

## ART • BOOKS

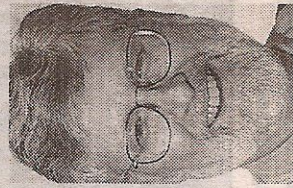
## Anthropology educator and Ishi researcher to speak Wednesday

Did Bryan "Pancho" Beavers, born in 1901, hold the key to Ishi's heritage? Before Beavers died in 1971, a researcher recorded his stories of Konkow Maidu culture (Beavers's father was Scots-American and Maidu). According to educator Richard Burrill, who obtained the transcripts, Ishi was not only Yahi/Yana, but Maidu (as many Maidu believe). Beavers said "the Maidu here were always at war with them [the Yana]. They didn't like 'em. They wasn't exactly at war. ... But the Yana didn't have any friends anyway."

Then, writes Burrill, "it is believed that in about 1830, the Yahi raiders kidnapped Beavers' great aunt from the fishing grounds downstream from Pulga on the Feather River. ... Upon coming of age, she was made the wife of one of the Yahi raiders named Yétati, a Northern Yana man. In about 1854, they produced a baby boy [who] remarkably survived the many massacres dealt the Yana. He became the man we have come to know as Ishi."

The fruits of Burrill's research are compellingly displayed in "Ishi's Untold Story In His First World: A Biography of the Last of His Band of Yahi Indians In North America" (\$22.95 in paperback from The Anthro Company; [www.ishifacts.com](http://www.ishifacts.com)). The large volume

### Biblio File



### DAN BARNETT

Book Columnist

contains a dozen maps and hundreds of historical photographs.

The author will talk about his research at 7 p.m. Wednesday, May 25 at Lyon Books in Chico.

"In 1864," Burrill writes, "a general massacre reduced [Ishi's] entire tribe to no more than fifty souls. Committed, and yet still proud, a small group of about twenty of Ishi's Yahi/Yana tribe retreated deeper into their remote hiding places along Antelope Creek, Mill Creek and Deer Creek. With few exceptions, the outside world was unaware of their existence."

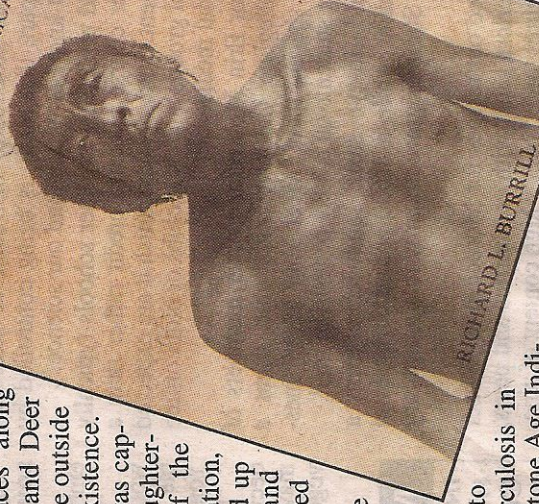
... On August 28, 1911, Ishi was captured at the Charles Ward Slaughterhouse, forty miles south of the tribe's homeland. For observation, the Indian stranger was locked up in the Butte County Jail and placed in the solitary and padded cell for the insane."

The book reconstructs "the secretive years" before Ishi's capture, and details his cultural heritage as well as "his inner strength and ability to assimilate." He died of tuberculosis in 1916, "the passing of the last Stone Age Indian in North America."

**Dan Barnett teaches philosophy at Butte College. To submit review copies of published books, please send email to [dannett@me.com](mailto:dannett@me.com). Columns are archived on the Musable blog, <http://dieleebee.blogspot.com>.**

### Ishi's Untold Story In His First World

A BIOGRAPHY  
OF THE LAST OF HIS BAND OF YAH I INDIANS  
IN NORTH AMERICA



RICHARD L. BURRILL