

# WADRIHWA

Quarterly newsletter of the Woodland Cultural Centre

Volume 7 Number 4

December 1993

Reg Henry  
Shagoḥedeta  
1923 - 1993



*"That people would help one another during times  
of need, and that there be love amongst us all."*

## We carry his memory in our hearts

by Joanna Bedard

It is with great respect and sadness that the Board of Governors and staff at the Woodland Cultural Centre have said good-bye to our friend, colleague and Elder Reg Henry. Mr. Henry worked for the Centre in the capacity of Linguistic and Cultural Consultant for 15 years. During that time he made an invaluable contribution to both the centre and to Iroquoian communities. His depth of knowledge and understanding of Iroquoian culture is incomparable. He shared his knowledge with the staff in weekly classes and individual consultations, ensuring that our programs and presentations reflected the culture and its customs accurately.

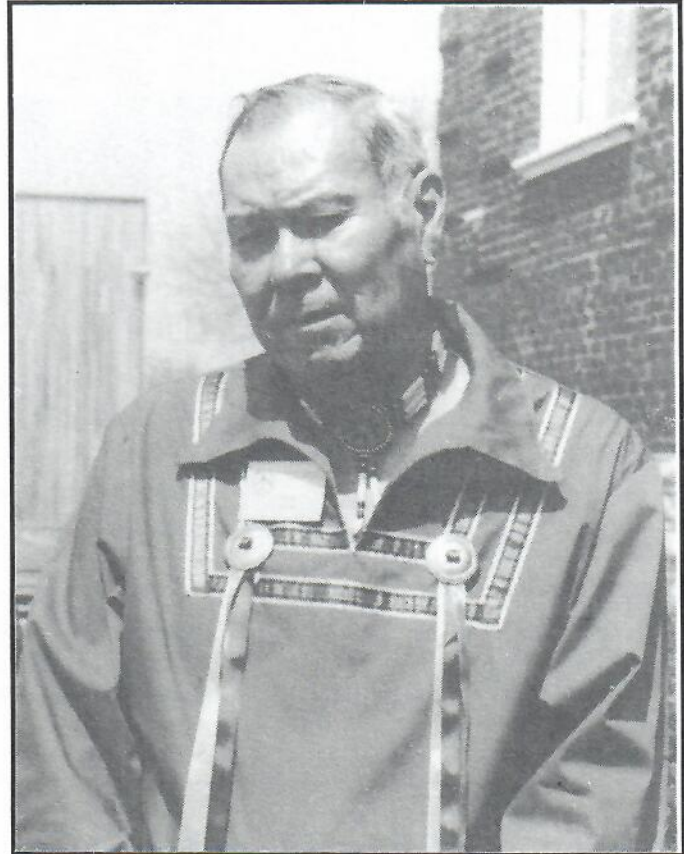
As a linguist Mr. Henry developed the Cayuga writing system currently in use at Six Nations. He translated ceremonial material and developed dictionaries, orthographies and word lists. Mr. Henry was the Centre's main source in the development of curriculum resource material in Cayuga and was our editor for Cayuga material as well. As our Elder Reg opened all the Centre functions with Ganohnyohk, making people feel welcome as they participated in programs, art shows, conferences or museum exhibits. Reg provided advice and consultation to Iroquoian linguists at various universities in Canada and the United States. One of the highlights of his career was the publication of **Concerning the League** a translation of the Great Law from the Onondaga language.

Reg co-authored this with Hanni Woodbury and the Centre was proud to host a book launching with the authors last year.

Because the Centre Director is on the Executive of the National Association for Cultural Centres, Reg Henry served as the eastern Elder for cultural educational centres during my terms of office. As such he performed openings for board meetings, participated in quarterly and annual meetings and offered advice as centre directors requested. Reg was respected and appreciated at the national level and his presence will be missed.

At the Centre, Mr. Henry was a role model for staff, a father figure to the younger staff and mentor for the others. Reg was never too busy to explain the history, culture or spiritual beliefs of the Longhouse to staff who sought his expertise. He extended his special activities for the culture to other organizations or individuals who needed his help in ceremonies. His kindness was unfailing, his humour gentle and his patience exemplary.

On a personal level, Reg Henry extended his graciousness to me as the Executive Director whenever the opportunity arose. He was a wise councillor, a generous Elder, offering advice and encouragement both at the Centre and in my activities as vice president of our National Association. I owe Reg a great deal of thanks. I along with all our staff, Board and countless others will indeed miss him. Nya:wəh Reg for what you gave and for all you were. We carry your memory in our hearts.



*Reg Henry*



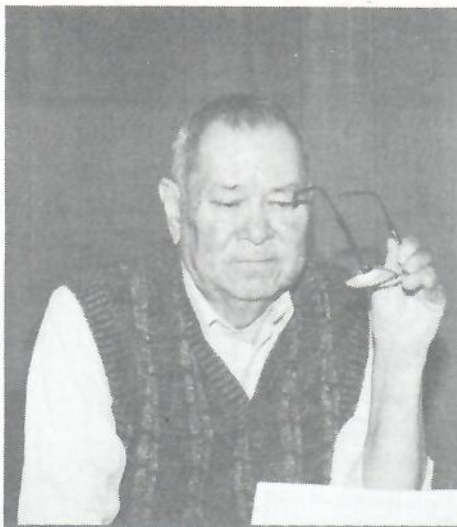
## A great leader, he will be sadly missed

On October 24, 1993, the Iroquois Confederacy and people lost a dear friend, Reg Henry. Reg Henry was a tall, kindly, soft spoken elder in our community. He was a speaker who spoke softly but we all knew he spoke from the heart.

I had the great pleasure of knowing Reg for ten years. Ten short years and yet I grew to know and respect him. His quiet spoken ways helped me many times when having to meet with federal government officials.

Reg came to the helping hand of the National President of Cultural Centres many times by coming to meetings as our elder.

He eloquently opened the meetings with the Ganq̄honyohk (Thanksgiving Address) and closed the meeting. Reg knew that there was a comment or statement he



wanted to make he was there to do so and he did. He was a great protector of the Cultural Centres program.

Reg believed in the preservation of the language and culture. As a fluent speaker of Cayuga he knew the importance of

speaking our language. He devoted his life to his people. He was a teacher: teacher of his language, the traditions, and the culture and our history. He was a speaker in the Seneca longhouse. He shared a big part of his life with the Iroquois people and his friends: native and non-native.

Reg will be missed by all especially his family, relatives and friends. The community will miss his kindness and thoughtfulness. A speaker within the Longhouse is carrying on his journey and I am sure that Reg would say to us: don't forget to learn and speak your language. Remember you are the speakers of today and tomorrow and you need to know our ways. Oneh ki wah eh Reg. Niaweh for your time, help and kindness.

*Barbara Barnes*

## Memorial to Reg Henry

The month of October is noted for the changing of one's season. So should that be at this time in our community. There has been a change. A great loss for our traditional ways and our language.

On October 24, 1993, a man who shared his whole existence in establishing the continuation of the Ogweho:weh ways had journeyed to the land of the creator. To many, Reg Henry was our mentor and dear friend. His departure will be felt in the days to come.

No longer will we be able to stop by and seek the answer that troubled our peace of mind. His quiet strength, soft spoken voice and his inner sense of one's trouble soul will long be remembered by all.

Reg Henry was a very influential person to everyone here at the Woodland Cultural Centre. To the Museum Education Program staff, he was a very important part of our daily training.

Reg gave each individual the time and the needed encouragement. He gave back to the individual, a part of them that has been so long denied or forgotten - their identity.

This is what Reg gave to me; my identity and my purpose in life. He instilled the importance of my existence and the awareness that there was much more to learn. I was like a sponge being immersed into water. His teaching filled my mind and comforted my heart and

my soul. For I had found the peace, the power, and the righteousness of a true human being.

A particular day comes to mind when I was to asked to give a presentation to a Historical Society I felt quite nervous. No! not me, there are others more knowledgeable than me. I quickly sought Reg for a solution. He listened as I explained the situation.

He replied, "Renee, do not be afraid. I know you and how dedicated you have become. Do not be afraid. Trust in your heart, and the words will flow. You have been given a gift, and now is the time for you to share with others. You know Who you are, so do not be afraid. Each of us will be nervous. It is good to be nervous.



It is a sign of being Humble. So each time I do a presentation, I think of his words of encouragement. He is one of the reasons for the success of me, the Museum Education Program and the Woodland Cultural Centre.

Each day, I thank the Creator for having been giving the opportunity of being a student of such knowledgeable person of the Haudenosaunee ways...."Being of the GOOD MIND "

When I hear the term " GOOD MIND ", my thoughts are of Reg. Here was a true being who maintain it though his daily walk. There were many times, he was tested, but he continues to maintain that GOOD MIND.

What a foundation for our community, our nation and our world. Even though he has departed from this walk in life. His words, and strength will continue on through me and many others.

In closing I would like to share these words of comfort.

## When I Must Leave You

When I must leave you, for a little while  
Please do not grieve and shed wild tears  
and hug your sorrows to you, through the years  
But start out bravely with a gallant smile  
And for my sake and in my name, live on and  
Do all things the same.  
Seed not your loneliness on empty days,  
But fill each wakeful hours in useful ways.

Reach out your hand in comfort and in cheer  
And I in return will comfort you and  
hold you near  
And never, never be afraid to die  
For I am waiting for you in the sky.

P.S.

This quote was sent to me, to help me through the loss of my loved one.  
May this help others at this time

Nya Weh

Renee Thomas - Hill  
Museum Cultural Interpreter

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## Memories of Reg

*by Hubert Buck*

The first memory I have of Reg Henry was when my family went to Rochester, to where he was living at the time. He and my father were obviously good friends and he seemed to know who I was. Perhaps I had met him before but when you are young sometimes those meetings do not stick in your mind.

The next memory I have is of him at the Seneca Longhouse. A faithkeeper, he was a presence, a tall man with a good clear voice. I don't recall when he moved back home but it seemed he was always there. It was as if that space on the bench on the other side belonged to him.

When I was a boy there seemed to be no end of people who knew about the longhouse and the languages of the Six Nations. If you wanted to know about something you simply had to ask someone, anyone. Reg's generation viewed this time with concern. Looking back, to me this seems to be the time when more of our older people started to actively teach, in the European sense, our languages and culture.

I remember, as a youngster, being taught words and phrases in the Cayuga language by people who tried to write them using English phonetic conventions. This was, of course, inadequate. Each

person had his or her own idea of how the language should appear, myself included. Many times I could not read something that I had written only hours or minutes before. This was frustrating.

I thought that if I could write my language in a clear, consistent manner, I could then learn it quickly and easily. Reg's orthography was a revelation to me. I was finally able to write what I heard and to read it again later.

The general public will remember him for this phonetic system. It makes it much easier for those of us who learned to learn in a different way to make sense of the many facets of our culture. It



makes it easier to teach our language and culture.

Those of us who knew Reg will remember him differently. He was endlessly patient with those honestly seeking understanding. He could be short with someone who would not understand. It was a waste of his time. He could explain something in both English and Cayuga. He gave of his experience. He was open to new

experiences. He sought knowledge. He was free with his own knowledge. He was a serious man who never took himself too seriously.

These are my impressions of him. I am at a loss. You cannot sum up a man in a few words. I will miss him. He and several of his generation have passed on lately, taking so much knowledge with them.

There is a phrase in the Cayuga language that expresses so much better than English can what we who are left behind must do. The sense of it is that we must be strong, that we must hang tough. When we are about to be overwhelmed by sorrow and loss this us what our people tell us.  
Swajágh.

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## Reg Henry - Scholar

by Sheila Staats

In 1990 Reg Henry was the recipient of Sweetgrass Language Council's Lifetime Achievement Award. The Cayuga Linguist and Cultural consultant contributed to the Iroquoian cultural tradition as a Speaker, an important ritual position requiring extensive training in formal rhetorical traditions. Though his formal education was limited he returned to academia as an adult and received the Certificate in Native Language Teacher Training. By his example and through his encouragement Reg inspired many people to further their education. He worked to assist in the revitalization of native languages in Ontario by chairing the Native Language Advisory Committee which advised the regional office of Indian Affairs Canada. He was widely recognized by First Nations people and academic linguists as a scholar. His lifelong commitment to the development of knowledge is reflected in the following selected list of publications:



Courtesy of The Brantford Expositor

1990 recipients (l-r): Reg Henry, Bessie Lazore, Amos Key presenter, Lena White



Henry, Reg. **Primary Cayuga: Conversational Communication at Mealttime.**  
Woodland Indian Cultural Centre, Brantford, 1976.

Henry, Reg. **Cayuga Language at Mealttime (Colouring Book).**  
Woodland Indian Cultural Centre, Brantford, 1977.

Henry, Reg. **Primary Cayuga: Clothing.**  
Woodland Cultural Centre, Brantford, 1978.

Henry, Reg. and Mithun, M. **Watewayestanih - A Cayuga Teaching Grammar.**  
Woodland Cultural Centre, Brantford, 1977.

Henry, Reg. **Primary Mohawk Kanienkehaka Conversational Communication at Mealttime.**  
Woodland Indian Cultural Centre, Brantford, 1983.

Henry, Reg. **"There's Better Days Ahead."** Speech notes for Paper presented at Annual Conference on Iroquois Research, Rensselaerville, October 7, 1983.

Henry, Reg. **"Iroquoian Dialect Differences"**. Paper presented at Iroquoian Historical Conference, Woodland Indian Cultural Educational Centre, May 27, 1984.

Henry, Reg. **Cayuga Thematic Dictionary.**  
Woodland Cultural Centre, Brantford, 1988.

Mithun, M and Henry, R. **"Notes on Goribundity: Incipient Obsolescence of Oklahoma Iroquois."** Proceedings of the 1979 International Congress of Americanists, Vancouver.

Mithun, M. and Henry, R. **"She nika:yé: a:hato:wá:t kwa' yo (How to Hunt Rabbits)"** in Iroquoian Texts IJAL-NATS, M. Mithun and H. Woodbury (eds) University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1979.

Woodbury, H. **Concerning the League - The Iroquois League Traditions as Dictated in Onondaga** by John Arthur Gibson. Newly Elicited, Edited and Translated by Hanni Woodbury in Collaboration with Reg Henry and Harry Webster on the Basis of A.A. Goldenweiser's Manuscript .  
Algonquian and Linguistic, Memoir 9, 1992.





## Portrait on an Elder

*When Greg Staats was a photography student at Sheridan College he was given an assignment to photograph and write about a significant person in his community. He approached Reg Henry with the idea and Reg readily agreed to assist Greg with the project. The following text and portraits are taken from this 1981 assignment.*

Reginald Henry was born in 1923 on the Six Nations Reserve, and being the eldest of six children, he learned the Cayuga language as a basic conversational language used in his home. When his father became ill, Reg had to support his family, thus leaving him with a grade eight education. He recalls being in public school and being taught in English, but the recess conversation was the Cayuga language. Therefore he views English as a second language.

Reg began teaching the Cayuga language in 1972 in various public schools on the Six Nations Reserve, on a weekly basis. He later enrolled in a four year course at the University of Western Ontario in London. The Second Language Teacher Training Program was geared to presenting the structure language with emphasis on grammar, and to enable the teacher to deliver it in a systematic order, which could be easily understood by school children. In 1976, he was appointed Chairman of the Native Language Advisory Committee, which acted as a connection between the various Native Language Programs on-going across Canada, and the Department of Indian Affairs. Reg was instrumental in preserving the Native Language Programs existence as he urged all Language Teachers to let the Government know that the Indian Languages Programs are of utmost importance to the Indian culture, and that the cut-backs should not be made in



the funding of these programs. He was successful in that the Department of Indian Affairs realized the importance of such programs.

Reg is now employed at the Woodland Indian Cultural and Educational Centre in Brantford, Ontario, as a Linguist-Fieldworker. He is a fluent speaker of two Iroquoian languages and is presently working on the translation of manuscripts penned by Hewitt and Goldenweiser in both the Cayuga and Onondaga languages. These transcripts housed in the Smithsonian Institute in Washington D.C., have never before been translated.

Reg acts as a Language Program consultant as well as a Linguistic consultant for all Ontario and other Provinces where Native Language Programs exist.

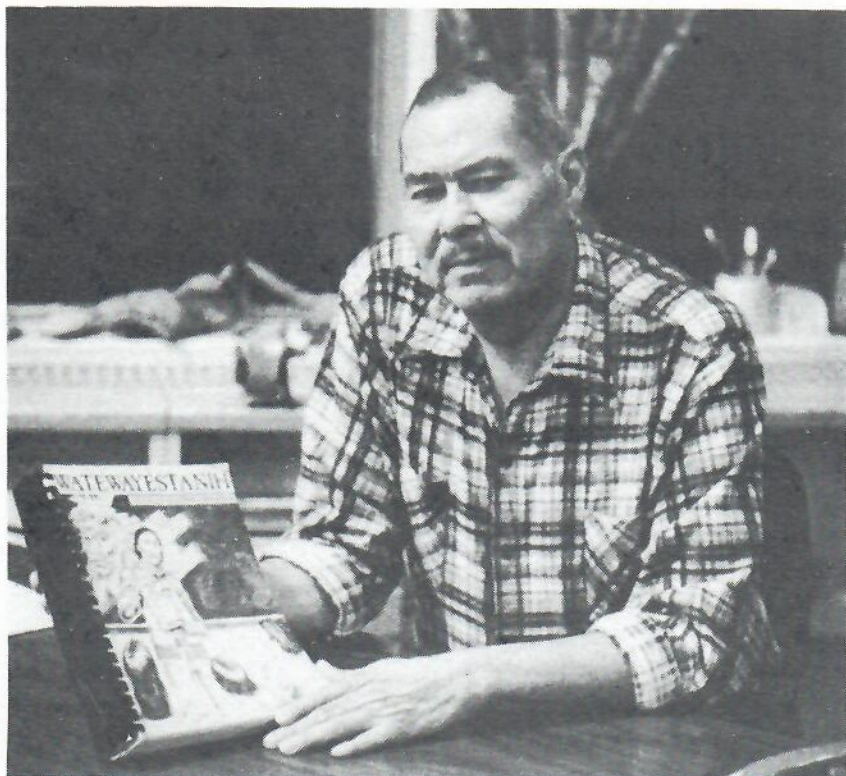
Reg resides on the Six Nations Reserve, with his wife, Marg and

their four daughters. Marg also teaches the Cayuga language to preschoolers for an hour a week.

Reg, along with Marianne Mithun, who is a Linguist and Professor at the State University of New York at Albany and who also has worked with Iroquoian languages for over ten years, have just completed *Watewayestanih*, a Cayuga Teaching Grammar. A first of its kind, this 618 page guide takes on a new approach to learning a language. It allows people to learn the structure and vocabulary of the language by developing new ideas as well as learning about various situations. Using pictorial representations, the book teaches the language through situations. Although this book was meant to be used in the presence of a Cayuga speaker, the guidance given allows this book to be used by any person wishing to learn the language.

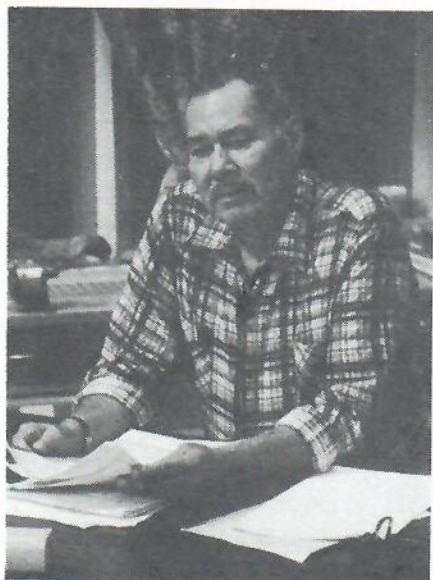
The contents of the book includes an introduction on how to use the Cayuga Teaching Grammar, and what the language sounds like as well as how the Cayuga language differs from the other Iroquoian languages. Each chapter is constructed around a conversation involving an everyday situation. It also discusses translation, stresspoints, particles, and structure inherent in the conversation. The authors have taken a systematic approach, whereby each chapter views the situation from two different angles, thus developing the vocabulary and





enabling the identification of the grammatical structures. The book concludes with a translation of all dialogues used, a glossary of all words used, and a summary of linguistic structures that make up a conversation.

Reg and Marianne have been working together on this Grammar Text for two years, and have been successful in their efforts. This



book is a breakthrough in the teaching of the language.

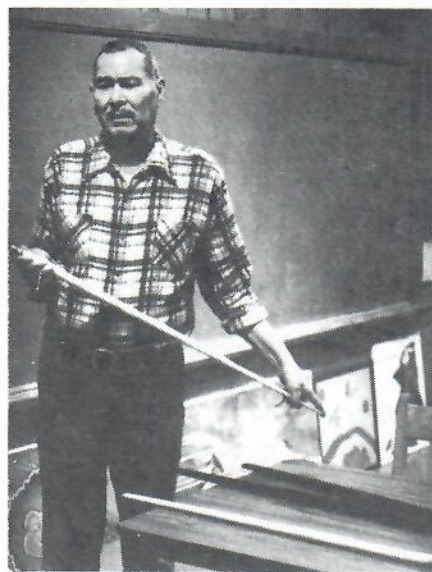
When asked about the future concerning the teaching of the Cayuga language, Reg replied that the language is the basis of survival for the Indian people. It is a part of the Indian culture and heritage. The young people learning their language have something which identifies them as being a Native Indian, and this is their language. He hopes the Cayuga Language Program will continue and more people will become interested, and that soon the language will be offered as a course in the surrounding Secondary School program off the Reserve, where many Native students attend, after completing public school on the reserve.

Reg, being active in the traditional Longhouse Religion on the Reserve, takes part in many of the ceremonies and games throughout the year.

Here he shows two pairs of Snowsnakes, one of the more

popular winter sports. A tournament is held annually at the W.I.C.E.C. A track of snow is constructed about four feet high and is tapered into a mile long track. The contestants from each team take turns throwing the polished hickory shaft down this icy track. A point system is used for scoring. These games are not only a time to compete, but they are a time of social gathering where people are united by their culture.

Reg is a very knowledgeable person concerning Indian history and Language. His job at the W.I.C.E.C. is not only a Fieldworker, but he also serves a valuable research resource person. As to his plans in the future, he will continue his job as a Linguist, encouraging other teachers and our people to become more aware of their language and culture.





# Shagohędeta Reg Henry

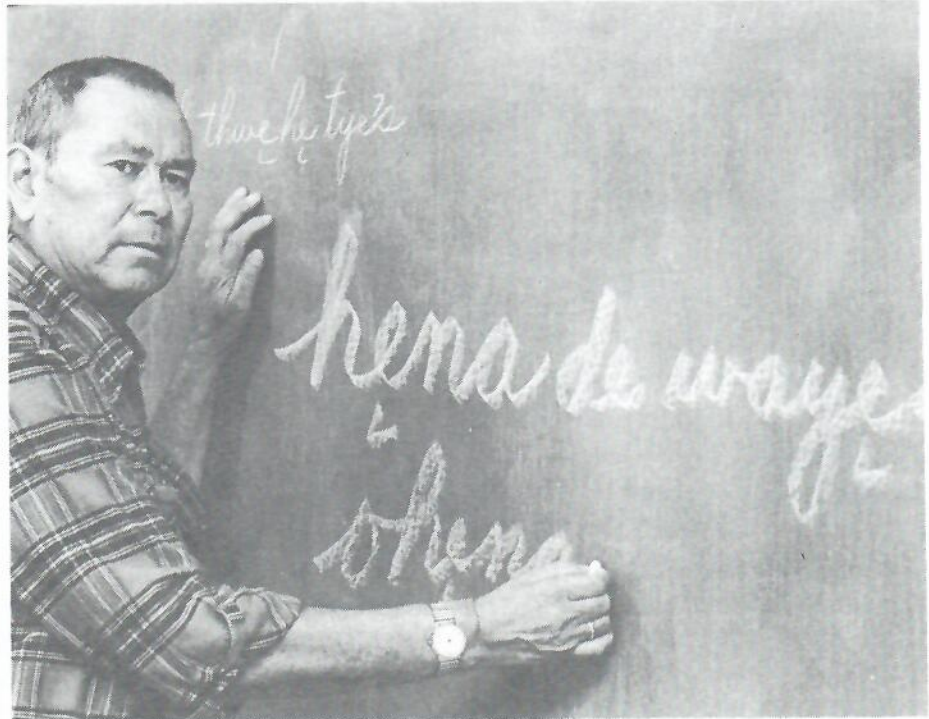
1923-1993

by Amos Key

He Leads the People is the translation of Reg Henry's given name. A name given at birth by the Longhouse community. It is amazing how one's given name often reflects the life or road one travels in life. The naming ritual is tied to a greater ceremony as part of Gei: niyoihwa:ge: (The Four Great Ceremonies). It should be remembered, one does not choose one's name, it is done by a collective, clan or family. He Leads the People.

It is difficult even now to write this short piece. We never thought that when he took a sick leave in March he would not return to his desk. This is further compounded by the fact that he took this sick leave at the time when another great leader had passed on: Hubert Buck Sr., Seneca Chief, Faithkeeper, Elder and Uncle. Reg was having such a hard time he could not even attend to his friend Hubert's funeral. Added to this was the passing of my own mother just a week before Reg. Together they took with them over two hundred years of life experiences and at least four languages each. These great events have made us in the Language Program even more determined to complete our work as there are now only 138 speakers of the Cayuga language remaining in the World!

Reg often said to us these words of encouragement and charges:  
 "Sadewayę:s... Swadewayę:s...  
 tęneh wędo, gyot go:t  
 totakdagyehshek...  
 Swadewayę:s!" (you learn... you all



Courtesy of The Brantford Expositor

learn... I will not always be standing here  
 ... all of you learn!)

Reg Henry worked with us in the Language Program for nine years. We still had a lot of work to complete with him and he had still had a lot to teach us. We will surely miss him.

We will miss his counsel and his brand of 'hidden' humour. For instance at the end of one of our cultural classes, he ended the class by saying: "I guess I grab my drum and beat it." or his classic, "I guess I make like a tree and leave." These were his mild jokes. He did have a collection of what he called his 'blue' stories. He had stories about the depression, W.W.II and his work experiences on the pipeline,

farming, etc. He could relate these in a number of languages even English! But somehow they lost some of the humour when translated.

We have a great wealth of information that he left us to work with. He helped organize the entire collection of some eighty, ninety minute tape collection of Gei: niyoihwa:ge: and other ceremonies which were recorded between 1986 and 1989. These verbatim recordings included the ceremonial music as well.

He left us also an English translation of the Code of Handsome Lake which was taken from an original Onondaga manuscript. He worked meticulously on this script for



approximately 4 years. We hope to soon make that available to the public in printed form.

Reg was a Faithkeeper of the Longhouse; he led the Bear and Deer Moiety of the Seneca Fire. When he took this charge is not remembered and not important. What is important was he followed in the footsteps of such great orators as Bill Thomas and Willie Sherry.

Many young people came to learn and listen to Reg recount stories and lessons at his trailer next to his home. These evening sessions involved explaining the content of orations and short speeches, discussions of the music and protocol of many, many ceremonies and rituals. No question was ever too sensitive to be answered nor comment too strong to be discussed.

Also of great importance and dear to him was his work in helping the community heal. No matter the 'walk of life' the person or family possessed, he worked with them to understand their place and assist them.

He spent much of his free time after work helping families in the community with their private ceremonies or 'doings'. I counseled him once about this, but he would

not slow down. It seemed, even if he was slightly under the weather or tired from putting in a full day's work, he somehow managed to include this work as part of his normal day. He would say to me: "You know, I can not be the judge of who to help or who not to help, someone greater than us will judge. You must try to think like that." We became more concerned with these added community responsibilities when his health was starting to fail him. At that time we thought he might limit this role as part of his day. But Reg was Reg and he continued to help the community until his health dictated otherwise.

It should be told too that the Cayuga language teachers affectionately tagged him their 'guru'. He always had time to give any one of them an answer to their questions about the language, it's structure or some other aspect of the culture, and often it was delivered so quickly it was like magic.

I can remember the day I was raised as a Faithkeeper, he gave the speech that charged me with that duty and role in front of all the clans at the Seneca Longhouse. He would tell me later, again and again: "do not take that position

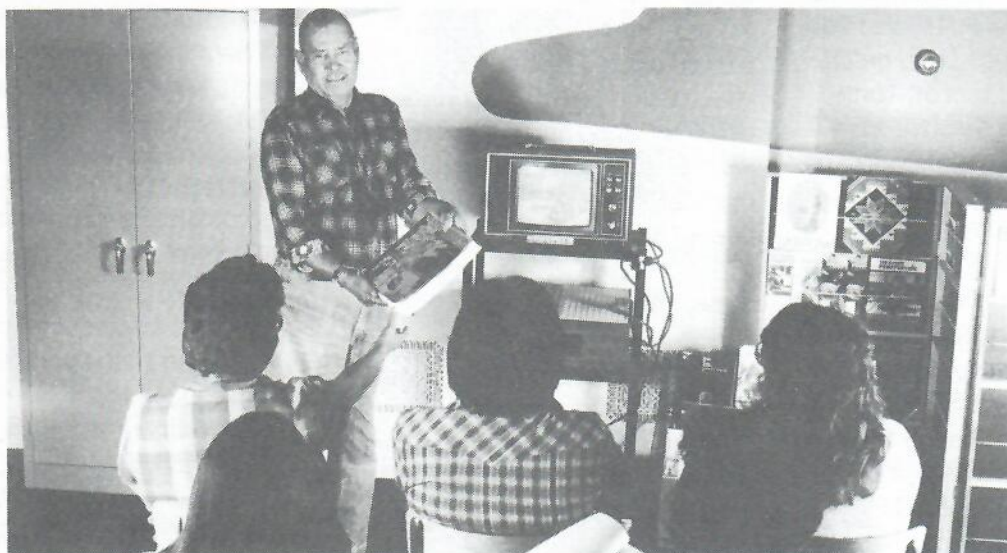
lightly... you must grow thick skin and not let any one or any thing bother you in that role. Because it was not the people who chose you to fill that role, they just confirmed it...it was planned .....way before you were even born, that you would work for the people as a Faithkeeper."

We find comfort today in remembering what Reg use to say the old folks use to tell him. We suppose he related this to us so that we might be better prepared for our own eventual passing or that of some one close to us:

"When a person dies during the reciting of the Code of Handsome Lake or during Gei: niyoihwa:ge: (the Four Great Ceremonies) they travel to Shogwayadis'oh with nothing stopping them....and they are greeted with the sweet scent of fresh strawberries... and those who pass on ahead of us will welcome and meet you with a celebration of the Great Feather Dance...with Ostowagowah that is why you must wear your Longhouse clothes...."

Remembering this teaching:  
Oh, how they must have celebrated on that fine day!

Shagohedeta, He Leads the People, 1923 - 1993





## Conversations We Had With Reg

by Tom Hill

*Over the years at the Centre, Reg Henry would host every Monday cultural or language classes for Centre staff members who were given the option to attend. The following excerpts which have been paraphrased are from my rough notes from cultural classes of conversations we had with Reg.*

*Reg was an insightful teacher presenting our social and cultural history in a warm, sensitive and personal manner. He was extremely generous with his own time often to a point where he would sacrifice his own needs to accommodate others not only in the Centre but in the community. He was many things to many people.*

*He was a faithkeeper, a traditional speaker, a linguist, a researcher, an informant, a teacher, a mentor an historian, an avid fisherman, a gardener, and to us at the Museum a colleague and a friend. He will be missed but the words he gave us informally at work or at Monday cultural classes will live on in our hearts and our minds forever.*

### September, 1988

(opening on the short version of the Thanksgiving address)

nə· dah nigəkyohg·odé·  
 ɛswathəqhsiyóhs gaihwaɛtqóh  
 awá·dó.  
 né·ʔ hɛdwaihwakyé·o  
 sɔ́gway·adis·óh sɔ́gwáwí·  
 ganóhonyohk né· ne· aowesáht  
 sɛnɔ́ dwɛnóhdonyoh nedín·e·  
 ɛdwéne·k i·hyá·ʔ sgá·t ɛdwayé·ʔ  
 ɔ́gw·anigoha· sgá·t  
 dɛdwadatnóhonyo·ʔ netogyé·  
 niyohtó·k ɔ́gwa·nigoha·ʔ

### October, 1985

We must really understand the ceremonies because it is really about life - our lives. Long before any white man set foot on Turtle Island there was a time we were very disorganized. To organize us, the first thing the Creator gave us was the clans. He then gave us leaders or Chiefs whose main function was to look after the people. In those early days we never had religious ceremonies as we have now. Our lives evolved around the forests and the trees. If you think about it everything we had came from the trees.

"Stirring Ashes" is reflecting those early days but it is really about giving thanks to the Creator. It is renewal of life. Ashes is the symbolism of that renewal. It was important that the Chiefs be there because they represent the people. You know "stirring ashes" was probably our first religious ceremony.

### September, 1991

Women are really the center of our (thinking) philosophy. They are the ones that bring life into this earth and we must honour them for the most important role.

Handsome Lake told us how we are to respect them but today we are caught up into another society and we don't do it very well.

Eskanye was the only way in which we sang our best songs so the women could dance and enjoy themselves. It was a way of honouring them.

### June, 1987

At social dances we always begin with "gada tro:t - Standing Quiver Dance". You know, at one time it was of a celebration or greeting dance after a war or a long



hunt. The returning warriors or hunters were supposed to stand their quivers up of those men who did not return. It was a way of paying respect to those who died in service to the people. The dance was also used when the men left the village.

### July, 1987

You are required to wear your Indian clothes at the Big Green Corn Dance. In the old days we would wear our Indian clothes for most ceremonies in the Longhouse.

You know you should at least once a year wear your Indian



clothes go out in the fields or the bush alone and thank the Creator.

### February, 1988

Ours is a different lifestyle now and I look back fondly to those old days when we would sit around the wood stove or the kitchen table and tell stories in our language with the old folks. You had to use the language then to create those images in the minds of your listeners and make your ideas understandable.

Today, technology particularly television seems to wipe out our part. Kids are more interested in all the action on T.V. than listening to us folks telling stories about what life was like twenty-five, fifty or sixty years ago.

I guess you can use video as a teaching tool but we lose a little of our identity because the feeling we have with what is shown on the T.V. screen will shift every time we play it. I don't know what it is but it is not the same. It's not very human. You can detach yourself from it and even be amused by video material that could be serious. The best learning happens through experience.

When I was a boy and going to school we would play longhouse out in the woodshed during recess. The girls would play with us pretending to cook by making mud pies and the boys would pretend to preach. We would sing and dance just like we did in the longhouse. We played in the Cayuga language. Now, that's learning from experience.

### January, 1987

You know the Grand River is really part of us. Just think how we used the River. If it wasn't there we would probably not have

survived. We got our fish from it, we drank it, we washed our clothes with it, we watered our cows and our gardens and we swam in it.

When I was a boy we would go down to the flats to help our parents look after our gardens. We usually planted our white corn down there. My favourite time was in the summer when we had to hoe the young plants. It seemed like everyone was down along the River working in their fields.

At noon, you could look all the way down the river and see smoke from the fires being lit for our mothers to make our lunch. Kids all along the River would jump into the water for their noon hour swim. Summer seemed to go on forever then.

Having a garden for Iroquoians is really important. Today, people just drive to Mac's Milk to buy their corn, beans and squash. When you plant seeds, water them and see them grow and finally, harvest them. It makes you realize the power of the Creator. We have a lot to be thankful for.

### February, 1992

Yeah, that Bill C-31 is going to cause us a lot of trouble. I know it's about equal rights but we also have our own ways. We shouldn't discriminate but we do. You know if you accept what the Great Law says everybody is welcome under the Tree of Peace, red, black and white - that is if they accept its terms of peace.

### Spring, 1986

The word for Museum is "ek do'nt kwa". I'm going to the Museum is said "ek do'nt kwa géh ha ge"- now, when I get there you better have something I want to see.

### August, 1987

I like to go to that Annual Anthropology Conference in Rensselaerville, New York. That is where you hear all those big guys of Iroquoians anthropology. Some of their presentations are really good. Dr. Lounsbury presented a real interesting paper there showing relationships of Iroquoian language to Aztec languages.

I don't always agree with what is said because mistakes are often made because the anthropologists don't have a working knowledge of the language. A good example is the use of the White Pine as the symbol for the Tree of Peace. I think the symbol was the Great Elm and the mistake was made in the translation by some anthropologist.

I know they are supposed to be scientists but sometimes they miss the whole point because the point is about feelings. Linguists are a little different because they understand the language. You know Hanni and Marianne Mithun can speak Cayuga real good.

### March, 1988

I always like going to Tyendinaga. That Les Claus and Ken Claus always have such good fish.

### Summer, 1985

You know I was a hobo once- or what ever you want to call it. I had to "ride the rails" to go looking for jobs. It was hard but you can learn from those experiences as well.

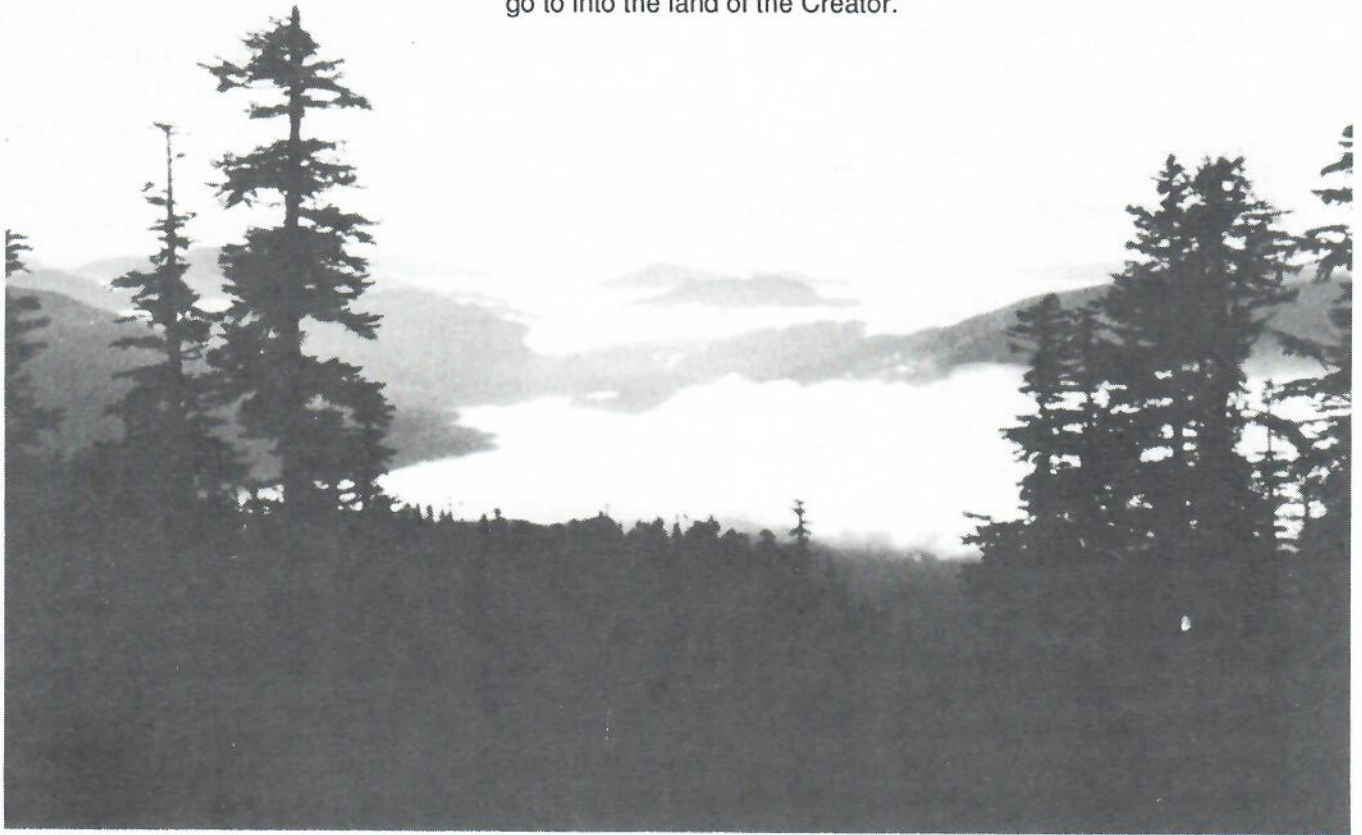
I was even a pin boy in a bowling alley. I would be setting back there just hoping the bowler wouldn't get a strike because the pins would just go flying and I would



have to run around to stand them all up. I'd be just happy when they missed. I did many jobs in my life but I guess one of the most important ones was when they asked me and Marge to move back from Rochester and help them out at the Longhouse. It was hard for the girls but it was the best thing I did.

**Spring, 1991**

You can feel sad when a loved one dies but there should be no excessive crying because that might interfere with their journey.  
Our ways are really about consoling the mind.  
There should be no getting angry.  
Love each other - for that will help everyone get over the mourning.  
Have peace! It makes it so much easier for the loved one to go to into the land of the Creator.





## From the Research Program

by Sheila Staats

# Spiritual Evolution Of The Iroquois

There are three religious reforms in the Iroquois course of time, from the beginning of time, several thousands years ago until some 181 years ago. Our religious and political formations were all God-given, through mediums of changing eras. Peacemaker, Fatherless man and Handsome Lake. But the first introduction of a religion amongst Iroquoians was combined with politics. It had no significance to sin. It was more of a Thanksgiving Ceremony of Mother Earth's creation, of which we benefited almost entirely for survival.

For us Natives, most anything that lives and grows has a purpose and a spirit, for the purpose of communication in times of need and in appreciation in meeting these needs. The needs are many, it could be for food or it could be for medicine. Weeds, bushes, trees, animals and running waters are only a small part of What Mother Earth provides for us. The medium we have been given for communicating with any spirit is Indian Tobacco.

The world could not function without the sun, the moon, the stars, the winds and the thunder Gods and so we give thanks to their spirits also.

In the beginning the Creator gave us Clans, divided into moieties, to form two main groups, to organize, to function as a people in times of rejoicing and in times of sorrow, and in times of misunderstanding. Then, the

Creator gave us women and men of wisdom to Chieftainship to carry out the peoples wishes of a religious ceremony.

This one religious ceremony that the Chiefs did was for the people, they represented the people in this ceremony. The stirring of tree ashes between the two clan groups of people. The lives of the people of that time revolved around the forests, the animals, the firewood, the numerous games, the sugar in their homes, their means of transportation on lakes and rivers. Their entire livelihood was dependent upon the forests. So the tree ashes became a symbol of life.

This was life in the beginning of time for us Natives. They had nothing but love for each other, hate and sin was unknown.

Some few thousand years later, the first religious reform enters the Iroquois cultural structure, after tribes were formed and split into different directions. Then came sin with disastrous results. Killings, scalping of each other's people, the plundering of each other's villages, for whatever reason is not clear, it seems it may be the other to rule larger domains for hunting purposes. It brought misery to the women and children. Peace was a thing of the past.

Then the Creator gave us a man of wisdom, a man with unusual powers. The divine power to survive many attempts on his life, to curtail his purpose of life, to bring peace amongst the Five Nations of

the Iroquois. A Five Nations Confederacy that would govern the Iroquois in a unique peace format that would be called the Great Law.

It was a God-given political structure that would be of religious significance which makes it unique in every sense of the word. Which in itself is hard to believe by non-Natives. The Five Nations Confederacy would consist of the Onondagas, Senecas, Mohawks, Cayugas and Oneidas. In the course of his peace mission, he was to recruit a helper to accomplish this peace mission. After many trying years it was finally accepted by all Five Nations. Much later, the Tuscaroras and Tutelos were accepted into the Confederacy. This peace mission did bring peace to the Five Nations, restored its formal ways of life to a favourable degree. There were no more killings and scalplings. There was peace among the Five Nations. This also was the beginning of the Five Nations political strict structured format.

The Creator again sent someone from his heavenly domain to restore peace and love against his Native people. This was the coming of the fatherless man, this was the second religious reform amongst us Iroquois.

To restore peace he made the Natives more aware of our Creator, he taught them to appreciate most everything that was created for us, in a more specific way. Through ceremonies, that mostly consisted of dancing is



the highlight of any happy event. These ceremonies were continuous from when the air warmed in spring, until the air grew cold in the fall from the frost. It was a continuous event of thanksgiving dancing from the first awakening of summer, the running of sap of the maple tree until harvest time in the fall.

The biggest events amongst the Iroquois is the Green Corn Dance and the Midwinter Dance. The Green Corn Dance is a three-day ceremony when the Creator and all of our sustenance are given thanks through speeches and dancing. Our main sustenance are corn, beans and squash but the many additional forms are also included. The coming of the fatherless man seems to coincide with the fact that the Natives already had agricultural skills to supplement their natural sources of survival.

The other big event I spoke of is the Midwinter Ceremony, which lasts for eight days, at Six Nations. This ceremonial time varies in the different Iroquoian areas. In some areas the ceremony is shorter or longer. Aside from these two events, there are approximately eighteen events

in between. To follow this new religious format closely, there would be little time for killing, as the songs and speeches of these ceremonies are also long and require a good deal of time to master.

At this time, most of the games we know of today were introduced by the fatherless man. Still at this time there were only Natives on the North American continent.

The fatherless man's effort was successful and still exists today with the first and second reforms combined. This was life some two thousand years ago. Then came the third and last religious reform amongst the Iroquois. This was some 181 years ago, when sin again ravaged Native villages, but this time on a larger scale. Several times over what was in the past thousand years. This time the Creator transferred his feeling and wants through a medium of this new era, Handsome Lake.

Handsome Lake declared alcohol as the greatest source of sin. Alcohol was bad for the Natives, it changed the mind, it made people capable of sins that they could not commit under normal conditions (Sobriety). Alcohol was

the biggest force of sin in changing the lives of Native people. The introduction of a new culture, changed their whole outlook on life. In short, us Natives could not handle what this new culture has to offer, it was new, it was tempting, we became so immersed with this new culture that we lost many of our ways, a culture that was meant for only us Natives. This new culture brought many sins that were unknown in the past.

Handsome Lake brought this message from the Creator to the Native people and because we were not wholly to blame for the sins, he gave us this wonderful thing of repentance. We could repent for sins we committed, repent to the Creator. Handsome Lake spent the remaining years of his life preaching this new religious reform amongst Iroquois villages.

This still exists today. But for how long?

Handsome Lake predicted as he did so many other things in our remaining years, that this new culture will introduce their language which in time will completely erase our own Native language from our minds.

This will be the last of the Natives as a people.



## Is the Tree of Peace Really a Pine Tree?

*The following is the paper presented by Reg Henry at the Annual Conference on Iroquois Research, September 22, 1990 at Rensselaerville, New York.*

From the beginning of time to the present time there have always been discussions about our social lives based on religion and the political structure. Since a lot of our beliefs are based on metaphors, it is confusing to us, let alone somebody that is not fluent in Iroquoian. Even though there has been a lot of research done in the past by interested non-natives with the help of natives (informants), I believe there was a considerable lack of communication between the researcher and the informant and that some of the information derived from these research sessions became based on assumptions. There are two areas to which I find questionable.

1. Was the tree of peace really a pine tree? There has been a lot written about the tree of peace, but nothing really definite has been mentioned. Example: In 1684, peace was promised by the Iroquoians and Lord Effinton, A Triton. The Iroquois said "we now plant a tree whose tops will reach the sun and its branches will spread far abroad, so it shall be seen far off. We shall shelter ourselves under this tree and live in peace," hence the tree of peace, but what kind? Was it a flower as the Hurons say, or is it a Balsam fir, the branches slanting upwards said the Ojibways.

Or is it as Peacemaker said to Tadoda:ho: "I plant the peace in your territory, that you will be the firekeeper of the five nations. I name the tree of peace, {the tree of long leaves (Onondaga dialect)}."

Note the similarity in the pronunciation of long leaves and long pine. Was this where the assumption of a pine tree started? The confusion comes from the extra vowel Onondaga has, a a and e that is conventional in Iroquoian. Incidentally, Seneca also has this a sound. Only an experienced linguist would be aware of this, or only an Onondaga and Seneca linguist would notice these sound similarities.

In the late 20's the elders of the day would come to grandma's store and buy tobacco and sit around for hours discussing many aspect of our culture. One was the great tree of peace which they mentioned was the mid field great elm, gahogago:wah (Cayuga). They would go on to say, no other tree could compare to its sturdiness, because of its weathering of many storms, that for this reason it has twisted into knots and almost impossible to split for firewood, and that no wind ever uprooted the great elm of the field.

2. My concern is the Mohawk name of the great law kaianerenko:wah. According to an authority in Mohawk dialect here, there are two concerns. One is, there is no wah suffix sound, that it is whispered. The other concern is that the name has been abbreviated from kaianerenserako:wah. As a speaker and a would be Iroquoian linguist, I tend to agree with this man. Is this concern, again the results of poor communication?

**Item # 1**

In regard to the Tree of Peace, notice the sound similarity between these two Onondaga words:

The tree of long leaves -  
ona:tetsisko:nah

The long pine trees -  
one:tetsisko:nah

Could this have created a confusion and resulted in a questionable conclusion?

**Item # 2**

In regards to the Great Law:  
The Great Law -  
kaianerenserako:wah (complete form)

The Great Law - kaianerenko:wah (in complete form and voiced suffix).





## Christmas and Noya

Each year the holiday season approaches Library staff receive a number of requests for information regarding First Nations and Christmas. The questions often take the form "how did Native People celebrate Christmas before European contact?" and "how do Indians celebrate Christmas now?" These questions often come from students involved in the "Christmas Around the World" projects and even from teachers. Others have come from writers preparing books such as "Lets Celebrate" or "Christmas in Canada". In anticipation of these requests staff began an all purpose research file on Christmas and Noya. Newsclippings are added to this file and now contain Keith Jamieson's "New Ya's tradition is unique to reserve" from the Expositor, December 31, 1984; George Beaver's "Noo Yaw was eagerly-awaited day" from the January 11, 1988 Expositor and "Doughnut dolls great on No:Ya" from the January 2, 1991 Expositor. Also in the file is probably the most extensive description of Noyá: in Barbara

Graymont's article "The Tuscarora New Year Festival" which appears in the April 1969 volume of New York History. The author explains the two different observances of the New Year - Midwinter and "Nu Yah". Her informant at the Tuscarora Reservation was Clinton Rickard.

Also in this Christmas file is a Hamilton Spectator newsclipping from December 20, 1985, "It's a special time on reserve even for those with Traditional beliefs." The writer Beth Marlin interviewed Reg Henry for the story and he explained his views on Christmas "I'm not a Christian. I'm a Traditionalist and so is my wife. But come along Christmastime, we get a tree and give presents.

Our religion is sort of based on nature. Everytime something comes new there's a thanksgiving of it with speeches and dancing." He explained that only in the last few generations have people celebrated Christmas and that there is no equivalent of Merry Christmas in aboriginal languages. Christmas is viewed as a cultural holiday

rather than a religious one and so many families follow the traditions kept by other Canadians including decorating an evergreen tree, enjoying a turkey dinner and giving presents. "They almost have no choice but to give presents - for the sake of the kids" - to save them from disappointment when other kids get toys at Christmas." Reg explained that he remembered Christmas as a child during the 1920's. " We never had a Christmas tree when I was growing up but there was a Santa Claus we went to see. My grandparents who were really traditional to the point they could barely speak English, they gave us presents. They never gave us toys though. They gave us shoes and boots and food, things like that ".

Reg concluded the interview by telling the reporter that he had no problem engaging in Christmas celebrations. " Even the Christians themselves, a lot of them don't know the true meaning of Christmas. It's so commercialized ". He concluded that regardless of religious beliefs "nobody could hate Christmas."

## Woodland has new Anishinaabeg Consultant



My name is Sandra Peltier and I am from Wikwemikong on Manitoulin Island. I have three children Duke, Rosalind, and Lyndon. I received my educational background at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay. I recently joined the Woodland Cultural Centre as the Anishinaabeg Language Consultant. It is my hope, that I can be of assistance to teachers in providing them with my knowledge

and expertise in order that we may benefit each other as we develop and enhance Cultural/Language programs in Southern Ontario.



# Kanien'kéha Standardization Project

## Background:

The idea of standardizing the writing system (orthography) used by the Kanien'kéha speakers of the six Kanién:ke First Nations communities originated through various developments and concerns of the Ministry of Education and Training since 1979.

In 1981, a First Nations Language Advisory Committee outlined Aboriginal language needs to include teacher training, printed materials, dictionaries, grammars and video materials. In order to produce the materials which could be used for everyone in a language community, standards would have to be agreed upon.

The Ministry of Education and Training views Aboriginal languages as legitimate and valid forms of communication, which are now threatened. In Ontario, only the Cayuga language has been standardized. The Ministry objective is to ensure the revitalization of the provinces Aboriginal languages. The Ministry will also assist the Aboriginal people in Ontario to develop standard literacy forms and to prepare material in their languages for the use in their schools.

The suggested method used for standardizing the Mohawk language for the six communities was a First Nations Language Standardization Conference. The First Nations people would have control over the process of standardization, and the Ministry would provide the financial support to achieve a literacy language. Prior to the conference a two day workshop was held to determine the orthography issues.

On August 17-20, linguists



Ruth Isaac

elders, language specialists, Band Council representatives and language teachers assembled at the Tyendinaga Community Centre for the four day conference. There were seventy-five speakers from Ahkwesáhsne, Tyendinaga, Six Nations, Gibson and invited from the Quebec were representatives from Kanehsatake and Kahnawá:ke.

Twelve letters of the Roman alphabet will be used to present vowels and consonants at all Mohawk Communities.

Letters are:

Vowels	A, E, I, O
Nasalized vowels	en, on
Consonants	H, K, N, R, S, T, W, Y, (F)

The F sound will be written as WH. The Y sound will be used when 2 or more vowels appear together and the first had been an "I" Ts replaces J.

## Diacritical Marks

/ accent marks to indicate stress

and rising tone.

/: up-accent mark plus length.

\ accent mark to indicate stress and falling tone.

\: down-accent plus length.

> glottal stop will be used to severely chop off vowel length.

## Punctuation marks:

? Question marks will be used.

. Periods at the end of a sentence.

, commas will be used.

! Exclamation marks will be used.

" Quotation marks will be used.

Capital letters will be used for proper names, at the beginning of sentences, place names, book titles and community buildings such as library, medical clinic, etc.

Dialects of each community will be respected. The writing system in no way affects the way people speak or the difference in the way in which they are said. The result is that all communities will write the same way.



## Coming & Going in The Museum

### The Power of Place at the Legislative Building

Ontario's diverse landscapes and their impact on the province's First Nations is the focus of **The Power of Place** which opened on November 15, 1993 at the Legislative Building, Queen's Park by the Honourable Lieutenant-Governor Henry H.R. Jackman.

**The Power of Place** is one of the ways Speaker David Warner and the Legislative Assembly is marking the International Year for the World's Indigenous People (1993) and recognizing the contribution of Ontario First Nations to the cultural heritage of the province.

This exhibit is an exploration of First Nation's relationships to the province's natural environment and cosmologies. Incorporating seventeen works of art from across Ontario, the exhibit is an intimate visual journey, which through art, attempts to reconnect not only First Nations but all citizens of Ontario to the power which lives within its natural landscape. The exhibit features paintings, in a variety of media, which illustrate legends about natural sites in Ontario, augmented by a small selection of pottery, sculpture and jewellery, reflecting diverse experiences and perceptions of the province's many landscapes.

Artists featured in the exhibit are: Rebecca and Kenny Baird; Carl Beam; Patricia Deadman; Blake Debassige; David General; Gesso; Elwood Green; Arnold Jacobs; Joshim Kakegamic; Mel Madahbee; Jenny Maracle; William Powless; Michael Robinson and Valerie Whetung. Loaning works for the exhibition are: Arnold Gottlieb Gallery, Toronto; Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto; Thunder Bay; Woodland Cultural Centre, Brantford; and private collectors.

This exhibit is located in the North Heritage Room of the Legislative Building, Queen's Park, Toronto, until June 24, 1994.

### Faber Castell makes donation to Museum

A limited edition of a set of china plates showing pow wow dancers from Six Nations were donated at a September 24th ceremony in the Museum Orientation Room. The limited edition plates was a series designed to be given to employees of Faber Castell for years of service to the company. Amos Keye, our language director organized the photographic shot for Rolland Armon, the photographer who designed the plate. Amos received a plate from the President of the Company.



*President Robert Sillers of Faber-Castell presenting the first numbered set of plates to the Woodland Cultural Centre*



## Museum Sponsors Carl Beam Exhibit in Italy

In co-operation with the Ontario Arts Abroad program, the Arnold Gottlieb Gallery, the Leonardi V-Idea Gallery in Genova, Italy, the Museum is pleased to facilitate an exhibition of Carl Beam's work titled "infinito and finito." With a catalogue introduction by Richard Rhodes, the exhibit included large acrylic and photo emulsion works that originally formed a part of the Columbus exhibit shown at the Power Plant. European Critics were impressed and plans are now under way to take the exhibit to Germany and Switzerland.



*Opening of the Centre's Carl Beam exhibit in Genova, Italy*

## Museum Director receives OMA Award of Merit



*Tom Hill receives the Award of Merit from the OMA president, Lawrence Grant*

At the Ontario Museums Association Annual General meeting on Friday, October 22, Tom Hill, the Centre's Museum Director was presented with the OMA Award of Merit. Margaret May, the OMA Award of Merit Committee Chair announced the 1993 recipients prior to the meeting. The award is designed to recognize outstanding contributions to the professional practice of Museum work in Ontario. Tom was recognized for his work as director, curator, trustee, advocate and advisor. Special mention in the commendation noted his work as Co-Chair of the Task Force on Museums and First Peoples and his efforts to ensure that Museums contribute to the debates of contemporary society.



## Jesus met Nanabush in the Museum

Two full houses came to see **If Jesus met Nanabush** a play produced by De-ba-jeh-mu-jig Theatre and presented in the Museum's Orientation Centre. The play is based on the premise of Jesus meeting Nanabush and then going on the Pow Wow circuit. Clayton Odjig played Nanabush and Alon Nashman played Jesus with Sharon King as the woman. Anne Anglin directed the production with Alanis King Odjig the playwright - a 1992 Graduate of the National Theatre School of Canada. Alanis is currently the fourth Artistic Director of De-ba-jeh-mu-jig Theatre.



*Jesus meeting Nanabush*

## Robert Markle Trust Fund is receiving applicants

A scholarship established to honour the memory of Robert Markle, Artist and Teacher (1936-1990) is now receiving applications towards a November 30th deadline. Successful candidates will receive approximately twelve hundred dollars. A resume, a selection of colour slides and/or black and white photography, recommendations from an instructor or institution should be sent to the Robert Markle Fund c/o Woodland Cultural Centre, 184 Mohawk Street, P.O. Box 1506, Brantford, Ontario, N3T 5V6

Robert Markle understood very well the need students have for financial support and as a Mohawk originally from Tyendinaga and intensely interested in his heritage, realized how much more difficult it can be for a First Nations person to study art after high school.

## Museum Shop set for Christmas

Linda Jamieson our Museum Shop manager has been stocking up (excuse the pun) for the mad rush that opens our Christmas season with the Independent Handicrafters Bazaar. Linda has been looking for the unusual specialty items that are inexpensive and suitable for packing and mailing. Handcrafted Tree ornaments, Christmas stockings by Dusty Sowden, miniature ceramics from Darlene Smith, baskets from Akwesasne, all make unusual Christmas gifts which become collectable favourites as time passes.

For the more elaborate gifts there are limited editions prints, ceramic sculpture, jewellery, traditional artifacts, and beaded whimsies. In fact, the Museum Shop is celebrating three of its



*The Museum Shop with it's Christmas look*

crafts persons with special displays, for Mutt General, the silversmith and carver, Sylvia Smith, the potter, and Lorna Hill, the beading designer.

The shop has an excellent selection of books, and art catalogues and cards for all occasions. We have exactly what you have been looking for to complete your Christmas shopping list.



## Snowsnakes are coming

February 5th and February 6th are set for our annual Snowsnake week-end. Alternate dates should we have no snow are set for the following week February 12 and 13th. A craft fair, traditional foods, our exhibit **A Community Remembered, the Art of R.W. Hill**, and possibly a roving musician will break up the cold winter months.

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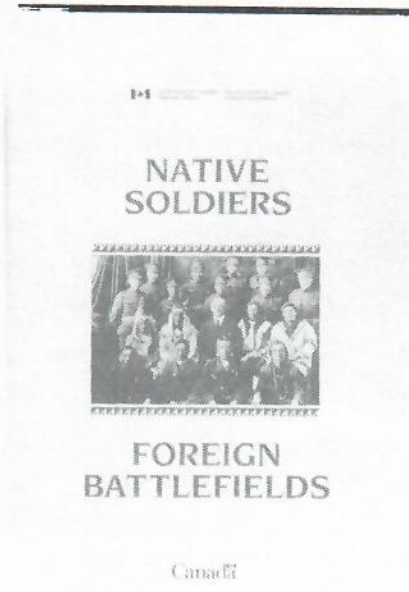
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Come to the Museum Shop for that special fine crafted gift . . .



New this Christmas.  
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Stone sculptures, pottery, leatherwork and silver jewellery made by artisans of First Nation ancestry . . .Shop weekdays 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
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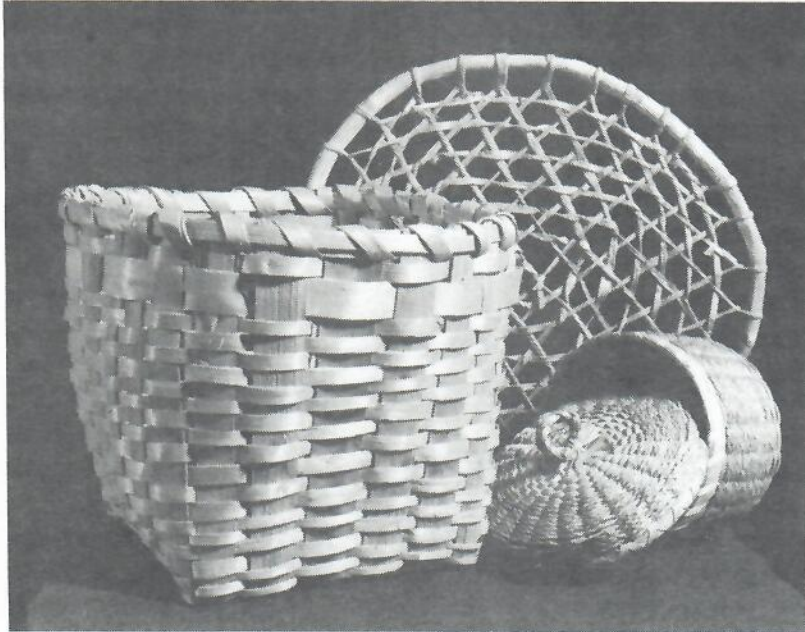


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An exciting exhibit . . .



**Woven Strands**

**Jan. 10 - Feb. 9, 1994**

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## *Coming to the Museum in the new year . . .*

Woven Strands	Jan. 10 - Feb. 9
A Community Remembered - The Art of R.W. Hill	Jan. 30 - March 31
Snowsnake Tournament	Feb. 5 & 6 alternate Feb. 12 & 13
From Crystals to Gems	Feb. 15 - April 12
Permanent Collection	April 17 - May 8
Power of Place	July 17 - Sept. 18
The River of Blood Flows On (rental)	July 17 - Sept. 18
The Art of Words	Sept. 30 - Dec. 16
The Crafted Image (textiles from our collections)	Jan. 1995 - March
Snowsnake Tournament	Feb. 4 & 5 (1995) alternate Feb. 11 & 12
The Cry of the Loon	March 7 - May 2

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**About our logo:**

The logo is based on a mid-eighteenth century trade silver brooch, prevalent in both Algonkian and Iroquoian societies. The two eagles represent the two Nations. The stylized hands are based on a pre-historic woodland design and represent our First Nations reaching for the light. The hands also represent holding the culture and passing the light to future generations.