

WOODLAND WAYS

FOLK ARTS APPRENTICESHIPS
AMONG WISCONSIN INDIANS
1983–1993

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DEDICATION

To all of the Woodland Indian people whose masterful skills and insightful vision created the beautiful expressive works discussed herein.

Thank you for your willingness to share your work and its meaning, your fervor to perpetuate the traditions, and your patience to acquaint me, an ignorant outsider, with your perspectives and ways. The Woodland ways embody an approach to art from which all artists can benefit and a spirit everyone needs to understand.

— RICK MARCH

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FOLK ARTS APPRENTICESHIPS

INTRODUCTION

In 1983, when I assumed the new position of Wisconsin's Traditional and Ethnic Arts Coordinator, I learned of a pilot project sponsored by the Folk Arts division of the National Endowment for the Arts to create ten state-based apprenticeship programs. The apprenticeship idea fit my mission: to enhance appreciation for Wisconsin's traditional and ethnic arts and ensure their continued vitality. Determined to initiate one of the ten pilot programs, I met with folk arts specialists from around Wisconsin, discussed the options, and proposed a program that emphasized the creative genius of Wisconsin's longest resident groups—the Woodland Indian peoples. The state's traditional Woodland Indian artists practice some of the rarest and most endangered art forms in our cultural garden, but ones which appeal to all Wisconsinites. The proposal succeeded, and the Wisconsin Arts Board's Apprenticeship Program commenced in 1984-85.

Apprenticeships in the folk arts are an effort in "cultural conservation," an attempt to assure that rare and unique traditional skills are not forgotten but continue to be practiced in the cultural groups who have cultivated them. Following concepts from natural conservation, cultural conservationists liken a rare skill to an endangered species that requires special encouragement to survive in its natural habitat.

Efforts in cultural conservation are relatively new in the field of folklore, requiring long-term interaction with

the cultural groups involved. Cultural conservation goes beyond the standard documentary techniques of interviewing tradition bearers, recording their expressions, and contributing the resulting reports, photographs, audiotapes, and sometimes traditionally-made objects to archives and museums for study and preservation. I like to use the metaphor "making pickles" to describe this basic type of documentation, a process where traditions are put away in "jars" to be reclaimed later.

Where documentary work is like "making pickles," cultural conservation is like "planting cucumbers." Apprenticeships, for example, are an effort to keep planting the seeds, to keep those "vines" of tradition growing year after year. The cucumber blossoms may cross-pollinate, and other cucumber varieties may evolve over the years—becoming a little different from the old pickles put away years ago—but that kind of change is in the nature of an on-going process.

Since its inception in 1984-85, the Apprenticeship Program has proved an effective way to conserve traditions. It has guaranteed that master folk artists pass on their traditional skills, and related community values, through the time-honored technique of coaching an apprentice.

From 1985 through 1993, 120 apprenticeships were awarded sums from \$500 to \$2,000 to help cover the supplies, materials, and a fraction of the labor necessary

to teach traditional skills to one or a few people who had demonstrated the interest and talent to learn. More than 75 master artists and 150 apprentices benefited from the program, and in cases of exceedingly rare skills, the number of traditional practitioners doubled or tripled. Each year, new masters and apprentices applied, and the range of supported ethnic groups and skills expanded. With the sustained competition for apprenticeship awards, and with the ever-broadening constituencies they served, the program thrived—like cucumber vines putting out tendrils and climbing trellises.

I offer heartfelt thanks to the many people who made suggestions, shared contacts, assisted applicants, and generally helped to make the Apprenticeship Program a success: Nancy Lurie, Bob Smith, the late Cynthia La Counte, Veda Stone, Bess Hawes, Bernadine Tallmadge, Walter Bressette, Cass Joy, Truman Lowe, Bob Gough, Liz Franck, Paulette Werger, Al Pach, Peggy Grinvalsky, Gregg Guthrie, Debbie Daniels, Janet Malcolm, and Georgianna Ignace.

Special thanks go to the participants in the Apprenticeship Program, whose insightful words from applications and site visits made this publication possible. Except as noted, Most of the photos are my own, taken during regular site visits with the artists.

—RICHARD MARCH, FEBRUARY 1994
UPDATED JANUARY 2005

A NOTE ABOUT THE CREATION OF THIS BOOKLET

This production has had a curious history. After almost a decade of success with the Apprenticeship Program, Richard March envisioned this small tribute to the program and its remarkable master-apprentice pairs. In 1989 he enlisted Janet C. Gilmore to research, write, and shape the work around applicants' statements and his recountings of experiences with the program. Ready for editorial review in 1992, the manuscript became a publication project of the former Wisconsin Folk Museum. Former publications director Phil Martin edited the work and designed a booklet with designer Lisa Teach-Swaziek, which was ready for publication later in 1992. Then the Wisconsin Folk Museum met with hard times and Martin left the organization. Board of Directors members and publications experts Jerry Minnich and Sheila Leary continued to support the creation of the publication, offering ideas for economical publishing options. Then Leary accepted the project for University of Wisconsin Press intern Sara DeHaan in 1993. DeHaan revamped the booklet's layout, and by 1994 it was updated, re-edited, and ready for publication. By then the images were also scanned and ready to print. Then the electronic versions of the booklet died with a major computer crash at the Press and the project languished.

Now, with the wonders of newer technology, production specialist Nicole Saylor of the Center for the Study of Upper Midwestern Cultures has restored the electronic design following DeHaan's format, project assistant Jocelyne Bodden has rescanned the images, and Gilmore and March have modestly updated the text so that the booklet can live more publicly in cyberspace and serve as program history, educational resource, and reference tool.

THE FOCUS ON TRADITIONAL WISCONSIN INDIAN ARTS

Wisconsin's six Indian nations, representing a combined population of roughly 40,000, provided a good focus for the Wisconsin Arts Board's Apprenticeship Program. Despite long and intense assimilative pressures, Menominees, Oneidas, Potawatomis, Ho-Chunks, Stockbridge-Munsee Mahican-Delawares, and the six bands of Ojibwas have maintained cultural identities distinct from each other, from surrounding European-American communities, and to some extent, from related communities residing in other states and Canada. In language, religious practices, and worldview, Ho-Chunks are as different from Ojibwas as Italians are from Swedes, for example. Strikingly, this small population supports a diversity of rare and complex artistic traditions that express these identities and can be found nowhere else in the world.

Today there are relatively few practitioners in each Indian community who can perpetuate the distinctive artistic traditions and, importantly, place them in proper cultural perspective. Until recently, younger generations have so tentatively embraced tribal customs—especially in the 20th century due to intense governmental policies of forced assimilation—that elders often have not widely or completely passed on their skills and rich contextual knowledge. With a keen sense of urgency to protect these extraordinary and threatened arts, the Wisconsin Arts Board saw the Apprenticeship Program as a timely effort. Fortuitously, the tribal climate appeared to be favorable for just such encouragement.



PHOTO BY RICK MARCH

Traditional Menominee pow-wow dancer, Gerald Hawpetoss, in Eau Claire, 1986.

Since the late 1960s, a policy of “community self-determination” (Lurie 1982: 61) has been gaining momentum in Wisconsin’s Indian communities. In their eagerness “for rational, self-sustaining community development wherever possible” (Lurie 1982: 62), they have often harnessed artistic and ceremonial traditions to create income-generating programs, museums and cultural centers, and sales outlets for Indian-made goods. This effort for community self-reliance has nourished a budding revival of interest in ethnic customs. Pan-Indian pow-wows and dance competitions proliferated in the 1980s, inspiring more and more young people to dress in appropriate, nation-specific attire for the occasions. Young tribal members have been seeking out elders, questioning them about their community’s ceremonial practices, dance outfits, and ritual objects, and requesting help in making the regalia. Community elders have welcomed this renewed interest as an opportunity to provide direction for the young and combat a host of social problems. By giving them something practical yet meaningful to do, such as make their own pow-wow outfits, they have been able to keep youngsters busy and inculcate them with traditional artistic techniques as well as tribal symbols and religious values.

In a 1986 apprenticeship, for example, Jim Razer, an Ojibwa who lives in Chippewa Falls, involved three Ojibwa youths in preparing complete old-style outfits for pow-wows. They obtained raw materials from hunters and other sources, involved knowledgeable craftspeople in helping them complete specific details, visited craftspeople and elders “to learn other viewpoints on crafting, and to learn about the meaning of what they are doing in spiritual terms,” and attended pow-wows to observe the varieties of “dress,

colors, meanings, and cultural values.” Razer used the project not only for educational purposes, but to instill values and a sense of commitment. Additionally he saw the process helping each youth individually: to move one, “who was becoming quite knowledgeable in Indian understanding . . . into another dimension with his people;” to encourage another, “who has less ability in the cultural sense, but appears very eager to work,” to “turn his life just enough;” and to see that the third, who “is a fast learner and is showing interest, but hides his feelings so I can not look into the future with him, . . . could not help but carry any knowledge he gains with him into the future.” Some master artists, like Oneida needleworkers Leona and Sheila Smith of Seymour and Green Bay, have taken such teachings a step farther, researched the historical record, and restored older Indian designs to contemporary work.



Beading on a traditional Oneida dance outfit by Sheila Smith, Green Bay, 1986.

PHOTO BY RICK MARCH

In the nine years of the program, traditional and ethnic arts apprenticeships have fulfilled their primary purpose: to reconnect the generations and enliven artistic traditions in Wisconsin's Indian communities. The apprenticeships have had an even farther-reaching effect by fitting into the larger movement to boost tribal identity and sovereignty. Recognition and respect for traditional artists has improved. Their work is increasingly included in celebrations of Indian arts, such as the annual Indian Arts Festival begun in 1984 and held in Eau Claire. The identification of master artists in the various communities has enabled formation of the Woodland Indian Crafts Cooperative for pooling interests and expertise and presenting work at trade shows. Several apprentices have used their training to amplify skills in order to go into business. Indeed tribal artists have found the apprenticeships particularly useful for turning indigenous skills into respectable means of earning income and, in the wake of creating an expanded market, guaranteeing a good supply of vigorous, properly trained artists to meet demand.

As the Woodland Indian artists broaden the market for their work and collectively elevate local, national, and international awareness of their traditions, perhaps they will reap as wide acclaim and benefit for their outstanding artistry as the Indians of the Southwest have secured for theirs.

While the Woodland nations may ultimately enjoy social, economic, and political rewards from the program, equally the people of the state, the region, and beyond stand to gain inspiration and insight from these exemplary artists. According to long-standing custom, traditional Woodland Indian artists intertwine art with nature, culture, and spirituality. Artistic expression is so integral with cultural



PHOTO BY RICK MARCH

Ojibwa Genevieve Goslin working on a birchbark "fanning" basket used for winnowing wild rice, Red Cliff, 1986.

history and religious values that some artists are reluctant to apply the term “art” to their work. In their view, “art” implies something separable from a holistic experience that cannot be broken into parts.

In practicing a skill, traditional Woodland Indian artists identify with fellow practitioners – past and present – and thus share in the symbolic place of the activity in the life of the community. In the process, they also connect themselves with the elements from the environment which they use to fashion a particular object. The natural materials are not only alive with the characteristics of the animals, plants, and places from which they are taken, but with symbolic meanings rooted in tribal mythology. In contemplating these associations, Woodland artists reach beyond the isolation of the present and the fragmentation of the visible to the universality and continuities of their spiritual world.

Red Cliff Ojibwa Diane DeFoe explained this artistic worldview, in part, in her 1985 application to teach Genny Goslin of Bayfield how to make birchbark containers:

We do not use them today as a necessity, but it is a link to or with our past and this is why I make birchbark baskets or containers. There are legends that accompany making birchbark containers as well as a sense of oneness with the earth. I can't explain fully my feeling as I do my art work, but it is something that warms my heart. As I make the baskets I feel one with the earth, and that I am special because my heritage is in that article I'm making. There is not just a lesson in the art work I do, but a part of me in my work. Everyone from my community can

identify with the work I do, because it is a part of them also. I believe I give away most of my baskets, and I believe that is what my ancestors did also. It's just a part of me, and I like the feeling I get back from my people as they receive a gift.

Not surprisingly, among some traditional Woodland Indian artists, the creation of a work of art, the artistic performance, is a ritual process requiring the proper contemplation and careful manipulation of human-to-nature relationships and cultural symbols. Before Menominee Gerald Hawpetoss of Keshena began to teach his apprentice, Becky Peters, to make beaded funerary ornaments in 1987, they planned to:

. . . hold a feast in honor of the Creator and ask the spirit of the name Osakapun to ask the grandfather, to ask his father for permission to proceed with his respected traditions he has given on to us to uphold.

Elders do not view potential tradition bearers as ready to learn an artistic skill until they demonstrate receptivity to learning the deeper meanings and relationships of the materials, the process of shaping them into cultural objects, and the proper use of the resulting objects. Ho-Chunk basket-maker Mary Thunder of Fairchild expressed these expectations of her apprentice, Luann Littlegeorge of Black River Falls, in 1986:

I will tell her the history besides telling and showing how baskets are made. . . . I will have her to think about and remember the history of

basketmaking for the Winnebagos. Later, when she learns the basics I'll give her some material to try to start a basket.

Similarly, in his 1986 application to pass on featherwork and roach-making skills to several urban Indians, Charles Connors of Madison, a Bad River Ojibwa, explained the importance of readiness for inheriting the tradition from his father:

I have learned featherwork and the caring of eagle and other feathers from my father, Freddie Connors. He has done featherwork for as long as I can remember. For many years I could not participate but could only watch him work at the actual making of fans, headdresses, and tomahawks. I had to first understand the meaning of the eagle to the Chippewa and show proper respect for the eagle. I was finally allowed to work first on other feathers, and when my skills were honorable I was then allowed to work with eagle feathers about the age of 11.

Once a person shows the proper inclination, however, she acquires a heavy feeling of responsibility to practice and perpetuate the skill and attendant meanings. As apprentice Lorene Hall, a Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa, stated in her 1987 application to learn fish-decoy carving from Lac du Flambeau Ojibwa Ben Chosa:

. . . the art is no longer practiced on my reservation, and since I have an opportunity to learn, I feel a responsibility to do so, so that it



PHOTO BY RICK MARCH

Ojibwas Ben Chosa and apprentice Lyle Chapman carving basswood icefishing decoys in Ben's kitchen, Lac du Flambeau, 1986.

doesn't die out. . . .when my time comes, I can teach my children and my nieces and nephews. The knowledge I gain will be of more value having come from Ben Chosa.

Oneida Loren Moore similarly felt the burden of honor and privilege to learn splint basketry from the late Mamie Ryan of Oneida. In their 1986 application, she claimed:

It would not only be an honor, but a privilege as well, to study with this master artist, Mamie Ryan. To learn all she knows about her art and to be as proficient in its execution would be a blessing. We know Mamie is up in her years and isn't going to be here always, so we need some of the younger people to carry her art into the future.



Mamie Ryan, Oneida, finishing the edge on a black ash splint basket, Oneida, 1985.

PHOTO BY PAULETTE WERGER

Once experienced in an artistic technique, the artist's sense of honor, privilege, and responsibility to pass on the skill remains. "As the last active, full-time metalsmith in our tribe, and amongst all the other tribes in the state, I feel I must carry on, as well as extend, our tradition," said Ho-Chunk German silverworker Kenneth Funmaker, Sr., of Wisconsin Dells.

The willingness to bear so tremendous a symbolic load is uncommon, but commonly elders will await that rare and receptive individual to come along. This cultural pattern-waiting for the right person in the right frame of mind—accounts in part for the rareness of the skills today and their perpetual peril of extinction. While this "Indian way" restricts the proliferation of the skills, importantly it helps to preserve a distinctive perspective on the arts and the significance of the cultural context.

Wisconsin's Indians have been able to use the Apprenticeship Program to good advantage, lending weight to their traditional process of artistic training. Their apprenticeships provide ideal models for artists of other traditions and ethnic backgrounds to ponder.



Ho-Chunk jeweler Kenneth Funmaker, Sr., uses a file to incise a design on a bracelet, Wisconsin Dells, 1985.

PHOTO BY PAULETTE WERGER

OUTREACH AMONG THE INDIAN PEOPLES

While Wisconsin's Indian communities as a whole may have appeared ready for the Apprenticeship Program, and community leaders were receptive to it, individual artists were initially shy and wary of what appeared to be a governmental hand-out, which experience told them would have strings attached. Coordinator Richard March recognized the need to work closely with the groups the program was designed to serve. Before setting up the program, he sought the advice of many Indian people. He met with Indian educators at tribal schools and consulted directors of tribal social and cultural centers, museums, and Indian arts programs. Bob Smith, Director of the Oneida Nation Museum, and anthropologist Nancy Lurie of the Milwaukee Public Museum, a non-Indian well respected in the Indian communities, made important suggestions.

From the advice received, March felt that responsibility for each apprenticeship needed to be firmly in the hands of the elder who was the master artist. He accordingly made changes in the pre-existing federal model for the program. Instead of having the apprentice apply for the grant, the master would be the primary applicant and grant recipient.

Further, March felt strongly that Arts Board involvement in the apprenticeship process had to be personalized. A site visit by him to each master-apprentice pair became an integral part of the program. The responsibility for conducting a successful apprenticeship thus became his personal commitment as well.

March also found that it was important to reduce the applicant's load of required paperwork. In lieu of the grant

PHOTO BY ROCHELLE POWLESS



Rick March visits Bertha Blackdeer and apprentice Samantha Greendeer, Oneida, 1992.

recipient submitting a written final report, March himself would document and prepare a report on the success of the apprenticeship based on the site visit.

To launch the new program, March visited each reservation and placed the application form in the hands of numerous potential participants...but the first grant deadline passed with no applicants. When he made a second round of visits to contacts, March discovered that two rumors had been circulating: university students from Madison were going to be sent to the reservations to be apprentices (fueled perhaps by the fact that Madison is both the site of the Arts Board offices and the location of the main campus of the University of Wisconsin), and any artwork created during the apprenticeship would become the property of state government. March had to reassure potential applicants that they could pick their own apprentices, and that, as with grants to fine artists, their work would remain their own. But

March's second visit, in and of itself, seemed to be crucial. Perhaps the fact that he showed up on their doorsteps two times convinced some of the elders that the intent of the program was genuine. On his second visit, they invited him in for coffee.

March set another deadline, and sixteen master artists submitted applications. Eleven apprenticeships were approved. By the second year, when hesitant potential participants saw that there was indeed no hidden catch, applicants more than doubled to nearly forty.

Site visits enabled on-going outreach in the Indian communities and generated more contacts, potential applicants, and apprenticeships – among urban Indians as well. During these first nine years of the Apprenticeship Program, 101 of the 120 apprenticeships involved Wisconsin Indian traditional artists.

WISCONSIN'S WOODLAND
INDIAN ARTISTS

WISCONSIN'S INDIANS

Wisconsin is one of the very few states east of the Mississippi River in which American Indians still live in sizeable numbers. Compared to the other eastern states, it harbors the greatest diversity of Indian nations and the greatest representation of Woodland Indians.

At the time of European contact, the many Woodland nations inhabited an area embracing the Great Lakes and stretching from the Atlantic coast to the Mississippi River, from the subarctic to the Ohio River system. The region was peopled distinctively by many small independent groups who, in spite of much interaction and borrowing among each other, possessed such diverse cultural systems that not one could typify the others. Additionally, because of long histories of cultural interchange with nations in adjacent ecological regions, many groups shared features with non-Woodland tribes, for example, Ojibwas with subarctic groups, Ho-Chunk with Plains peoples, and Iroquois and Atlantic coastal nations with southeastern cultures.

Like their ancestors, Wisconsin's contemporary Indians live in small, independent groups, practice widely different customs, and maintain a vibrant exchange among themselves and with groups in adjacent regions. They represent the three Woodland linguistic families: Menominees, Ojibwas, Potawatomis, and formerly Stockbridge-Munsees speak Algonkian languages; Oneidas an Iroquoian language; and Ho-Chunks a Siouan language. They also reflect the three basic groupings of Woodland Indian tribes: Stockbridge-Munsees, eastern Algonkian or coastal peoples; Oneidas, Iroquoian or St. Lawrence Lowland groups; and Menominees,

Ojibwas, Potawatomis, and Ho-Chunks, north-central Algonkian or Great Lakes-Riverine peoples.

Because of common characteristics of the Great Lakes area and the northeastern Atlantic seaboard, these groups relied upon common natural materials and foodstuffs, and accordingly, similar ways of utilizing the resources and making a living. All combined, in varying degrees, hunting, fishing, and gathering with gardening, cultivating maize, beans, peas, squashes, pumpkins, melons, sunflowers, and tobacco. The eastern tribes stressed gardening, settled in villages, and conducted affairs on a village, tribal, and intertribal level according to sophisticated political systems. At the other end of the spectrum, north-central Algonkians, Ojibwas especially, relied more upon hunting, fishing, and gathering in less fruitful territory, and they ranged farther in small, loosely-knit, nomadic bands.

The Woodland peoples all collected and utilized the sap of the sugar maple, and consumed wild rice, which the northwestern groups gathered and traded to the east. All were noted for their expertise with bark, wood, and plant fibers. They constructed wigwams or longhouses of saplings and bark; built snowshoes, toboggans, and birchbark canoes and containers; wove, coiled, or twined baskets of twigs, bark, roots, or grasses; wove, braided, or sewed mats of bulrushes, cattails, or cedar bark; fashioned wardrobes from deerhide decorated with dyed porcupine quills; and composed ceremonial garb from feathers.

Inspired, with European contact, by new materials, designs, and ideas, the Woodland peoples rapidly developed



PHOTO BY RICK MARCH

St. Croix Ojibwa beadworker Connie Rivard modeling a partially completed bandolier bag with typical floral motifs, Round Lake, 1991.

clothing from cloth and substituted beads for quills and silver for shells. They used the new materials enthusiastically to express tribal specificity--even more extremely than previously--in colors, clan symbols, favorite floral motifs, and other minute design features. Discarding stone and bone for metal tools, they began to utilize common materials in new ways and produce customary objects more rapidly for trade among themselves and with the newcomers.

Today Wisconsin's Indians still practice many Woodland traditions, from beading and basketry to making ceremonial clothing with deerskin and feathers, from maple sugaring and wild ricing to carving icefishing decoys and building birchbark canoes. They have used these traditional skills not simply to survive, but to preserve a way of life, maintain cultural identities, and perpetuate traditional spiritual values.

While most of the groups practice similar symbolic repertoires of Woodland skills – such as beading, ribbon appliqué, deerskin work, and basketry – along with more contemporary pan-Indian skills such as star-quilting, they use colors, decorative motifs, clan symbols, and other distinctive patternings to distinguish themselves from each other. As if to ensure distinctiveness, almost every nation has uniquely cultivated a few traditions that have become symbolic of the group: Ojibwas and birchbark work, Oneidas and sacred singing societies, Stockbridge-Munsees and silver jewelry incorporating the Many Trails symbol, and Ho-Chunks and black ash splint basketry.

In these respects, Wisconsin's Indian groups follow a pattern of differentiation that is common to the state's other ethnics. Throughout Wisconsin, many small religious-ethnic

enclaves live in close proximity, in rural and urban settings. Perhaps because of the juxtaposition of equally cohesive yet often radically different groups, most communities have insistently maintained an ethnic identity by cultivating a significant set of distinctive traditions. In a typical Wisconsin way, each group increasingly practices similar kinds of traditions--usually those involving festive clothing, dance, and foods. But each group takes pains to stress a separate identity by highlighting specific clothing, dances, and foods, for example, that are unique to the group. Thus, the state's people harbor a variegated lot of unusual artistic traditions, some of which may be encountered only in Wisconsin.

PHOTOS BY RICK MARCH



Silver pendants by Eddie Martin of Bowler, in the "Many Trails" design, the symbol of the Stockbridge-Munsee Nation, 1985.

Moccasins by Menominee Gerald Hawpetoss, showing Menominee (center) and Ojibwa (left and right) styles, Eau Claire, 1986.



Traditional Ojibwa moccasins by Margaret Hart of the St. Croix band, Maple Plain, 1985.



PHOTO BY PAULETTE WERGER

Geometric design depicting eagle feathers in the "lazy stitch" technique, part of a Ho-Chunk dance outfit by Annette Cleveland, Waukesha, 1988.



PHOTO BY RICK MARCH

HO-CHUNKS

Ho-Chunk people represent the state's second oldest continuous residents, after the Menominee people. More than half of North America's Ho-Chunk people live in Wisconsin. By the early 1700s, their ancestors had retreated from their Green Bay-eastern Lake Winnebago homeland, spreading to western portions of the state. Later they successfully resisted relocation to the Nebraska reservation where the second largest group presently resides. Today Ho-Chunk homesteads are scattered across more than ten western central counties from La Crosse to Shawano, and many Ho-Chunks have settled in Wittenberg, Wisconsin Rapids, Black River Falls, Tomah, La Crosse, and Wisconsin Dells, as well as in the region's big cities.

A Siouan-speaking people of upper Mississippian cultural origins, Ho-Chunks share many cultural features with Iowas, Otos, and Missouri Plains Sioux tribes to the west. But through centuries of living in the Great Lakes-Woodland area, they adopted many of the ways of their Algonkian neighbors, Menominees, Sauks, Mesquakis, and Ojibwas. In more recent times, they have continued a dynamic interchange with neighboring groups and their Nebraska Ho-Chunk relatives, sharing ideas but maintaining their own identity.

Of all of Wisconsin's Indian nations, Ho-Chunk people endorsed the Apprenticeship Program most enthusiastically. Per capita, they contributed the most applicants and received the most awards of any group. Through participation in the program, they made known practitioners of tipi construction, deerskin tanning, ceremonial roach making, quillwork,



Doll in a traditional Ho-Chunk dance outfit, showing a miniature version of a pah-keh finger-woven beaded hair ornament made by Bernadine Tallmadge, Wisconsin Dells, 1986.

PHOTO BY RICK MARCH

and finger-weaving. Awards supported a rare nickel silver worker, a finger-woven sash maker, a jingle dress maker, a hide tanner, a carver of wooden bowls and spoons, several ribbon appliqué-ers, many beaders working in a variety of techniques, and most notably, several makers of pounded black ash splint baskets.



PHOTO BY RICK MARCH

*Detail of a pah-keh,
traditional Ho-Chunk
beaded hair ornament,
finger-woven by Irene
Thundercloud, Tomah,
1984.*

Finger-woven beadwork is a skill that only a few artists now practice, as Helen Lonetree of Wisconsin Dells explained in her 1987 application:

The *pah-keh* is a Winnebago women's hair ornament made of long strands of finger-woven beadwork. Finger-woven beadwork is becoming a "lost art" because it is a difficult and time-consuming process. The *pah-keh* is worn to ceremonies and the finger-woven beadwork is also attached to buckskin dresses and earrings are made by the same process using very small beads.

Archaeological evidence indicates the splint basketry technique was known in Wisconsin well before Europeans set foot on the continent. Like Lauren Little Wolf of Wittenberg,

today's Ho-Chunk elders claim, "the tradition of black ash basket weaving is the Winnebago art." According to basket-maker Elizabeth Deere of Fairchild in her 1984 application:

It is a God-given art. A young Winnebago Indian woman dreamed God spoke to her, told her to go in the forest to identify the tree, and [told her] the way she will do every step.

Basket-maker Mary Thunder of Fairchild recounted a similar story in her 1984 application, adding that the woman received the vision before the coming of the white man, but that the Great Spirit "advised her that the white-skinned man was coming; and through the sale of these baskets she and her people would subsist in the white man's society."

Indeed, many have relied upon the skill to make ends meet, especially during hard times, as Deere pointed out:

During the years of Depression in the '30s, we depended on baskets. My mother said, it is an art work, it can help you get what you might need, but you cannot get rich from it.

Mary Thunder, whose parents died when she was very young, learned the skill when she was six years old from her grandmother, and wove and sold baskets to help earn food for her family.

“From the beginning to finish is a long process,” said Deere of the basket making, adding:

This art work requires many men’s strength and involves going near the Canadian border, getting the wood, carrying it on your shoulder from the swamp. And pounding it is only the beginning.

Often the procedure is a collaborative effort, involving several members of the same family. For example, Lauren Little Wolf, born in La Crosse in 1945, learned to weave baskets from her mother and grandmother from age five: “I did the weaving as they always did the preparation,” she said. She added:

But from observation, I gained knowledge on the preparation of materials. In 1969 I finally learned the whole process on my own. . . . to start from step 1 until the finished basket. . . . the right log, splitting of the strips, scraping of the strips, cutting, what thicknesses are used for what part of the basket, the dyeing of the materials, the weaving on to the finished basket.

She often gets help from her husband, Martin, born in Tomah in 1942, who learned to carve basket handles from his father and uncle in his youth. He not only makes handles for his wife’s baskets, but he helps select “what type of tree to use for baskets and what type of tree to use for handles, . . . by the bark in winter, by the leaves in summer.”

In 1986 and 1987, Little Wolf used her awards to teach the complete process to women who were already familiar with weaving baskets. One apprenticeship ensured that



Paul Cloud, Ho-Chunk from Wisconsin Dells, pounding a black ash log so it can next be split into basket splints, 1987.



PHOTOS BY RICK MARCH

Miniature black ash baskets by Ho-Chunk Lauren Little Wolf, Wittenberg, 1986. Note penny for scale.



PHOTO BY RICK MARCH

The late Ho-Chunk Violet Whitewing weaving a black ash basket at home in Wittenberg, 1988.

her daughter Marlene, born in 1966, pick up the skills, and the other trained a woman older than the master. Apprentice Lillian Thomas of Eland, born in 1937, wanted to expand her skills to be able to carry on the complete tradition, pass it on to her grandchildren, and have something enjoyable to do that could bring in some extra income.

MENOMINEES

Wisconsin's Menominees are unique to the state and represent its oldest known continuous residents. They now occupy Menominee County in northeastern Wisconsin, a small inland portion of previous domains along the western shore of Green Bay and up the Fox and Wolf Rivers. Wedged between Ojibwas and Ho-Chunks before the reservation period, Menominees associated amicably with the two neighbors, and through intermarriage and continued interchange, they have maintained close ties and shared traditions to the present day.

In spite of a population similar in size to Wisconsin's Ho-Chunk and Oneida peoples, Menominees have contributed few applicants to the Apprenticeship Program. These few, however, have practiced rare skills such as coiled sweetgrass basket making and wooden flute carving and playing, or possess uncommon understanding of ceremonial traditions and the preparation of appropriate paraphernalia.

Gerald Hawpetoss was one of the Program's most active master artists, as a young man. He received several awards to pass on his skills in processing deerskin, in making moccasins and ceremonial roaches, and in beading. His applications to the Arts Board are filled with eloquent insights regarding the artistic techniques, Menominee design principles, and their deeper meanings.

Hawpetoss was born in Keshena, Wisconsin, in 1952, to:

... a family where it seems we always made the moccasin traditionally and the tribe received



PHOTO BY RICK MARCH

Gerald Hawpetoss, with apprentice Becky Peters, setting up to weave an Osakapun, Menominee funerary ornament, Keshena, 1986.

their moccasins from our family. . . . My grandmother's mother passed this art form to her and she passed it completely on to me. It's my responsibility now.

At the age of eight, Hawpetoss was given to his father's aunt and uncle, Jane and Ernest Neconish:

My father instructed me that these people raised him and that I was to serve them until he freed me. I served without question. While there I was taught many traditions, for we are a family who inherit their traditions.

*Parts of beaded
dance outfits
in process
on Gerald
Hawpetoss's
work table,
Keshena, 1986.*



PHOTO BY JAMES P. LEARY, COURTESY JOHN
MICHAEL KOHLER ARTS CENTER, SHEBOYGAN

He tanned hides for his “grandmother,” as he calls his great aunt, and she showed him how to construct Menominee moccasins: “Together we worked all year round and I helped her raise money for her burial fund and my father freed me.”

Practitioners of the Menominee medicine dance, Neconish and her husband encouraged Hawpetoss to learn to make the Osakapun beaded funerary ornament when he was sixteen: “They knew that among the Menominee I am the only Wabeno in my generation . . . because of the dreams I related to my elders.” His great aunt taught him how to construct the ornament and his great uncle instructed him “in the oral traditions that must accompany the material product.” Also when he was sixteen, he learned Menominee clothing design, ribbon appliqué techniques, and their symbolic meanings, from his mother.

Hawpetoss has inherited the moccasin-making business from his elders, but because of many set-backs due to ill health and open heart surgery, he has not been able to keep up regular production. But, as his apprentice Becky Peters claimed, “As a Wabeno he is responsible for the continuation of our traditions.” Faced with a short life expectancy and a great burden of responsibility to pass on his rare knowledge, he repeatedly sought help from the Apprenticeship Program to teach not only his “authentic traditional techniques, but cultural concepts valuable to the preservation of the art form among the Menominee,” to several eager apprentices.

One apprenticeship instructed Peters in making the Osakapun funerary ornament, which is wrapped around the single braid at the center back of the head during a funeral. Menominees who practice the tradition maintain a long center

back lock even if the rest of the hair is cut short. A beaded rectangular section is placed around the braid and wrapped by the central of three loom-beaded straps; the two other straps contain a diagonal design and are left to hang. During the funeral, a religious figure, a Peri:

. . . wraps the diagonal sections around the hand and the hand is held around the braid so as to make sure that the mourner does not look to the west, especially when the last march around the individual grave site is made. Should the mourner look west, the soul of the deceased is trapped in the journey west forever. Often the mourner is so bereaved they will fight to see the deceased, the Peri will start kicking the mourner in the behind and remind the mourner that to look west is forbidden. The Peri will then march the mourner around four major tree types and ask them for help in the continuation of life they still have. The concept of suicide is not permitted in the Menominee culture.

Peters had learned some elementary beading from her mother and she had watched Hawpetoss work, but she had “no knowledge of how to begin and properly develop true Menominee design” and “no idea of the techniques used in diagonal beading which would enable” her “to work at a level of old tradition.” Jane Neconish had bestowed the Menominee name “Osakapun” upon Peters, and consequently Hawpetoss, a Wabeno, had “been given the privilege to pass on these skills and techniques” to Peters.



PHOTO BY JAMES P. LEARY, COURTESY JOHN MICHAEL KOHLER ARTS CENTER, SHEBOYGAN

Detail of Hawpetoss's beadwork in process, Keshena, 1986.

She, in turn, expected “To first pass on my name to one of my children and they in turn are expected to pass it on to their children.” She was to learn the construction of the ornament, the “oral traditions that accompany and complete this arrangement,” as well as the preparation of a pair of leggings and a pair of double moccasins with white oak leaves placed between the inner and outer shoes “as a buffer when and if kicking a mourner becomes necessary.” But first, she and the master were to:

. . . hold a feast in honor of the Creator and ask the spirit of the name Osakapun, to ask the grandfather, to ask his father for the permission to proceed with his respected traditions he has given on to us to uphold. After the feast we will meet weekly. . . .

In recognition of his outstanding commitment to perpetuating the traditions of his people, Gerald Hawpetoss received a prestigious National Heritage Fellowship in 1992 from the National Endowment for the Arts.

OJIBWAS

Ojibwas form the most populous Indian nation north of Mexico, and the majority live in Canada. After Minnesota, Wisconsin claims the second greatest population in the United States, and the group outnumbers all of the state's other Indian peoples. Nevertheless, like the other Wisconsin groups, Wisconsin Ojibwas reside in relatively small communities, identifying with one of the six administratively-independent bands. Moving from northwestern to northeastern Wisconsin, the small St. Croix band occupies scattered portions of Burnett, Barron, and Polk counties; the Lac Courte Oreilles band, the largest, resides in Sawyer County; the modestly-populated Red Cliff band occupies the northeastern tip of Bayfield County; the comparably-sized Bad River band lives in northern Ashland County; the Lac du Flambeau band, the second largest, resides in Vilas and Iron Counties; and the tiny Sokaogan (Mole Lake) band is settled in Forest County near the Potawatomi reservation.

The most hunting- and trapping-oriented of any of Wisconsin's Indian peoples, Ojibwas once ranged an extensive territory mostly north of Lakes Superior and Huron during precontact times. Before the 1600s they had pushed west to the Plains and south into Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and southern Ontario. They have remained in this area ever since, confined to comparatively minuscule portions of their previous domain and widely dispersed across the north central states and south central Canadian provinces.



*Beaded
medallion
with Ojibwa
floral motif
by Josephine
Doud, Lac du
Flambeau,
1988.*

PHOTO BY RICK MARCH

Descended from the same ancestral tribe as Potawatomi people, Ojibwas are closest culturally to that group, and next to Menominees, who are more distant relations. They are most different from Ho-Chunk people, of all of the Wisconsin Indian groups.

The most populous of Wisconsin's Indian nations, not surprisingly Ojibwas had the most Apprenticeship Program applicants and recipients of any group and they have indicated the persistence of a great diversity of Woodland skills: deerskin tanning and moccasin making, roach making and fur pelt making, yarn bag making, decorative beading of

*Red Cliff Ojibwas
Elizabeth
"Tiny" Cadotte
and apprentice
Marlene Soulier
concentrate on
beading, 1985.*



PHOTO BY RICK MARCH

various types, quillwork, dream catcher making, cradleboard making, la crosse stick carving, ceremonial mat making, birchbark canoe building and container making, maple sugaring, icefishing decoy carving, stone pipe making, drum making, wooden flute making and playing, and storytelling. All six reservation communities were represented in the program.

Born in Chicago in 1957, birchbark canoe builder Marvin Defoe, Jr., of Bayfield, is a member of the Red Cliff community. He "talked a lot with elders from Wisconsin who helped build canoes when they were young," and also gained some knowledge of birchbark canoe building from books, films, and other documents, but he notes:

. . . mainly I learned through experience. . . . most of this knowledge is no good unless you actually use it. This learning is by experience, where the real learning takes place.

Defoe has become an accomplished builder and a respected elder, inspiring younger members of the community to learn skills that are indeed rare. In 1987, apprentice Richard La Fernier explained his interest in this way:

I have known Marvin most of my life and have worked with him at the school, the youth programs, and on the drum--he has skills that I too want to have and to have these skills I must work hard as Marvin has already taught me.

Defoe has used his apprenticeships to instruct younger people such as La Fernier, who have already "worked a little bit with birchbark," in "the whole process, from gathering materials, making canoe tools, to the construction with the finished product and using the canoe in the water." His regimen is demanding:

We will start from scratch, go in the woods, gather all materials needed – birchbark, roots, cedar – which takes time. We will take about three weeks, sun up-sun down seven days a week until finished. . . . this is how I build them, don't stop until it's finished.

Defoe and his apprentices are dedicated to the preservation of this art form, "the Indian way," and the ability "to survive using only the Indian way":

Today the skill of knowing this craft is very



PHOTO BY RICK MARCH

Ojibwa birchbark canoe maker, Marvin DeFoe, Jr., stitching the bow of a canoe, Red Cliff, 1985.

important . . . some day . . . maybe we will have to go back to the canoe for our travels.

Another Ojibwa master artist, Margaret Hart, was versed in many traditional skills and conducted apprenticeships in moccasin making, in the natural process of tanning and smoking deerskin (which uses only the deer's brain as a tanning agent), and in the weaving of ceremonial mats from bulrushes. A member of the St. Croix band, Hart was born in 1922 in Maple Plain, an Ojibwa village near Cumberland, where she lived until she passed over in (date). During a site visit to her deerskin-tanning apprenticeship, Richard March inquired whether she was acquainted with anyone who knew how to weave bulrush mats of the sort documented decades ago by ethnographer Frances Densmore. "Well, I used to help my grandmother weave them, over thirty years ago," Margaret replied. Asked if she remembered the technique, she responded, "I think so. Once it's in the fingers . . ."

Hart then proposed an apprenticeship to pass on her knowledge of making the mats. She and her apprentices, Eileen Skinaway, Hazel Hindsley, and Ramona Kasabun canoed Round Lake and the Yellow River to gather bulrushes (called Anaka nashkun in Ojibwa). Since she no longer possessed a gigantic cast iron kettle like her grandmother's, she improvised, scalding the rushes by pouring boiling water over them, to much the same effect. Without the kettle, she did not dye any rushes then, but planned to do so in the future. The bulrushes provided the warp and were hung on a wooden frame. Hart used twine-sisal and even nylon-as the weft, though the oldest way was to use weegum, basswood fibers. It took at least two people to weave-a helper to "cast

on” (position the rushes properly), and the other to weave the twine.

According to Hart, the apprenticeship stimulated a revival of weaving a ceremonial necessity:

The large mats are used in Mide religious ceremonials—placed on the ground around the drum. Also everyone needs to have their own little mats to bring to ceremonials to sit on. The mat is also used to place upon it a special bowl—asking for good life for someone—only at the big drum dance. Since nobody has been making them for a long time and the old ones are starting to get pretty ragged, some people were getting mats from the Philippines at Pier One, and some of the elders said that’s not right.

In addition to the three apprentices, three more St. Croix women became interested in mat weaving. In all, six people learned the technique and the master refreshed her recollection from decades ago.



St. Croix Ojibwas Margaret Hart and apprentice Hazel Hindsley, Maple Plain, 1986.

PHOTO BY RICK MARCH

POTAWATOMIS

One of the smallest groups of Potawatomi people resides in Wisconsin, where it represents the state's smallest indigenous population. Potawatomis have been present in the state, mostly in areas adjacent to Lake Michigan, at least since dispersing from the lower peninsula of Michigan beginning in the 1640s. The Nation's twenty groups live variously in Kansas, Oklahoma, Ontario, and Michigan, as well as Wisconsin, and Wisconsin's communities appear to be as diverse. The reservation community occupies scattered households in Forest County, notably around Crandon and Wabeno. Descendants of Prairie Potawatomis who migrated back to Wisconsin from the Kansas reservation live in the Wisconsin Rapids area. A third group, descendants of a Dream Dance religious revitalization movement, merged with Menominees near Zoar. In the 1970s, there were still numerous native speakers in each community.

Culturally, Potawatomis were especially close to Ojibwas and Odawas, with whom they share a common ancestral tribe. Yet they diverged significantly in their language, political and folk traditions, becoming more agricultural, settling in villages, and organizing politically on a dispersed clan structure. In the Wisconsin setting, Potawatomis still maintain close ties with Ojibwas, especially the Sokaogan band whose reservation lands lie near the Forest County community, and with Menominees.

Perhaps because they are so few in number, Potawatomis are one of the least represented groups in the Apprenticeship Program. The few applicants came only from

PHOTO BY RICK MARCH



Potawatomi cradleboard maker Ned Daniels with apprentice in Forest County, 1986.

the Forest County community which, according to the late Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Elderly Programs Director Cynthia La Counte, "is very traditional, and attempts to maintain their traditions as a whole." There were several skilled moccasin makers and beadworkers in the group. "Since many of the Forest County Potawatomi people are still traditional, practicing native dances and other ceremonies, the moccasins play a large part in those traditions," La Counte explains. Also there were many accomplished woodcarvers in the community. A few still carved and played wooden flutes, different types depending on the occasion.

The Apprenticeship Program supported elder William Jackson of Crandon, born there in 1908, to pass on to apprentice LeRoy Brown of Crandon, born in De Soto in 1921, his knowledge of gathering the materials in the woods, fashioning them into flutes, and playing the instruments. Several members of the community use their woodcarving skills to make cradleboards. Elders often make and give

Josephine Daniels, Potawatomi yarn bag weaver, instructing an apprentice in Forest County, 1986.



PHOTOS BY RICK MARCH



Yarn bags in process by Josephine Daniels and apprentices, Forest County, 1986.

them as gifts to children or grandchildren who still use them when they become parents. They fashion the frames of cedar, which is light to carry, and use white ash for curved portions such as the headpiece. They carefully fit and peg the pieces together without screws or nails.

Josephine Daniels, a skilled beader and seamstress, received an award in 1985 to pass on one of the rarer skills practiced in the community: twining yarn bags. Daniels, born in 1928 on the Potawatomi reservation, learned the technique from elders, using yarn stuffs they processed themselves with natural dyes. She made a traditional pouch-style bag used for carrying a variety of items. At the time she used purchased jute as the warp and jute and other brightly-colored yarns as the weft.

In Daniels's apprenticeship, as in others awarded to fellow Potawatomis, the educational process involved several people, not only the master and younger people familiar with the tradition and eager to learn more of the skills, but older "apprentice-teachers" who, even though they had not

mastered the techniques, were knowledgeable of "all the tribal traditions and arts."

Sessions took place in the tribal center, a natural gathering place, where as many as six apprentices would bring their works-in-progress. Sitting on folding chairs at the tables where the elderly lunch program meals are served, the apprentices worked away on their yarn bags. Josephine ranged around the tables, encouraging and intervening when needed – asking an apprentice to tear out and redo some unsatisfactory work, even reaching over both of an apprentice's shoulders to get her started on the next step in the process. Other elders spending time in the room, lingering in the communal area well beyond lunch, occasionally commented on the symbols, colors, their proper combinations and clan associations, conveying important knowledge related to the tradition.

Elders and master traditional artists Josie and Ned Daniels have since passed over yet their legacy still inspires many in the community.

ONEIDAS

Wisconsin is home to the largest of three groups of Oneidas living in North America. Several thousand reside on or near reservation lands scattered through Outagamie and Brown counties, and many live in the De Pere-Green Bay and Milwaukee areas. At the time of European contact, Oneidas were members of the famous League of Iroquois, and they were based in what is now central New York State. Pressured by the immense Euro-American appetite for natural resources, and accordingly decimated by warfare and disease, the group dispersed in the early 1800s. The greatest numbers set off for land in Wisconsin purchased from Menominee and Ho-Chunk people, while others moved to the London, Ontario, area, and a small group stalwartly remained in New York State. The groups have maintained contact and tribal cohesiveness over the years, and all have participated in a movement to revive Oneida traditions in recent years, but each has developed distinctively.

The Wisconsin community has not retained as many ancient tribal customs as the more conservative Ontario enclave. Nevertheless it has continuously fostered sacred singing societies, composed largely of women and connected to the Episcopal and Methodist churches. A rare few elders are knowledgeable in splint basketry techniques, and reflecting the group's agrarian heritage, in cornhusk-doll making. In fact, the Oneida tribal government operates large farms which raise several varieties of corn, including a long-eared black "Indian corn" which happens to produce long shucks suitable for cornhusk dolls. As in other groups,

several artists produce ceremonial garb incorporating deerskin, beadwork with the traditional flower and leaf motif, ribbon appliqué in distinctive colors and patternings, or featherwork. Some have applied considerable needlework expertise to making full traditional cloth outfits decorated with distinctive beaded designs. Many other artists are practiced in more contemporary techniques such as needlepoint or the pan-Indian star-quilt making. Oneidas represent the third most Apprenticeship Program applicants and recipients, and awards supported a sacred singer, splint-basket maker, cornhusk-doll makers, and several makers of ceremonial outfits incorporating cloth, ribbon appliqué, and beadwork.

In 1985, Wendell W. McLester of De Pere received an award to pass on his knowledge of sacred singing to an apprentice. In his application he described the tradition and its significance to his people in this way:

The folk art consists of singing traditional religious hymns and chants in the Oneida Indian language. This is one of the few remaining traditions and customs of our Oneida people. . . . This art is valued throughout the Oneida and surrounding communities where the hymns and chants are performed. There are a variety of functions that include the Oneida singing such as graduations, weddings, university functions, after dinner presentations, etc. In the Oneida community, Indian singing has a special place and meaning because it is

*Wendell
McLester and
apprentice
Jon Greendeer
holding the
Oneida hymnal,
Oneida, 1992.*



PHOTOS BY RICK MARCH

known to be the one real tradition and custom we as Oneida have maintained throughout the years.

Born a member of the Turtle Clan in Oneida in 1930, McLester says, "At the age of 10 years I started learning the Oneida songs. I learned from my mother and other Oneida singers while attending religious functions." He adds:

I have the honor of being selected to carry on the one sacred Oneida "Te Deum" hymn by the late Oscar Archiquette who had that honor till just before his death in 1975. This is a sacred chant performed only by the selected individual who has the responsibility of carrying on this tradition and selecting a successor and teaching that person.



Oneida Mary Lee Lemieux inspecting cornhusks, Oneida, 1988.

McLester used his apprenticeship award in a very traditional way, to designate a successor, someone who had some familiarity with the tradition already and showed an interest in learning more. Jon Greendeer knew some of the tunes, but needed to learn pronunciation of the words and how to read from the written hymn books in the Oneida alphabet. "I hope to learn all the songs so I can sing with the Oneida singers and try to get others to sing," he said.

Apprenticeships not only encourage passing on a skill and the traditional knowledge associated with it, but they may also benefit the emotional well-being of the participants. Many of the masters enjoyed the opportunity to work intensively with an attentive young person, and of course, the apprentices' lives are shaped through the experience. A good example of this emotional benefit can be seen in the

Cornhusk dolls in traditional Oneida regalia by Mary Lee Lemieux, Oneida, 1988.



PHOTOS BY RICK MARCH

experience of Oneida cornhusk-doll maker Mary Lee Lemieux and her apprentice Cassandra Gollnick.

Mary Lee Lemieux, born in Green Bay in 1946, learned in her youth to make cornhusk dolls from an older woman. Her interest revived in the 1980s when she learned a different technique from Rita Christjohn Vincent, an Oneida from New York State. In 1989, she taught her teen-aged apprentice, Cassandra Gollnick, to fashion the dolls and to sew and bead



Cornhusk dolls, by apprentice Cassandra Gollnick, representing her family members in traditional Oneida regalia, Oneida, 1988.

traditional Oneida outfits for them. As is often the case at her age, fourteen-year-old Cassandra was often at odds with her parents at the time of the apprenticeship. Simultaneously, Lemieux had personal issues of her own to resolve. In their dollmaking sessions, master and apprentice became close, talking about and sorting out their personal feelings. Gollnick's mother noticed that Cassandra's feelings of alienation from her family diminished as a result of the focus on learning to perpetuate an aspect of her Oneida heritage. To symbolize her family and tribal connections, Cassandra made five dolls during the apprenticeship, representing herself, her parents, and her two younger siblings.

STOCKBRIDGE-MUNSEES

Like Oneidas, Wisconsin's Stockbridge-Munsee people represent eastern Woodland groups who moved west to Wisconsin. Stockbridge people are a mixture of mostly Mahicans, who formerly inhabited the Hudson River valley area of New York State. They and other neighboring eastern Algonkian groups merged during the 1700s in western Massachusetts at Stockbridge. They relocated again to Oneida country in New York before moving on to Wisconsin with other conglomerate groups like Brotherton Delawares and Brothertowns, a mix of Mahicans, Mohegans, Pequots, Narragansetts, Montauks, and other eastern Algonkians from the New York-New England area. Similarly Munsee people represent a merged and much-relocated group of highland Delawares who formerly lived in distinct villages in what is now northeastern Pennsylvania and southeastern New York. Brothertons, who moved with Stockbridge people to Wisconsin, likewise consist mostly of two other major groups of Delaware villagers (Unami/coastal and Unalachtigo/downstream) who had regrouped in the central New Jersey area. Arriving in Wisconsin throughout the early 1800s, Stockbridge and Munsee peoples, including Brothertons and Brothertowns, joined forces and purchased land from the Menominee people in the 1850s. Today they make up one of the smallest Woodland groups in the state, and their reservation lands consist of small plots scattered across northeastern Shawano County, mostly in Bartelme and Red Springs townships. As in the past, the core identity of the group remains Mahican.

When they settled in Wisconsin, Stockbridge-Munsees, collectively, were very likely skilled in splint basketry, beading, and in making deerskin clothing, coiled baskets, twisted root bags, mats, cornhusk dolls, and European-influenced nickel silver. During the Apprenticeship Program's first decade, no practitioners of these older Woodland skills came forward. Many distinctive tribal-specific traditions, including the languages, had apparently fallen to the many regroupings and relocations. Since the 1970s, an ardent group has researched the community's many cultural and historical pasts and successfully created a museum and an important repository of relevant documents. This enthusiastic inquiry may encourage the revival of some artistic traditions.

Edwin Martin of Bowler, Wisconsin, was the only Stockbridge-Munsee member who applied for an apprenticeship award, which he received. During 1986 he coached two apprentices, welders Mort Gardner and Danny Moede, in silver-jewelry-making technique, particularly teaching them how to fashion the "Many Trails" symbol.

Born in 1909 in the town of Red Springs north of Gresham, Martin learned silver-jewelry making in 1965, during a special craft-training program offered by the University of Wisconsin on the reservation. While the specific technique was not then traditional among his people, admiration for silverwork was among his Mahican ancestors and it continues to be in the Stockbridge-Munsee community today. Recognizing the need to create a symbol that reflected



PHOTO BY PAULETTE WEGER

Edwin Martin, Stockbridge-Munsee jeweler, in his workshop in Bowler, 1986.

the present group's common experiences, he designed the "Many Trails" symbol, and reproduced it in pendants, rings, and earrings. Martin explained:

The design symbolizes the endurance, strength, and hope of a long-suffering, proud, and determined people. The curved shape represents the arms of a man raised in prayer. The circles represent many campfires. The lines represent the many trails taken from the time the Indians left their ancestral homes.

Since the 1960s, the silverwork technique and the Many Trails symbol have become traditional to the group. "Many Trails . . . has become an important symbol to the Tribe. It identifies us," claimed Martin's apprentice Mort Gardner. Danny Moede, Martin's other apprentice, explained, "I want to keep up the tradition of the Many Trails so we can meet the demand for the jewelry."

While the technique and the symbol are not anciently traditional to the group, however, certainly the master's approach to the work was. Characteristically, the tradition was vested only in Martin, "the only person who currently makes this particular jewelry," said Gardner. Further, both apprentices were to learn the jewelry-making technique and the method of fashioning the symbol, but they were to develop their own designs and not make the symbol for sale while Martin was still able to do so:

Our agreement is that neither apprentice will be making the Many Trails symbols for sale while Eddie is still alive. I want to design work of my own until then and in the future will continue on with the Many Trails jewelry when Eddie is no longer able to make them.

The Apprenticeship Program award supported the perpetuation of this new tradition, and importantly, older traditional attitudes about the practice and passing on of artistic skills. Martin, who has since passed over, also trained his daughter, Vicky Martin Doxtator, in the silverwork technique.

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