

HISTORIC PHOTOGRAPHS: THE DRUM



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Charlie Swan, Makah cultural leader, Neah Bay, August 1945



In August of each year, the Makah people hold their annual Makah Days celebration at Neah Bay. In their 1945 festival, the Makah also celebrated the end of World War II, the imminent return of tribal members serving in the military, and the dedication of a new housing project on the reservation. Tribal leader Charlie Swan, whose son served in the Pacific, led the dancing. In this August photo, Swan wears a button blanket and wooden mask, and he holds a painted drum. Swan, who was well known for his dancing, had a dance troupe which gave performances throughout the Pacific Northwest. Negative Number: PI-23865



Indians in ceremonial costume, Seattle, 1931

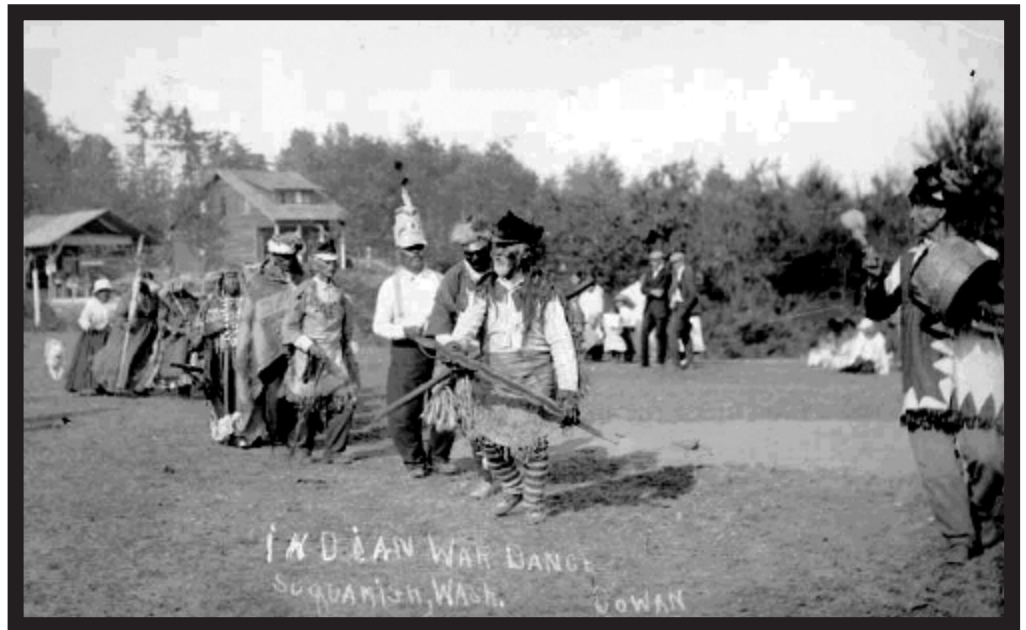
A group of Indians dressed in elaborate dance costume were photographed in the summer of 1931, possibly in connection with a display of Northwest Indian culture at the Seattle Exposition and Home Show. The two men on the right wear feather headgear typical of Coast Salish spirit dancers. The man on the left holds a painted drum which also appears in photographs of a group identified as Chief Blackthunder, Skykomish. This photograph is a valuable document as it was quite rare for people to display these costumes outside of their ceremonial context. Negative Number: PI-23790



Bone game at the Swinomish smokehouse, January 22, 1946

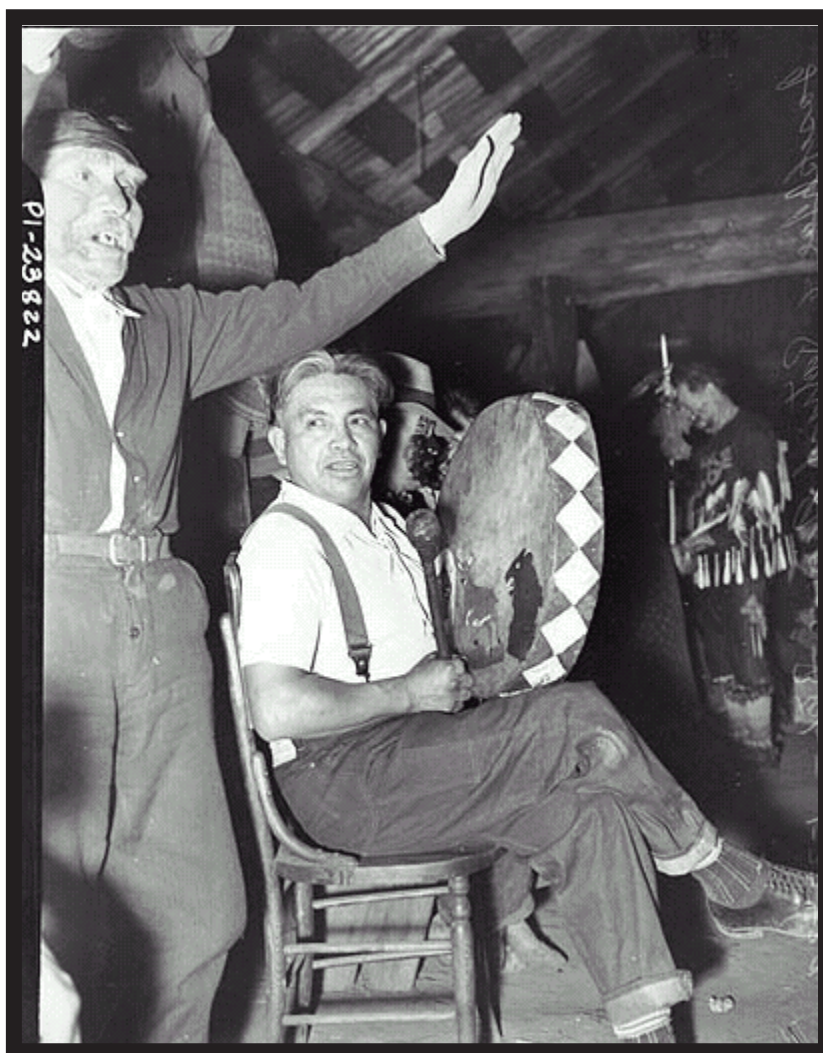
The January 22, 1946 Treaty Day celebration at the Swinomish Reservation at La Conner featured the gambling game known as slahal or the bone game. Two teams of players sat in lines facing one another, with one player holding the pair of bones and the others singing and beating time with sticks and a drum. This photograph shows one line of players. Abel D. Joe of Swinomish sits to the left of a group of tall scoring sticks placed in the ground. He chants while holding one of the game bones in his open hand. Two drummers sit to the left; other players sing and drum the floor with sticks. Negative Number: PI-23871

Man with drum leads a line of men & women in ceremonial dress in a dance. Men wear a variety of decorated hats and headresses, fringed tunics, women in dresses with necklaces and headbands. Various onlookers visible in background. Negative Number: NA1950



Suquamish dance during 'Chief Seattle Days', annual powwow at Suquamish, Washington, 1912

On January 22, 1939, Native American tribes living at the Swinomish Reservation, near La Conner, Washington, held their annual Treaty Day observance. The event marked the anniversary of the 1885 Treaty of Point Elliott which transferred their traditional lands to Washington Territory. In this photo, Patrick George (r.) beats on a drum while tribal elder Joseph Joe (l.) sings. According to the Seattle Post-Intelligencer article which accompanied the photo, the 1939 Treaty Day events included feasting, singing, and drumming as well as discussions of taxes and government promises. Negative Number: PI-23822



Swinomish drummer and singer at the Treaty Day observance, January 22, 1939

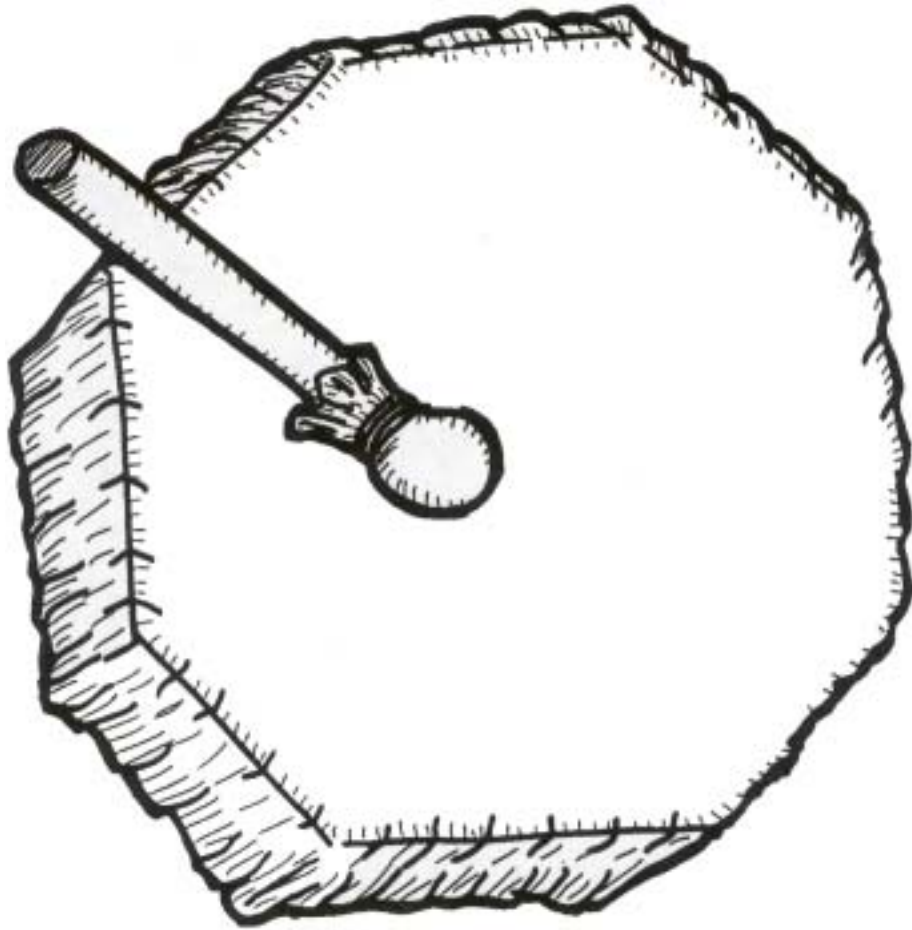


If My
Drum Could Talk

by Jerome Jainga
illustrated by Jeffrey Noel Jainga

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This book was developed by the Northwest Native American Curriculum Project, sponsored by The Evergreen Center for Educational Improvement at The Evergreen State College and the Office of Indian Education at the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. The project was partially funded by the Washington State Higher Education Coordinating Board.

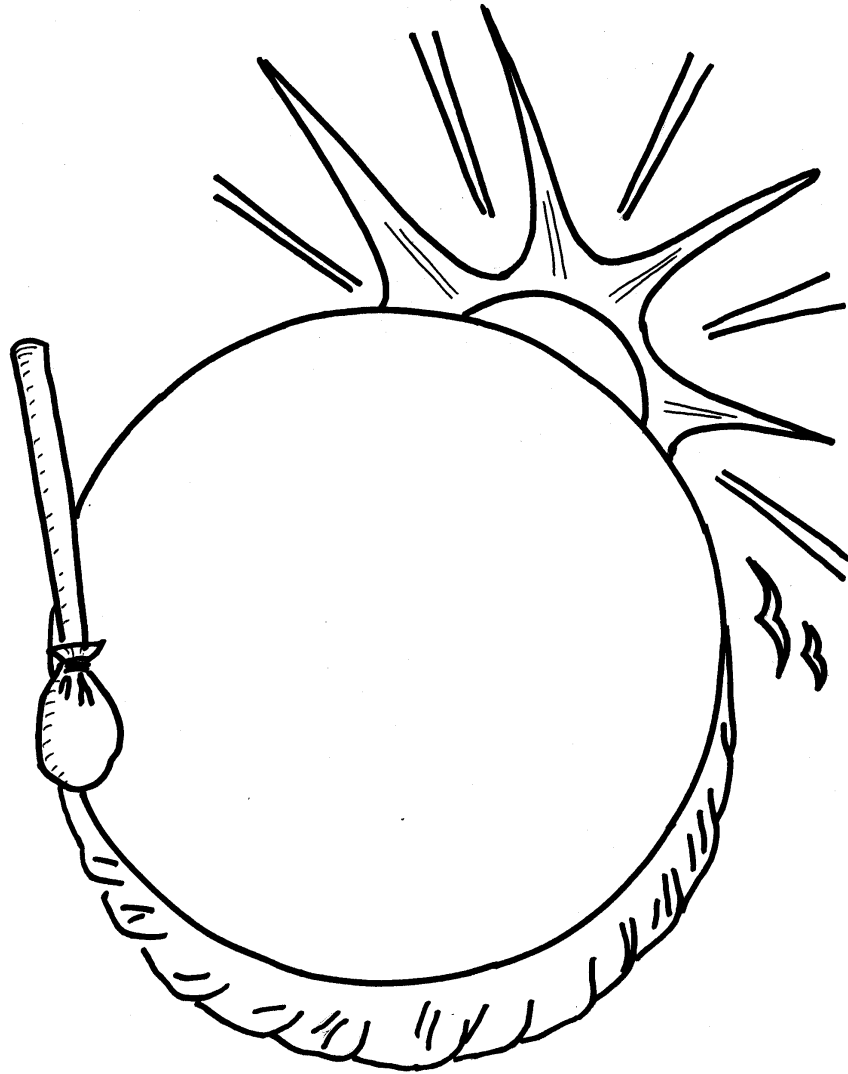


As I beat my drum, I think and I wonder, 'If my drum could talk, what would it say?'

"Boom! Boom, boom. I am your friend. I will always be with you, up to the very end."

"Boom! Boom, boom. Remember as you sing your songs, please always respect me and my beat will stay strong."

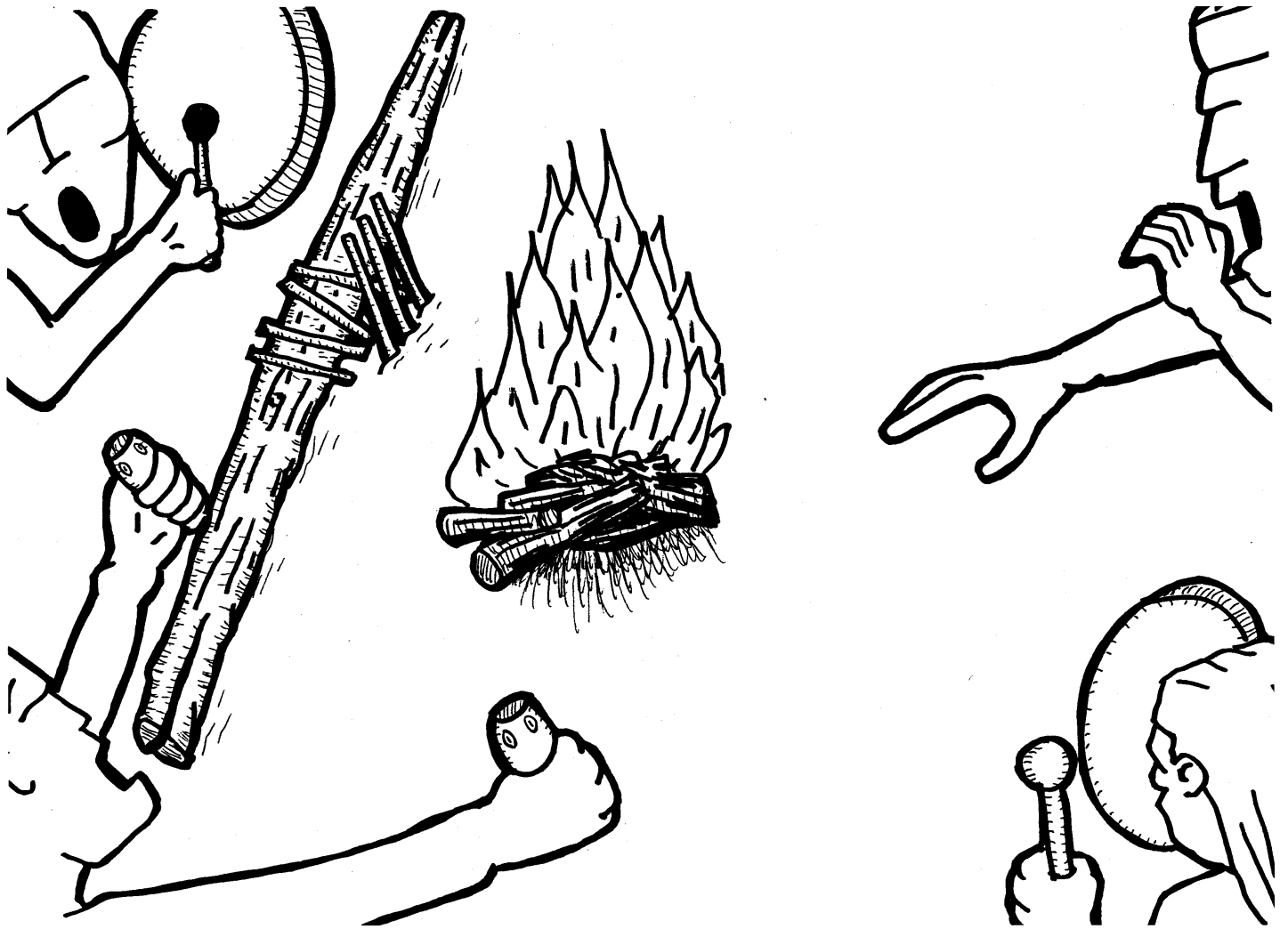
"Boom! Boom, boom. I'm the beat of your heart. Please use me to help you and I'll always do my part."



As I beat my drum, I think and I wonder, ‘If my drum could talk, what would it say?’ It might ask our people to remember to pray.

“Boom, boom. Like the beat of my heart, I pray Great Spirit help me to be strong and do my part.

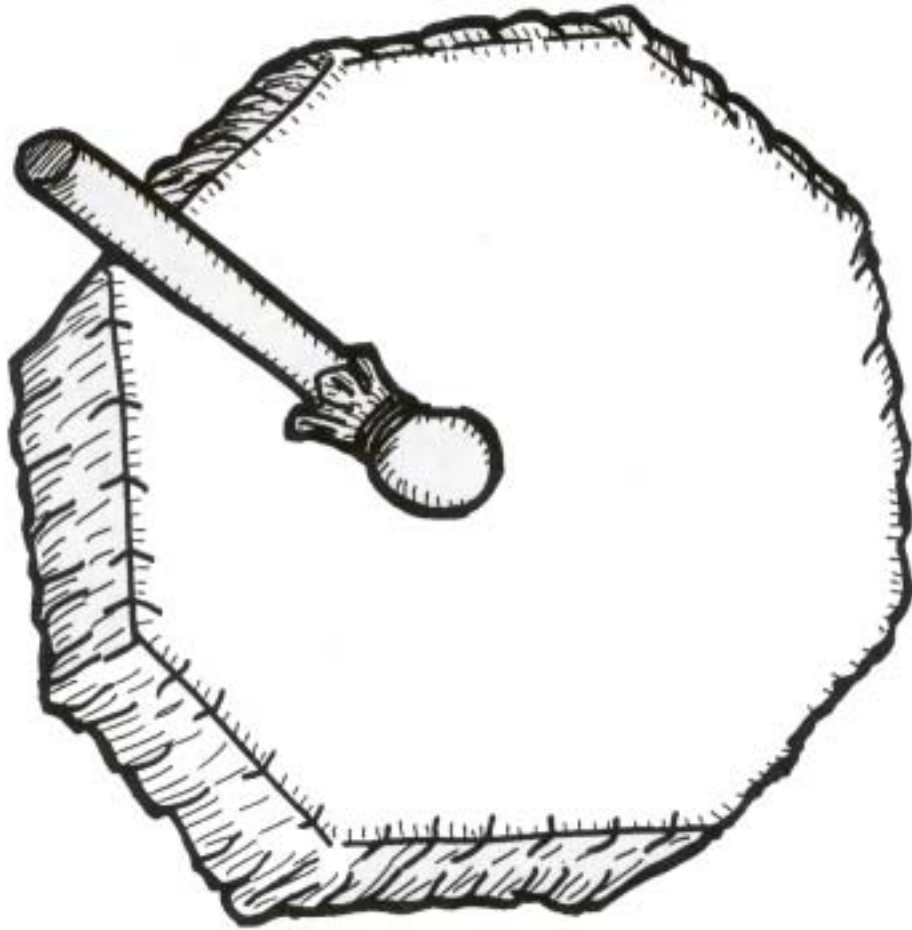
“Boom, boom. I am thankful to you, for giving me the strength in all that I do.”



As I beat my drum, I think and I wonder, ‘If my drum could talk, what would it say?’ It might help our people as they gather to play.

“Boom, boom. Boom, boom. Stay alert, and be quick, focus as we begin. Keep your eyes on the other team and don’t let them win.

“Boom, boom. Boom, boom. Sing loud and sing strong. Make every move count, don’t let us guess wrong.”



As I beat my drum, I think and I wonder, 'If my drum could talk, what would it say?'

"Boom! Boom, boom. I am your friend. I will always be with you, up to the very end."

"Boom! Boom, boom. Remember as you sing your songs, please always respect me and my beat will stay strong."

"Boom! Boom, boom. I'm the beat of your heart. Please use me to help you and I'll always do my part."

ABOUT THE AUTHOR AND ILLUSTRATOR

Jeffery Noel Jainga- Tsimshian

Mr. Jainga is a cartoonist, illustrator, videographer, editor and screenwriter. He has attended Seattle Central Community College's Advertising Art Program and DeAnza College in California for filmmaking. He has studied traditional Native Arts with David Boxley (Tsimshian Eagle), learning Alaskan Tsimshian 2-D design, mask and spoon carving and bentwood box construction. He worked for four years as a TV news camera soundperson at KOMO TV, for five years at LSI Logic Corporation editing, writing and producing video. He also took traditional native drum making classes with Mike Dangeli of Northwind Native Arts.

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In addition to being a cultural specialist for the Suquamish Tribe, Jerome Jainga works for the Marion Forsman-Boushie Early Learning Center. He designs culturally appropriate curriculum and programs for young people ages 3-12. He manages the educational delivery of the Lushootseed Language and acts as an advocate for Native American Education. He holds an Associate's degree in Pastry/Foods from South Seattle Community College and is currently working towards a Bachelors/Masters in Human Development and Native Studies from Pacific Oaks College. Mr. Jainga is also active in the Puget Salish Language Council, the Native Curriculum Development Team and Washington State OSPI.



Many Drums

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Canoes are drums.



We beat a landing song on our canoes.



Planks are drums.



We beat a gambling song on our plank drum.



Hands are drums.



We beat an honor song with our hands.



Boxes are drums.



We beat an entrance song on our box drum.



Hides are drums.



We sing a prayer song with our
hide drums.



Our hearts are drums.



Our drumbeats add to the rhythms
of all life.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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