1-30-20

**ANSWERS TO**

**FUR TRADE STATION QUESTIONS**

**Spokane House Interpretive Center Tour:**

1. Spokane House; the North West Company Canadian fur trading post built in 1810 and abandoned in 1826.
2. The Traders were not interested in taking the Indian’s land or changing their tribal spirituality. They wanted beaver and other furs, from the Indian’s land. There was a basic level of trust and respect between each people group; each group wanted something from the other.

Before the Traders arrived, the Indians only have stone tools. The fur trade brought metal items such as guns, knives, kettles and awls. Cloth and wool blankets were also much desired by the Indians.

1. This the Great Gathering Place was called Nin Chin Sen. The Spokane and other tribes came to fish the big salmon run each spring in the Spokane and Little Spokane Rivers. The tribes had been gathering here for thousands of years.

**Women of the Fur Trade:**

1. Metal kettles, fabric, metal knives, axes, flint and steels, wool blankets & awls.
2. Making clothes, moccasins for the family, care of children. Gathering and preparing food items, preparing hides for moccasins, clothing and for trade. Gathering Indian medicine plants, moving lodges, gathering firewood and building fires for cooking.

**Fires & Firearms:**

1. The steel striker
2. They were loaded from the muzzle
3. Mostly from England

**Trade Goods:**

1. Canoes and horses
2. The fur was in great demand to make gentlemen’s top hats and military hats in Europe.
3. Beaver pelts, referred to as “Made Beaver”

**Spokane Tribal History**:

1. According to science and Chief Lot’s story about 10,000 years.
2. Salmon, Steelhead, shellfish, deer, roots, berries, buffalo
3. Montana (hunting bison also called buffalo)

**The Beaver Hunters:**

1. About 60 beaver yearly.
2. Beaver dams, houses, brush and trees chewed off by beaver, “shiny” sticks with no bark in the water, scent mounds on the bank.
3. Generally six beaver traps

**The Men Working at the Trading Posts**

1. The Engagees loaded and unloaded bales of furs and trade goods in the canoes they paddled, and pack horse brigades. They cut firewood. They helped with the construction and repair of the trading post. They hunted game and tended the fish weirs.
2. The Mechanics were blacksmiths, carpenters, gunsmiths, tailors (sewing and repairing clothes).
3. The Clerks recorded the inventory of trade goods, and the ledger accounts of furs traded by the beaver hunters. They kept a journal of daily trading post activities.

**Horses in the Fur Trade**

1. The journals mention about 60 head of company owned horses at Spokane House.
2. The horses were traded from the Indians, particularly the Nez Perce, for beaver credits.
3. A horse was worth 18 beaver credits (MB) at Spokane House; the same as a trade gun.
4. The Spokane House horses were used to transport bales of trade goods to the trading post, and bales of furs out. Horses were ridden transportation for men, women and children.