



JANUARY 2024

Vol. XLIV No. 1

MUSEUM NOTES

News from the Iroquois Museum

IT'S A WRAP!

While normally our season at the Museum starts to wind down come autumn, 2023 was an exception. Nearly every weekend in October and November featured special programming. On Oct 7 we hosted Scott Manning Stevens, Phd, who spoke about Haudenosaunee history, foundations, and the impact of the WPA Indian Arts Project. On Oct 14, our stalwart flintknappers and archaeology aficionados Fred Stevens, Barry Keegan, Steven Spretnjak, Bill Cleveland, Bob Fusco, and Paula Jakowlew welcomed over 70 visitors to Early Technology Day. Our Caverns Road neighbor Julian celebrated his 10th birthday at the event with family and friends. The day featured demonstrations of flintknapping, firestarting, and cordage making. The archeo team deciphered mystery artifacts and assisted in the identification of a treasure trove of points discovered unexpectedly beneath a potted plant. Next time you encounter Fred or one of his team ask them to recount this peculiar story!



"Legend of the Little Dipper" by Ernest Smith, Seneca

On October 21 & 22 Seneca artist and culture bearer Jamie Jacobs drew participants from as far afield as Utica, NY and Washington, CT for a two-day quillworking workshop. Participants had ample opportunity to try four different techniques and left with both new knowledge and a new appreciation for this uncommon Haudenosaunee art form.



Barry demonstrating a pump drill for fire starting



Jamie Jacobs and happy workshop participants

OPEN HOURS

April & November: Monday-Wednesday: Closed; Thursday-Saturday: 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Sunday: Noon-4 p.m.

May-October: Monday: Closed; Tuesday-Saturday: 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sunday: Noon-5 p.m.

Oct 28, just in time for Halloween, featured Mohawk storyteller Mandy Tarbell with an assortment of spooky tales for all ages. Seneca-Cayuga stone carver Tom Huff was on hand to demonstrate stone carving on Nov 4. On Nov 12, Iroquois Museum Educator Mike Tarbell presented a special Veterans Day program in which he shared the amazing story of one very special veteran – his father Albert A. Tarbell. Albert was the very first Mohawk to graduate from paratrooper school and served with the 82nd Airborne Division of the US Army during WWII. On November 28, Akwesasne Mohawk artisan Kawenniiosta Jock presented her skills at outfit making to close out our season.



Colleen and her assistant!

Apart from our mission-based programming, the Museum also hosted yoga classes with registered yoga instructor Colleen Sheehan. Colleen offered two classes this fall. Little Boy, the stretch master and epitome of body awareness, provided inspiration and assistance. The classes are scheduled for Sundays at 10:30. A suggested donation of \$15 supports the Museum's education programs. Monthly classes will resume in the spring.



IROQUOIS ARTS FESTIVAL AFTER ACTION REPORT...

The weather for our 40th annual Labor Day Weekend Festival was delightful and brought over 1100 guests to the 2-day event.

Haudenosaunee artisans new and old marketed hand crafted wares from soapstone sculptures to blueberry scones. Popular favorites including The Sky Dancers from Six Nations; storyteller and MC Perry Ground; and food vendor Happy Eating Grounds were present and accounted for. New presenters included Seneca puppeteer Kari Kennedy and the Ruppets and the Iroquois Lacrosse Program.



Perry Ground enthralls visitors!

LONGHOUSE MODEL...

Have you seen the new longhouse model in the children's museum? Let's hear it for Audrey Scarlett! Audrey, the granddaughter of one of our volunteers, with the assistance of Onondaga educator Odasiyo/ Brenda Laforme, constructed a detailed model of a Haudenosaunee longhouse using paper, paint, and natural materials. The new model was placed in the enclosed area under the stairs near the turtle pond just in time for our Labor Day festivities.



Audrey Scarlett with her longhouse village!

SHOP FUNDRAISER...

Innovation pays off in a major way! This year, the Museum obtained an exceptional one-time grant award from the Seneca Gaming Commission that covered many of our 2023 Festival expenses. Because of this windfall we didn't request Festival sponsorships this year but instead requested donations to purchase inventory for the Museum gift shop. Because the items we purchase are then sold at a 50% markup in the shop, this initiative doubled the cash value of our members' contributions. The Shop Fundraiser raised over \$6200 (generating over \$12,000 in net income), a substantial benefit to both the Museum and the Haudenosaunee artists that we purchase directly from.

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION & HOLIDAY PARTY...

On December 2, the Museum's staff, board, and volunteers gathered for pizza, homemade goodies, and the installment of deserving volunteers into the prestigious Silver and Black Bear Societies. With a small part-time staff, IM volunteers represent the indispensable backbone of the Museum. Their contributions range from archeology to gift shop display, children's museum activities, gallery interpretation, school group support, database entry, gardening, and more.

2023 saw the induction of 4 individuals into the Silver Bear Society. Each received a silver bear pin featuring the Museum's iconic logo for their contribution of 100 or more hours. Recipients include 3 volunteers from the archaeology department – Bill Cleveland (144 hours); Karen Putnam (120 hours) and Paula Jakowlew (162 hours). Sherry Wack who assisted with computer entry, groups, and gift shop contributed 105 hours.

Inductees into the rarified Black Bear Society, requiring a 500 hour or more contribution include archaeology volunteers Bob Fusco (1226 hours) and Stephen Spretnjak (708 hours); children's museum volunteer Rose Swanhall (779.5) and garden and archaeological report database entry Pat Hults (515). Together, our roughly 50 volunteers contributed 2965.5 hours or the equivalent of a \$41,577 in-kind contribution to the Museum (using minimum wage as a standard). Whether you contributed a couple of hours at the Festival or helped us out year-round on a weekly basis we value each and every one of you!

FROM THE DESK OF THE CFO...

As frontline staff at the Museum I had an exceptionally busy fall. As you might expect, my human counterparts appear to be incapable of running this place without me. Alas, it fell to yours truly to supervise our latest construction project. My unrivaled agility allowed me to inspect each and every truss as it was installed to insure quality control and visitor safety. As I possess characteristic feline diplomacy, it also fell to me to handle all complaints, most of which were quickly and successfully dispatched by turning my back with a theatrical harrumph directed towards the complainant. Of course, despite my supremely demanding workload, I was called upon to sign autographs and make numerous public appearances.

Once again (déjà vu!) the Museum's heating system began acting up just as the temperatures started to drop. By early November, even I, with my luxurious yellow coat, found the indoor temperature a tad less than cozy. My colleagues insisted on plugging in space heaters and blowing fuses which, more often than not, rudely interrupted my nap times. I have approached the Director numerous times with my concerns but, in the end, felt compelled to report this appalling inconvenience to the Department of Labor. At long last my efforts paid off and the heat was restored.





PORCH ENCLOSURE...

If you visited the Museum for any of our fall programming, you may have noticed a host of yellow and black caution signs around our back entrance. No, we aren't safeguarding evidence from a major art theft! Once again the Iroquois Museum is undergoing some significant renovations thanks to our benefactor and friend, Nick Juried and the Nicholas J. Juried Foundation. Along with the other valuable projects Mr. Juried has supported we are enclosing the back porch on the second level of the building to serve as our new learning space. Construction began in mid-September and is scheduled to be completed prior to reopening in April. In addition to being a much needed classroom space; this sun-filled area will also be used for demonstrations, presentations and workshops.

The renovation was designed by architect Vincent LaGonga who has worked with a number of Schoharie County non-profits. Local contractor Gribben Enterprises is doing the construction and the windows were purchased from Tom Brooks of Harbrook Fine Windows, Doors & Hardware of Albany. We are thrilled to have this versatile new space that will enable us to expand the Museum's reach and better serve our students and other visitors.



PREVIEW OF THINGS TO COME...

This year's main gallery exhibit and programming is supported by a generous grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. The theme, "Outside the Box," will present the work of Haudenosaunee individuals who have chosen creative paths that locate them solidly in arenas where Haudenosaunee representation is singular and often unexpected. We'll celebrate the work of the Iroquois Indian Marching Band; photojournalist Ian R. Maracle; installation artist Hannah Claus; claymation animator and comic drama filmmaker Pauline Moore of The Aunties Dandelion; luthier (guitar maker) Glenn Hill, Jr.; neo-burlesque dancer Lauren Ashley Jiles; and more. A major component of this project is the presentation of *The Mush Hole: Truth, Acknowledgement, Resilience*, a moving contemporary dance composition by Santee Smith's Kawa:hi Dance Theatre inspired by the residential school experience at Six Nations Reserve. The performance will take place on June 29th at the University of Albany Performing Arts Center and mark the first time this compelling piece will be performed in the Capital Region. That's just one of several special presentations we'll be hosting in conjunction with the 2024 exhibit. Watch the spring newsletter for more Outside the Box specifics and special programming.



Santee Smith performing at Iroquois Arts Festival

Thanks to a **Two For The Trails Grant** from **Athletic Brewing**, the leading producer of non-alcoholic beer, the Museum's nature trails will be getting some much needed TLC. Athletic is dedicated to the creation of safe, sustainable outdoor spaces and donates up to \$2 million dollars annually across the globe via their Two For The Trails program. The Museum's \$14,600 award will cover the construction of a bridge and a boardwalk over areas of our trail system that are often impassable during the wet spring and fall seasons. Construction will begin as soon as the work areas are dry enough to access. Mark your calendars for a ribbon cutting reception with nature-oriented activities and guided trail walks at its completion.

WISH LIST...

Cornhusk for cornhusk doll craft
 Forever postage stamps
 Stickers for kid's activities
 Newsprint for rubbing craft activity

SIGN UP FOR ELECTRONIC MUSEUM NOTES...

In an effort to reduce our ecological footprint, we are offering members the choice of receiving future Museum Notes in digital rather than print form. Better yet the digital form features full color photos! If you prefer to have Notes e-mailed to you in pdf format, please send us an e-mail at: info@iroquoismuseum.org

SNEAK PEAK OF TWO OF OUR RECENT ACQUISITIONS!
 Stop in when we re-open in April to see more of our newest pieces.



"My Ancestors Are Strong", photograph by Marjorie Skidders, Mohawk



"Abscission" leather hat by Cliff Redeye, Seneca

REMEMBRANCES...

As we look forward to a new year we look back and recall with great fondness those who are no longer with us except in spirit. We offer our sincere condolences to their community members and loved ones.

Irene Peters Sept 10, 1946 - April 4, 2023

Irene was a mother, grandmother, great grandmother, elder, teacher and mentor. Up until 2022, she was a regular vendor at the Iroquois Museum's annual Iroquois Arts Festival on Labor Day weekend where she marketed her feather fans, beaded bags, and other handmade items. She was also adept at skinning, tanning, beadwork, and wampum jewelry. She has been self-employed since 1985, traveling the powwow circuit throughout the northeast.

Dorene A. Rickard June 7, 1936 – May 3, 2023

Dorene was the Clan Mother of the Tuscarora Beaver Clan and actively involved with her community and its wellbeing. She was a passionate practitioner of traditional Tuscarora beadwork. Her first beadwork investigations were at her grandmother's side as a young girl. In 1970 – 1980 she participated in beading classes offered at the Tuscarora Indian School. In 1996, Dorene assisted in the restoration of an antique Tuscarora beaded table cover in the collection of the National Museum of the American Indian (NY, NY). Beginning in the 1990s and continuing for the next ten years she taught beading, passing her knowledge and skills on to her children, grandchildren, and community members. Her proficiency in her art form earned Dorene a number of commissions as well as opportunities to display her work across New York State.

Liz Shultes March 24, 1932 – May 22, 2023

The Museum experienced a very personal loss this year with the passing of director Steph Shultes mother Liz Shultes at the age of 91. Liz was a lifelong resident of Middleburgh, NY. She graduated from Middleburgh Central School in 1951 and married Roger Shultes a year later. Liz was an avid housekeeper and cook and worked for ten years at Parson's Drug Store in Middleburgh, a job she greatly enjoyed. In Iroquois Museum circles Liz was known as "The Raffle Queen" for her uncanny ability to sell extraordinary numbers of raffle tickets to Festival goers, a reputation that has remained unmatched since she relinquished her role. A remembrance celebration attended by family, friends, volunteers, and former and current museum staff was held at the Museum on June 17.

Rose Kerstetter Sept 5, 1918 – May 30, 2023

At her passing at age 104 Rose (Oneida Nation Turtle Clan) was a treasured and respected member of the Wisconsin Oneida community. Rose dedicated much of her exceptionally long career to the recovery and restoration of extinct Haudenosaunee pottery traditions. Her work is the result of personal research and experimentation. Rose served in the US Army from 1943 - 1946. At the age of 60 she enrolled in the Institute of American Indian Arts (Santa Fe, NM) where she earned an AFA in ceramics and three-dimensional design. Throughout her career, Rose introduced dozens of individuals to the art of clay using hand built construction. Ceramicists Ken Metoxen and Jennifer Stevens from Oneida, Wisconsin are among those who have blossomed under her guidance. Award recognition includes a Cultural Capital Fellow and Community Spirit Awards from the First People's Fund and a fellowship from the Southwestern Association on Indian Affairs. Rose is represented in the collections of the NY State Museum (Albany, NY); Institute of American Indian Arts; Maxwell Museum of Anthropology (NM); and the Iroquois Museum.

Alfred Jacques March 2, 1949 – June 14, 2023

Alf was Onondaga Nation Turtle Clan. In his role as lacrosse player, coach, teacher, cultural educator, and carver he served as a role model, journeying through life with an unequalled generosity and a deep passion for the Creator's game. Alf was inducted into the Ontario Lacrosse Hall of Fame, the Upstate Chapter of the US Lacrosse Hall of Fame, and is recognized worldwide for his intimate knowledge of the wood, of the sport, and his uncompromising commitment to craftsmanship. He carved wooden snowsnakes, spoons, and paddles but it was his traditional lacrosse sticks that were truly special. His masterful proficiency was gained at the side of his father Louis and stickmaker, coach, and player Eli Cornelius. Including the period when the three were manufacturing 11,500 sticks a year out of their small shop (1968-1974), Jacques estimated that he made 75,000 – 80,000 sticks in his lifetime. He was featured in numerous publications and documentaries and is represented in this Museum as well as numerous other museum and private collections.

Robbie Robertson July 5, 1943 – August 9, 2023

Robertson, a singer-songwriter and guitarist of Mohawk and Cayuga descent is best known for his work with the legendary rock group The Band during the peak of their career in the 1960s and 70s.” During his decade long stint with the Band Robbie recorded several classics including *The Weight*; *The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down*; and *Up on Cripple Creek*. The Band dissolved in 1976. In 1994, Robbie collaborated with the Red Road Ensemble, to produce *Music for the Native Americans*,” bringing him face to face with his indigenous heritage. Robbie’s 2019 album, *Sinematic*, coincided with the release of Martin Scorsese’s gangster epic *The Irishman*. The film’s unofficial theme song, *I Hear You Paint Houses*, was penned by Robertson and the centerpiece of the album. Robertson was credited as executive music producer or music supervisor on every Scorsese feature from 2002 to 2022’s *Killers of the Flower Moon*. The Band was inducted into the Canadian Hall of Fame (1989) and the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame (1994). In 1997, Robertson received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Academy of Songwriters. In 2008, he earned a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award. In 2020, an official documentary, *Once Were Brothers: Robbie Robertson and The Band*, directed by Daniel Roher, recounted Robertson’s life.

In 2009, Robertson loaned the Iroquois Museum one of his guitars; his 1998 First Americans in the Arts Award; photographs; posters; and lyrics for inclusion in the Museum’s popular *Native Americans in the Performing Arts: From Ballet to Rock and Roll* exhibit. At the conclusion of the exhibit, his handwritten *Code of Handsome Lake* lyrics were donated to the Museum collection.



Anne Donnelly June 3, 1942 - October 4, 2023

Anne was a longtime resident of Cobleskill, NY and an active volunteer at the Landis Arboretum in Esperance until her passing. Well remembered as a committed educator, first as a high school biology teacher and then a professor at SUNY Cobleskill for 3 decades, Anne was an equally avid learner. During her professorship she published and presented internationally in the field of biology and served on multiple committees. Her skill and commitment was honored with the Chancellors Award for Excellence in Teaching. She was an integral part of the Landis Arboretum, donating her time, serving on the board, and Chairing the Education and Publications Committee. She was also President of the Schoharie County Headstart program. With Anne’s passing the Museum lost a strong supporter of the arts. On many occasions Anne opened her warm and plant-filled home to Haudenosaunee guest artists for extended stays while they worked on projects at the Museum, forging friendships that were sustained years beyond their residencies.

Sylvia Van Houten Sept 12, 1933 – Nov 1, 2023

Sylvia was an integral contributor to the Museum’s success from its early beginnings in Schoharie through its first few decades in its new facility. She served on the Museum board from 1983 – 1993. Sylvia’s substantial experience and willingness to share her knowledge of genealogical research was the highlight for many Museum visitors until 2004. Additionally, she provided genealogical assistance at the Old Stone Fort in Schoharie and helped to found the Gilboa Museum. A resident of Middleburgh, NY for 60 years, Sylvia was an avid gardener, reader, birdwatcher, amateur archaeologist, and lifelong artist. A lover of the outdoors, she enjoyed traveling and camping across the US, and hiking the trails of Vroman’s Nose, the commanding cliff face that towered above her home.



“Onistigrawa”, 1989 by
Linley Logan, Seneca

WE INVITE YOU TO BECOME A PART OF OUR TRADITION OF GIVING

Make a Gift: Make a donation to the Annual Appeal or give online through our website.

Matching Gift Program: If you work at a company that has a matching gift program, ask your employer for a matching gift form and send it in with your contribution.

Give Appreciated Securities: By donating directly to the Museum appreciated stocks or other securities held for at least one year, as a general rule you can avoid the federal capital gains tax that would be incurred if you sold the securities and you can obtain a charitable deduction equal to the fair market value of the securities.

Include the Museum in Your Will: Bequests can help transform the future of the Museum and the process is simple. You may specify a portion of your estate or a specific dollar amount for the Museum. We urge you to consult your attorney for appropriate bequest language to carry out your charitable goals. The following sample language may help in the preparation of your will:

*I give and devise to the Iroquois Museum, located in Howes Cave, New York, the sum of
\$ _____ (or percentage of your estate) as an unrestricted gift to be applied to the Museum's general uses
and purposes (or for the support of a specified fund or purpose).*

Type of Gift or Bequest: An unrestricted gift or bequest allows the Museum to determine the best use of your donation at the time the Museum receives it. An earmarked gift or bequest allows you to support the program of your choice.

Earmarked donations are welcomed for the following established funds and purposes: Iroquois Museum Endowment Fund; William N. Fenton Research Fund; Staff Support; Public Program Support

To discuss your proposed gift or bequest, please contact us at: Iroquois Museum, P. O. Box 7, Howes Cave, NY 12092 or at info@iroquoismuseum.org or call us directly at 518-296-8949. Ask for our Director, Steph Shultes.

Connect with Us

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