Still Waters Run Deep

The Salish word for Spring translates to “a Time of Gathering”. The word for Summer means “a Time of Fishing.” We are now on the cusp between those two times. A lot of gathering took place on May 17 as the Kettle Falls Historical Center reopened for the first time in two years. A Fur Trade Encampment was going on at the same time. The Colville Confederated Tribes brought exhibits showing their history and language. There was even a band, the Planetary Refugees. But time does not stand still and several more events are happening in June.



Shaun Deller shows kids ways to start a fire.

The second anniversary of the opening of the Inchelium Cultural Research Center (ICRC) in Inchelium is on Friday June 13th from 11:00 to 3:00 PM. The center is located behind the Inchelium Community Store on the corner of Bridge Creek Rd and Short Cut Road. The ICRC was founded by Nancy Michel and local community supporters in June 2023. Nancy found the space they currently use to house an original collection of genealogical



documents from Mary Kaye Perkins Hale. Since Nancy's passing shortly after the dedication of the center, their collection has grown as well as their equipment, but the work is expanding with it. The event will feature speakers and a lot of items for sale including baskets and beadwork. Some of the items were made at the research center by volunteers. There are also very informative books on Sinixt history for sale. This is an important event and worth your time and money. (Incheliumcrc.org)

One week later, the Sinixt people and hundreds of others will gather on Native Land across Lake Roosevelt from the Kettle Falls Historical Center. There is no charge. This is a sacred ceremony to call the salmon back to their ancestral home. It is held annually on the summer solstice. Although the ceremony begins officially at 10 AM, it is best to arrive early to witness the arrival of the canoes from the 10th Annual Paddle to Sxwnitkw (Kettle Falls).



That journey starts in Revelstoke, BC. Another flotilla of canoes will be coming from the

south up the Columbia. They will arrive and be brought onshore before the ceremony begins. The canoes themselves are wonderful and include both dugout canoes, the pride of each tribe, and sturgeon nose canoes. Many conventional canoes of all sizes also arrive. Parking on site is limited so you are encouraged to park by the Kettle Falls Historical Center on St Paul's Mission Road. Shuttles will bring you to the ceremony site starting at 8:30 AM.

2025 is also the 200th anniversary of the establishment of Hudson's Bay Fort Colvile. The fort and the fur trade had lasting effects on the native population, the surrounding environment and ecology and on the economy going forward to now. Representatives from the Colville Confederated Tribes as well as the Spokan and Kalispel tribes have been invited to bring displays and their own trade goods to the Kettle Falls Historical Center on Saturday the 21st and Sunday the 22nd for a Native Culture Weekend. The Sinixt group from the Inchelium Cultural Research Center may also be present with informative books, crafts, posters etc. The Kettle Falls Historical Center Museum will be open from 10 to 4.



The Historical Center is well-worth a trip in itself. Since a flood from an overhead heating system in the winter of 2022-23, the museum has been completely rebuilt on the inside. New displays and artifacts from the older displays portray the life at Kettle Falls before the fur trade and the people and technology that came with the fur trade. The new venue features a tule mat lodge built by Shawn Brigman; a long dugout canoe built from a single cedar log; exact replica flintlock rifles built by students at Kettle Falls High School; murals by Native artist Michael George and so many other exhibits and historic pictures.

One of the newest items on display is an 8 ft model of a Columbia Boat. The original design evolved from one constructed by fur trade explorer and cartographer David Thompson in 1810. By the time Hudson's Bay Fort Colvile was established in 1825, the design was more sophisticated. These 30 to 40 foot boats could hold 3 to 4 tons of trade goods or furs and a crew of 10. Over a hundred of the were built at HBC Fort Colvile and they became the main cargo vehicle of the fur trade on the Columbia River. Colville High students Dane Hoogstad and Dallas Burt built the model with plans from Parks Canada and some lumber donated by Columbia Cedar.



With the waters of Lake Roosevelt drawn down to make room for spring meltwater, the ripples of the river near the Sxwnitkw site reveal where the current once swept over the quartzite boulders of the Kettle Falls. The waters and the people are calling the fish back. We will do well to join in this invocation and remember what it means to live here.

Shawn Brigman, Dallas Burt, Dane Hoogstad