle Oregon. A community of Paiutes was moved to the Warm Springs Reservation in 1879 and afterward.

Although the treaties mandated that the Indigenous population living in The Dalles region relocate to the reservations, some continued living on or near the Columbia. These include members of the Pine Creek and Rock Creek bands, Wishxams, and Klikitats in Washington State, and Wyams, Teninos, and Wascos in Oregon. These peoples are tied socially, culturally, and politically to the reservations, but they maintain strong ties to each other and to their shared experiences as river people.

The Dalles region has long been home to rich artistic traditions. Prior to the construction of the Columbia River dams and the flooding of ancient habitation sites, petroglyphs could be seen on many cliffs along the river. Archaeological activity has revealed a centuries-old Columbia River tradition of stone carving that included both functional objects and figurative sculpture. Carved wooden spoons with birds and animals on their stems are unique to the area, as are distinctive bowls that were crafted from mountain sheep horns.

The region's coiled cedar-root berry baskets are often associated with Klickitat people. Wasco and Wishxam peoples created their own signature baskets with designs showing "ancestor figures" (human-looking characters with large heads, big eyes, and exposed ribs), as well as condors and giant white sturgeon.

The Dalles of the Columbia River can justifiably be called the "cradle of Northwest history." For centuries, nearby Celilo Falls was home to one of the most important fisheries in Indigenous North America. At the same time, the surrounding area hosted one of the continent's premier aboriginal trade centers. Two hundred years ago—late in a regional human history that stretches back for eons—the Columbia became a highway for European and American explorers, fur traders, and overland emigrants. The written descriptions that these interlopers produced were eventually superseded by the work of diverse photographers who left visual records of the same peoples and landscape.

This online exhibition profiles an area extending from Rock Creek (eastern Klickitat County, Washington) to the Warm Springs Indian Reservation and Cascade Locks, Oregon. It features photographs by Albert H. Barnes (1876–1920); Fred Andrew "F.A." Young (1860–1922); Fannie B. Wright Van Duyn (1867–1929); Louise E. Ruch Miller (1871–1955); Iris Markley Hurst (1880–1947); Benjamin Clayton "B.C." Markham (1881–1942); and J.W. Thompson (1890–1978).

Steven L. Grafe, Ph.D.  
Curator of Art





Albert H. Barnes (American, 1876–1920), ***Native Men near Celilo Falls***, c. 1910; Gift of Samuel Hill, Collection of Maryhill Museum of Art, 1938.1.339

Albert Henry Barnes is well-known for his turn-of-the-20th-century photographic record of rural and urban landscapes in Western Washington. He worked out of studios in the Tacoma area and from 1905–1915, many of his images were published in local newspapers. He also wrote articles for diverse photography magazines, railroad publications and travel books.

Barnes first visited the greater Dalles region in 1910, when he photographed Sam Hill's growing agricultural enterprise near Maryhill, Washington. He returned to the area in 1911 and 1912 to record the experimental roads that Hill was building on his property. In 1915, Barnes made four trips to the Columbia River Gorge to photograph the construction of the Columbia River Highway and its surrounding landscape.



Louise Van Pelt Spino (Wasco, 1897–1972), **Twined Flat Bag** (recto and verso), c. 1925, cornhusk, dogbane (*Apocynum cannabinum*), cotton string, and leather, 8½" x 10" (without handle); Gift of Mary Underwood Lane, Collection of Maryhill Museum of Art, 1940.1.97b

Historically, Wasco and Wishxam peoples lived south and north of the Columbia River near present-day The Dalles. They were famous for the dried salmon that they traded to their upriver and downriver neighbors. They are also known for circular, twined root-digging bags—sally bags—that are among their signature works. Many of these display repeating figures that include condors, sturgeon, quadrupeds, and humanoid characters (“ancestor figures”) with large eyes and exposed ribs.

This flat bag is unusual because it bears motifs that are usually reserved for sally bags. Its maker can be identified by the diverse designs that were used in the wings of the giant condors. Louise Spino learned the full-turn twining technique from her Wasco mother and grandmother and she wove sturgeon, ancestor figures, and other ancient images of the Columbia River Gorge into her fine bags. She was the last known weaver to use this weaving technique prior to its revival in the 1990s.







Fred Andrew "F.A." Young (American, 1860–1922), *Warm Springs Women*, 1902; Gift of Mr. & Mrs. Burt Morse, Collection of Maryhill Museum of Art, 1951.6.2

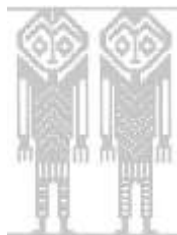
Fred Andrew Young was a central Oregon sheep rancher and one-time president of the Oregon Woolgrower's Association. His ranch was located near Ridgeway, Oregon, about a dozen miles southwest of Shaniko, near the junction of U.S. Routes 97 and 197. Young was in a livestock partnership with his father for almost two decades prior to 1900. When they sold their outfit in 1904, they owned 7,000 acres of land, 16,000 sheep, and miscellaneous other livestock. Young then moved to Owyhee County in far southwestern Idaho. In 1920, he was convicted of second-degree murder in the death of a Grand View, Idaho, rancher during an altercation over the price of honeybees. Two years later, he escaped from the Silver City, Idaho, jail and elected to commit suicide with a stolen pistol rather than be captured by the posse that was trailing him.

Young developed an avocational interest in photography before 1900. A limited number of his photo prints of Shaniko townspeople and the residents of the Warm Springs Indian Reservation are in circulation.



Fred Andrew "F.A." Young (American, 1860–1922), *Warm Springs Men*, 1902; Gift of Mr. & Mrs. Burt Morse, Collection of Maryhill Museum of Art, 1951.6.8

These men were identified by the donor on the reverse of the original photograph. From left to right they are: Big Frank Queahpana (Red Grizzly Bear, "Head man at Warm Springs and father to Mrs. Mae Peters"); Henry Stwire; Johnny David; Charlie Hellon; Willie Leonard; James Wilson Thompson; Jackson Culps; Old Man; and an individual identified as Announcer (or whip man).





Fred Andrew "F.A." Young, (American, 1860–1922), *Warm Springs Family*, 1902; Gift of Mr. & Mrs. Burt Morse, Collection of Maryhill Museum of Art, 1951.6.16

A caption on the reverse of this photo identifies the man in the fur cap as "Antelope." His son-in-law, daughter, and grandchild appear at left and his wife and another daughter are seen on the right.

A group of ten F.A. Young photos of Warm Springs people are in the collection of the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. They were probably forwarded there by the photographer when he was seeking to copyright them in 1902. The Library of Congress copy of this image is titled "Indian Joe and family."

Young's mention of Shaniko, Oregon, on the face of his photographs references the settlement that was nearest to his residence. His ranch was located near Ridgeway, a now-defunct post office (1892–1905) that was located about five miles east of the eastern boundary of the Warm Springs Indian Reservation.





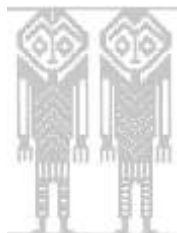
Fred Andrew "F.A." Young (American, 1860–1922), *Warm Springs Women on Horseback*, 1902; Gift of Mr. & Mrs. Burt Morse, Collection of Maryhill Museum of Art, 1951.6.10





Fred Andrew "F.A." Young (American, 1860–1922), ***Charlie Pistolhead on Horseback***, 1902; Gift of Mr. & Mrs. Burt Morse, Collection of Maryhill Museum of Art, 1951.6.5

Charlie Pistolhead was the father of famed Yakama beadworker Elise Pistolhead. According to his descendants, he was originally from Pine Creek, which flows into the Columbia River about four miles upriver from Roosevelt, Washington (40 miles east of Maryhill Museum of Art).





Fred Andrew "F.A." Young (American, 1860–1922), *Warm Springs Women*, 1902; Gift of Mr. & Mrs. Burt Morse, Collection of Maryhill Museum of Art, 1951.6.3

An inscription on the reverse of this photograph identifies these women (left to right) as Mrs. Baker, Lily Pendleton Harding (*Tsitwats*), and Addie Cushingway. Mrs. Baker and Lily Harding were sisters.





**Left:** Possibly Mary Hunt Cayuse (Klikitat, c. 1843–c. 1916), **Cedar-Root Berry Basket**, 1900–1915, western red cedar (*Thuja plicata*) and bear grass (*Xerophyllum tenax*), 16¼” high x 17¼” diameter; Gift of Teunis J. Wyers Jr. and Jan Wyers, Collection of Maryhill Museum of Art, 2015.7.18

**Center:** Mary Hunt Cayuse (Klikitat, c. 1843–c. 1916), **Cedar-Root Berry Basket**, 1900–1915, western red cedar (*Thuja plicata*) and bear grass (*Xerophyllum tenax*), 10” high x 8½” diameter; Gift of Teunis J. Wyers Jr. and Jan Wyers, Collection of Maryhill Museum of Art, 2015.7.16

**Right:** Lucy SlimJim (Klikitat, active early 20th century), **Cedar-Root Berry Basket**, c. 1920, western red cedar (*Thuja plicata*), bear grass (*Xerophyllum tenax*), and buckskin, 13½” tall by 11¾” diameter; Gift of Teunis J. Wyers Jr. and Jan Wyers, Collection of Maryhill Museum of Art, 2015.7.10

Coiled baskets like these are called “berry baskets” because Klikitat people and their neighbors used them for temporary storage during huckleberry harvests in the Cascade Mountains. The loops (or “ears”) around the rim were used to tie down evergreen or other foliage that protected the berries and kept them in place when full baskets were being moved.

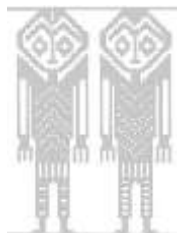
The occasional cedar-root berry basket has a pictorial element woven onto its surface. The basket at right shows a woman wearing a Wasco-style headdress.





Fannie B. Wright Van Duyn (American, 1867–1929), *Klem-e-tose (Warm Springs)*, c. 1901; Gift of Gary Goodwin, Collection of Maryhill Museum of Art, 1991.6.23

Fannie Van Duyn was a resident of Tygh Valley, Oregon, for 40 years. Her husband, Charles, plotted the town in 1892 and owned a general store there from 1892–1920s. Although she was an amateur photographer, some of Van Duyn's images, including others seen here, were published in a July 1907 *Pacific Monthly* article titled, "The Undomesticated Indian as seen on the Warm Springs Reservation."



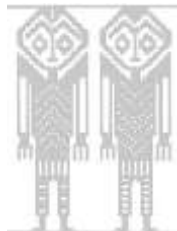


Fannie B. Wright Van Duyn (American, 1867–1929), ***Sow-e-kus (Warm Springs)***, c. 1901; Gift of Gary Goodwin, Collection of Maryhill Museum of Art, 1991.6.30





Fannie B. Wright Van Duyn (American, 1867–1929), *Tat-toon-my with Doll (Warm Springs)*, c. 1901; Gift of Gary Goodwin, Collection of Maryhill Museum of Art, 1991.6.31





Klickitat maker, **Wedding Veil**, c. 1890, glass and metal beads, dentalium shells, thimbles, bells, and Chinese coins, 22" x 10"; Collection of Maryhill Museum of Art, 1989.13.1

Wedding veils like this one are specific to people groups living near The Dalles of the Columbia River—especially Wascos and Wishxams. They were family heirlooms that passed down through generations and were worn at a young woman's betrothal and again during her wedding ceremony. This veil was worn by a Klickitat woman named Talwasa at her 1890 wedding.

Dentalium shells (*Antalis pretiosum*) are ocean mollusks that resemble small elephant tusks. Historically, they were important Northwest Coast and Columbia River Plateau trade items. The shells—also known as *hiixwa* or *hiaqua*—were symbols of status and wealth and they were used on clothing, personal accessories, and as jewelry. During the fur trade era, they were also used as currency, with the standard being 40 shells to a fathom-length (six feet). Most dentalium that circulated in the regional Indigenous trade network came from the west coast of Vancouver Island and was traded south to the Columbia River. The shells were bartered in The Dalles/Celilo area every summer and made their way east—to the Great Plains—from there.





Louise E. Ruch Miller (American, 1871–1955), *Indian Women near The Dalles, Oregon*, c. 1900; H.G. Miller Photographs Collection, Organized Lot 866, Neg. No. 39567, Oregon Historical Society Research Library, Portland

Louise Ruch Miller was the daughter of early white settlers in The Dalles. Her father, George Ruch, was owner of the city's Pioneer Bakery, served as Wasco County Treasurer from 1870–1892, and was involved with The Dalles Electric Light Company from 1888–1892.

Louise's husband, Herbert George "H.G." Miller (1877–1962), was co-owner of *The Dalles Weekly Chronicle* in 1909–1915 and served as printing instructor at The Dalles High School. He was also an inventor and secured several patents, including one for an apple corer and another for a vegetable slicer/drying mechanism. H.G. Miller was an amateur photographer and he is often given credit for some his wife's photos.



Louise E. Ruch Miller (American, 1871–1955), *Indian Woman near The Dalles, Oregon*, c. 1900; H.G. Miller Photographs Collection, Organized Lot 866, Neg. No. 39569, Oregon Historical Society Research Library, Portland

According to information attached to some of her photos, women and girls from the Celilo Falls area occasionally dressed in their finery and posed for Mrs. Miller.





**Left and center:** Cascade (Watlala) or Klikitat maker, **Octopus Bag** (recto and verso), 1870–1900, glass beads, and cotton string, 16¾" x 7"; Gift of Mary Underwood Lane, Collection of Maryhill Museum of Art, 1940.1.68

**Right:** Cascade (Watlala) or Klikitat maker, **Beaded Fabric Bag**, c. 1890, velvet, cotton fabric, glass beads, dentalium, metal buttons, and cotton thread, 18½" x 7½" (exclusive of handle); Gift of Mary Underwood Lane, Collection of Maryhill Museum of Art, 1940.1.65

The Underwood family descended from the daughter of Cascade (Watlala) Chief Chenoweth and a local settler named Amos Underwood. Some of the couple's offspring identified with their Indigenous ancestors and others integrated into the white population. Over time, the extended family became known for skilled handiwork and both of these items are identified with family members. The tabbed bag incorporates historic Wasco-style basketry motifs into its design while the beaded cloth bag utilizes birds and flowers that was probably taken from a late-19th-century women's magazine or book of popular embroidery patterns. Underwood material from the turn of the 20th century displays both types of work.

The Watlala people were part of the 1855 Treaty with the Tribes of Middle Oregon. They were subsequently numbered among the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs and were removed to that reservation.





Iris Markley Hurst (American, 1880–1947), *Indian Madonna*, 1913; Collection of Maryhill Museum of Art, N/N dup322

Iris Markley was a Hood River, Oregon, photographer. She was born in Kansas and came to Hood River with her family in the late 1880s. She was operating a photo studio in Hood River at the time this photo was taken. Markley moved to Los Angeles prior to 1920. An inscription of the reverse of the original photo says, “This is Lucille Corbett. Raised in Hood River, Oregon, she became a flu victim in 1918. She was the great-granddaughter of Colatchen, [who is] spoken of in history of early days.”

Lucille was born about 1894 and her name is given in period censuses as Cecilia, Sicilie, and Celia. Colatchen was a leader among Middle Columbia River Chinookan-speaking people and he lived in a village that was situated west of present-day Underwood, Washington. Lucille’s father, Peter Corbett, was a grandson of Colatchen and a second cousin to Ellen Underwood, who was well known locally for her woven beadwork. Colatchen was the brother of the Cascades chief, Chenoweth, who was hanged with eight others during the 1855–1856 Yakama War.





**Left:** Columbia River Plateau (possibly Watlala or Klikitat) artist, **Beaded Bag**, c. 1880, wool, glass beads, cotton cloth, buckskin, and cotton thread, 10½" tall (exclusive of handle); Gift of Mary Underwood Lane, Collection of Maryhill Museum of Art, 1940.1.73

**Center:** Columbia River Plateau (possibly Watlala or Klikitat) artist, **Beaded Bag** (recto and verso), c. 1880, wool, glass beads, cotton cloth, and cotton thread, 7½" x 8½"; Gift of Mary Underwood Lane, Collection of Maryhill Museum of Art, 1940.1.77

**Right:** Columbia River Plateau (possibly Watlala or Klikitat) artist, **Beaded Bag** (recto and verso), c. 1880, wool, glass beads, cotton cloth, and cotton thread, 10½" x 9¾"; Gift of Mary Underwood Lane, Collection of Maryhill Museum of Art, 1940.1.80

Glass beads were first traded into the interior Pacific Northwest after coastal peoples acquired them from seagoing fur traders. By 1805, Lewis and Clark found that blue and white Chinese beads were highly desirable in Columbia River Plateau communities. For the next half-century, most of the glass beads that were available to Plateau residents came from the Hudson's Bay Company and other fur-trading enterprises. Much of this stock came from select Chinese sources and from British suppliers whose wares were manufactured in France, Italy, and Bohemia (Czech Republic). The seed beads that are now popularly associated with Indigenous expressions first appeared in the Columbia River region during the middle of the 19th century. Their arrival encouraged the creation of a regional style of geometric decoration that adorned clothing, personal accessories, and horse gear. As the Plateau's geometric beadwork tradition developed after 1860, so did a concurrent figurative tradition. The earliest examples of Plateau pictorial beadwork reproduce floral designs. These were initially worked in applique on wool trade cloth backgrounds, as shown on these bags.



Benjamin Clayton "B.C." Markham (American, 1881–1942), *Oregon Indian Women in Native Costume of Beaded Buckskin*, c. 1930; Collection of Maryhill Museum of Art, N/N dup291

B.C. Markham moved to The Dalles, Oregon, in 1925, after pursuing a career in photography in Portland and elsewhere. During the 1920s, photographic activities in The Dalles were controlled by the Gifford Studio (although its namesake had sold the business to Charles Lamb in 1908). Markham thrived nonetheless and specialized in photographing ranchers and farmers throughout Central Oregon.

Although his photo studio survived the stock market crash of 1929, a lack of customers forced Markham to sell his business to Everett Olmstead in 1933. He retained most of his negative inventory, returned to Portland, and continued selling postcards there.

The woman at right is identified as "Mrs. Andy, mother of Walter Spedis."



**Left:** Columbia River Plateau (possibly Klikitat) maker, **Beaded Flat Bag**, c. 1905, glass beads, buckskin, corduroy, cotton cloth, and cotton thread, 16½" x 13¾" (exclusive of handle); Gift of Teunis J. Wyers Jr. and Jan Wyers, Collection of Maryhill Museum of Art, 2015.7.76

**Center:** Columbia River Plateau (possibly Klikitat) maker, **Beaded Flat Bag**, c. 1920, glass beads, buckskin, cotton cloth, and cotton thread, 15¾" H x 13½" (exclusive of handle); Gift of Teunis J. Wyers Jr. and Jan Wyers, Collection of Maryhill Museum of Art, 2015.7.76

**Right:** Columbia River Plateau (possibly Klikitat) maker, **Beaded Flat Bag**, c. 1910, glass beads, buckskin, wool cloth, cotton cloth, and cotton thread, 14¼" x 12" (exclusive of handle); Gift of Teunis J. Wyers Jr. and Jan Wyers, Collection of Maryhill Museum of Art, 2015.7.62

Floral bead embroidery is only one aspect of an all-encompassing Columbia River tradition that is often referred to as "Plateau pictorial beadwork." This descriptive label embraces a diverse array of subjects, including vegetation, horses, various wildlife species, religious imagery, rodeo motifs, patriotic themes, and genre scenes. Casual observers—especially those who are unfamiliar with Plateau peoples and their 19th and 20th-century histories—often misinterpret this visual tradition. They conclude that pictorial beadwork represents an art form that has been produced specifically for sale to outsiders, but this has never been the case.





J.W. Thompson (American, 1890–1978), *Irving Pinkham and Willard Skahan Fishing at Celilo Falls*, c. 1955; J.W. Thompson Collection, Maryhill Museum of Art, 1997.10.601

Celilo Falls was a horseshoe-shaped waterfall that was adjacent to the south bank of the Columbia River near present-day Celilo Village. The falls were the focal point of a nine-mile-long fishery through which more than 15 million fish passed each year.

For millennia, Indigenous people built wooden platforms and used dipnets and long spears to catch fish at Celilo Falls. The right to place fishing scaffolds at the falls was inherited and passed from one generation to the next. The fishing was done by men while women collected, cleaned, butchered, and dried the catch.

Dried salmon was used to make *ch'lay* (salmon flour or salmon sugar), an important protein food and regional trade item. The Celilo Falls area was at the center of a vast intertribal trade network. People from throughout the Columbia River Plateau traded there and exchanged goods that came from as far away as Alaska, the Great Plains, and the American Southwest.

The Army Corps of Engineers began construction of The Dalles Dam in 1952. It was part of a network of dams and locks that were intended to provide hydroelectric power and allow marine traffic to move freely up and down the Columbia River. On March 10, 1957, the reservoir behind the dam flooded Celilo Falls and created what is now Lake Celilo.

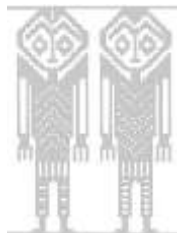




J.W. Thompson (American, 1890–1978), ***Catherine Rae Cooking Salmon for Feast, Celilo Village***, 1956; J.W. Thompson Collection, Maryhill Museum of Art, 1997.10.2042

The ten-mile stretch of the Columbia River between Celilo Falls and The Dalles was historically the river's most important fishery. Secondary sites included the Cascades (near Cascade Locks, Oregon), Priest Rapids (above Tri-Cities, Washington), and Kettle Falls (30 miles south of the Canadian border). After 1879, commercial fish wheels in The Dalles-Celilo Falls region began harvesting huge amounts of fish. The wheels were outlawed by Oregon in 1926 and by Washington in 1934.

The Celilo Falls fishery was generally active between late April and late October and saw five or six distinct salmon runs each year. Fishing was regulated by a salmon chief who had the authority to open and close fishing there on both a daily and annual basis. Fishing generally ceased each night and did not resume until late the following morning. Neither did it occur during funerals or—during the 20th century—on Sundays.





J.W. Thompson (American, 1890–1978), ***Mrs. Kelly George Digging Bitterroot***, c. 1955; J.W. Thompson Collection, Maryhill Museum of Art, 1997.10.625

Bitterroot (*Lewisia rediviva*) is an important root food. When sacred foods are named during regional thanksgiving feasts, it is mentioned after water and salmon but before other roots and huckleberries.

The bitterroot harvest begins after the celebration of the spring root feast. Women then begin collecting roots at their preferred seasonal gathering places. Bitterroot appears at low elevations in April and can be found at some higher elevations two months later. Women may gather 60 or more pounds of bitterroot in a day. They are then peeled and sun-dried for later use.





J.W. Thompson (American, 1890-1978), ***Louise Weaseltail, Sally Dick, and Rosalie Harry Picking Huckleberries near Mt. Adams***, c. 1955; J.W. Thompson Collection, Maryhill Museum of Art, 1997.10.1735

Huckleberries (*Vaccinium* genus) are an important food for Columbia River peoples. For thousands of years, areas south and west of Mt. Adams have been preferred locations for berry harvesting. Berry growth was sustained and encouraged using controlled burns that provided the open areas that huckleberries need if they are to flourish.

Historically, families left the river each August to travel to berry fields on the slopes of the Cascade Mountains. They remained there until October. A first foods feast follows the initial ceremonial harvest of the year's first berries and precedes the start of more general berry-picking activity.

Huckleberries are among the traditional foods whose collection is guaranteed in the 1855 treaties between Columbia River peoples and the United States Government. A 1932 handshake agreement between the Yakama Nation and the U.S. Forest Service reserves important berry fields near Mt. Adams exclusively for Indigenous use. The resource is nonetheless threatened with overharvesting by non-Indigenous commercial berry pickers.

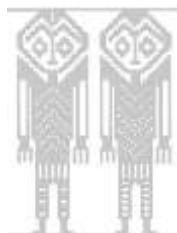




J.W. Thompson (American, 1890–1978), ***Root Feast Encampment at Mouth of Rock Creek***, 1953; J.W. Thompson Collection, Maryhill Museum of Art, 1997.10.1491

Root feasts are held in the Mid-Columbia region during March and April. After the Creator's beneficence has been acknowledged and the first food feasts have been celebrated, families begin gathering the foods they will preserve and eat during the coming year.

Rock Creek flows south into the Columbia River about 20 miles east of Maryhill Museum. Some members of the Rock Creek community are enrolled on the Yakama Reservation and others are enrolled at Warm Springs. Additional Rock Creek people reside on trust lands north of Goldendale, Washington. A permanent longhouse is situated on Rock Creek, a couple of miles above its confluence with the Columbia River.







J.W. Thompson (American, 1890–1978), ***Stick Game at Rock Creek***, 1955; J.W. Thompson Collection, Maryhill Museum of Art, 1997.10.717

The Bone or Stick Game (*palyúut*) is a spirited gambling game that has been played by Columbia River peoples and their neighbors since ancient times. The names for the game come from the bones that a team attempts to hide from its opponents and the sticks that are awarded to a team for successfully hiding the bones or guessing their location.

A team's "handler" moves two bones from hand to hand while his or her teammates seek to distract their opponents with songs and gestures. The bones change sides after an opposing team correctly guesses the hands in which they are hidden. Play continues until one side has won all the sticks. The wagers—which are left in bundles on the ground between the facing teams—are then removed by the winners.





J.W. Thompson (American, 1890–1978), ***Ella Jean Billy, Mavis George, Matilda Howtopat, and Mabel Shike, Rock Creek Longhouse***, c. 1955; J.W. Thompson Collection, Maryhill Museum of Art, 1997.10.2761

J.W. Thompson was a Seattle-area high school teacher. After retiring, he spent much of the 1950s photographing the Pacific Northwest's Indigenous peoples. He took many photos at Celilo Falls and in communities near the Columbia River, recording regional food gathering activities, root feasts, dances, and parades.

Thompson ultimately produced thousands of 35mm slides and black and white negatives of Indigenous people in Washington State. Nearly 3,000 of his eastern Washington images are now in the collection of Maryhill Museum of Art. A similar number of photographs of western Washington peoples are at the Museum of History and Industry in Seattle.

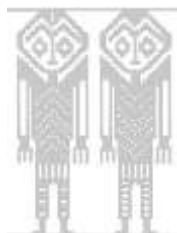




J.W. Thompson (American, 1890–1978), **Walter Cloud, Tony Umtuch, and Johnny Billy**, c. 1955; J.W. Thompson Collection, Maryhill Museum of Art, 1997.10.1360

J.W. Thompson started photographing Indigenous people in the interior Northwest in earnest after attending an event related to the centennial of the 1855 Treaty. He then began visiting local Indigenous communities and soon learned that dancing was a part of most social occasions. He subsequently photographed dancers at Celilo, Rock Creek, Wapato, Toppenish, Satus, and other locations. Events at these longhouses were attended by Indigenous people from throughout the region and Thompson's photographs shown many of the same individuals in multiple locations and during different years.

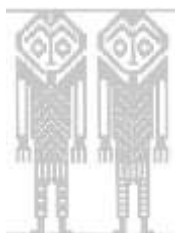
Thompson sought to take photos that were “interesting and authentic.” He was esteemed for asking permission before taking photographs and for sending copies of his images to those who asked for them.





J.W. Thompson (American, 1890–1978), ***Dancers at Cleveland, Washington: Franky and Pat Stevens, Lester Onepennee, and Others***, c. 1955; J.W. Thompson Collection, Maryhill Museum of Art, 1997.10.2478

Cleveland is in eastern Klickitat County, several miles west of Bickleton, Washington. It is in the upper reaches of Rock Creek and Indigenous celebrations have been held there for many years.







J.W. Thompson (American, 1890–1978), ***Elsie Pistolhead, Jennie Wesley, and Ida Shawaway with Children, including Earl and Clifford Wesley***, c. 1955; J.W. Thompson Collection, Maryhill Museum of Art, 1997.10.2025

Elsie Pistolhead (left rear) was known for her knowledge of Indigenous oral history and traditional arts. She routinely attended public events and displayed her collection of baskets and beadwork at regional gatherings such as the Pendleton Round-Up—allowing the public to better understand and enjoy the rich creative traditions of Columbia River peoples.

Elsie's father, Jim Pistolhead, was from Pine Creek, which flows south into the Columbia River about 40 miles east of Maryhill Museum of Art.





Rock Creek (Yakama) maker, **Fringed Gauntlets**, c. 1950, 16 $\frac{7}{8}$ " long; Gift of Art Dodd and Diane Plumridge and Scott and Pam Evans, Collection of Maryhill Museum of Art, 2016.2.1a&b

Leather gauntlets have a long history in Europe and Asia, but they did not arrive in the American West until after the Civil War. By the end of the 19th century, gauntlets with decorated cuffs were being made for use within Indigenous communities and for sale to outsiders.

These "George" gauntlets probably belonged to George Gibson (c. 1885–c. 1960s). J.W. Thompson photographs of Gibson, taken in the 1950s, show him wearing a matching vest—beaded in the same palette and with the same woman in a canoe, birds, and salmon. Gibson was affiliated with the Rock Creek Band and lived there late in his life. During the 1960s and '70s, much of that community was moved to a settlement called "Georgeville" that is eight or nine miles north of Goldendale, Washington.



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