A VIEW FROM THE WILD...

Plants have been intricately woven into the fabric of every culture...

The folklore, mythology and religion of the Amerindian abounds with plant logic and relationships that tantalize and instruct us. For thousands of years the earth's recurring fertility has inspired mystic rites. Spirits and magical forces were considered to determine the success of each food-getting venture, whether it was hunting, fishing, farming or gathering.

The Amerindians' knowledge of their botanical environment is impressive. Their ecological concepts were much more involved with religion and mystic interpretation, than our sense of the environment today. Very special attention was given to the teaching of plant lore, gathering techniques, and food preparations. This was a compendium of botanical knowledge that was handed-down orally over hundreds of years.

"Anxiety over food was universal in native North America." (1) When the Eastern Amerindians evolved from a hunting and gathering culture to a more horticultural people, farming became a highly socialized activity. Gathering wild foods supplemented their horticulture, and continued to provide most of their foods, cosmetics and medicines. Hundreds of herbs were used for food as well as technology. These early cultures found in herbs the sources and secrets of healing. Their experiments and sensitivities within their plant world launched them as our first scientists.

And, as one of the oldest races, the Amerindians have given us a cumulative herbal knowledge that spans over 20,000 years.

The plant-part most commonly used by Indians was the root; it was representative and symbolic of the human body, sacred animals, and even visions from dreams. Fresh roots and herbs were chewed, and herbs and powdered roots were boiled with animal grease to make salves. The Amerindians customarily greased their bodies with vegetable or animal oils to protect their skin from acute cold. Plants of the mint family were customarily used to prevent and relieve insect bites, and these were often mixed with bear grease, and rubbed over the entire body. Early accounts of the Amerindians relate that they were generally free of skin diseases, and maintained smooth, healthy skin by frequently 'washing' their skin with the oils of fishes, and the fats of eagles, raccoons, bears, etc., mixed with the right herbs to lend fragrance, and additional protection.

The Amerindians prized many different substances such as 'chewing gum,' to relieve toothache, indigestion, headache, dehydration, etc. Other favored botanicals were: clematis, hawkweed, salsify, dandelion (latex), chicory (roots), hollyhock (stems-peeled), licorice (roots), pussytoes, milkweed (sap), and spruce (gum). From the swamps and saltmarshes: the catail, phragmites and sweet flag produced necessary flours, starches, sugars (as vegetables), and the fibers for cordage, mats, kindling, caulking and insulation. Milkweed was a vegetable, a medicine, a paint-base, rubbery latex, and provided fiber for cordage. Witch Hazel, Sassafras and countless Viburnums provided tea-like beverage material, medicines and foods. Indeed, thousands of recorded plant usages can be projected!

Numerous harvesting rites governed the hundreds of species of wild berries, grains, seeds, nuts, roots, leaves and barks essential to the woodland diet. Most Indians who gathered herbs and hunted for food would sing the necessary songs (or prayers), or offer gifts of tobacco to the respective spirits, (believed to be (et on pg 2)

by Barrie Kavasch
A VIEW FROM
THE WILD...
(ct. from pg. 1)

embodied within their objectives.) Among the Eastern Amerindians six major annual "harvesting festivals" evolved of cultural significance.
Maple Sugar ing foretold winter's end with the gathering of their most important seasoning and sweetening.
Shad Fishing in early spring brought their coastal migration for one of many fishing and shellfishing rites;
Planting the seeds of the early cultivars in clearings;
Strawberry Festivals enhanced the midsummer growing seasons of wild and cultivated plants;
Green Corn Ceremony offered early thanks for the summer harvests;
Corn, Bean and Squash Harvesting festivals, "the three sisters" cultivars, meant the end of the growing season... for all but the wild botanicals.

Amerindian medicine has provided the "pharmaceutical spadework" to open new frontiers in medical history. Over the centuries native drugs and treatments were found to be of enormous value. More than two hundred indigenous plants were used by one or more Indian tribes, and have been official in the "Pharmacopoeia of the U.S.A." since its first edition in 1820. The aboriginal knowledge and usage of their native flora was incredibly accurate. So significant in fact that medical science is continuing to research the primitive plant logic for its essential applications to modern man's diseases and discomforts.

Indeed, the plant world is charged with meaning. The traces of the meanings sift down to us from pre-history and lend greater emphasis to our modern culture. Our environment is continually shifting, and our abilities to deal with it insure our survival. "The degree to which we are all involved in the control of the earth's life is just beginning to dawn on most of us, and it means another revolution for human thought." (2) Perhaps we shall discover our own more instinctive earthsense.

1. from "INDIANS OF NORTH AMERICA" by Harold Driver. 0 1961, 1969. The University of Chicago Press.
2. from "THE LIVES OF A CELL: NOTES OF A BIOLOGY WATCHER" by Dr. Lewis Thomas. 0 1974. The Viking Press.

FOUNDER'S DAY

An important date to mark on your calendar is August 26, 1978—that's a Saturday. From 1-30 to 4:30 P.M. on that day, the Visitor Center on Curtis Road in Washington will be involved with Founder's Day activities.

An exciting rain or shine day is being planned. Barrie Kavasch and a group of volunteers are harvesting and preparing a wide variety of seasonal native American food. Members will be able to enjoy new taste experiences with the Indian foods to be served that day.

Another part of the program is being set up by Trudie Lamb. Trudie has gathered a group of skilled native American handcraftsmen. These people will be demonstrating a number of crafts that are fast becoming dying arts. This is a "don't miss" day for members only at A.I.A.I. Please be sure to be at the Center.

EARTHWATCH

There are only a few openings left in the August 6 to August 19 Field School. The field school, co-sponsored by "Earthwatch," is intensive. Participants learn site surveying, mapping and gridding; proper and efficient use of excavation tools; and artifact identification. Classes will be used to discuss dating techniques, laboratory procedures, archaeological theory and related topics.
The fee includes room and board at the Gunny, use of all necessary equipment and transportation to the site. This type of living arrangement provides the maximum exposure to archaeology and to archaeologists.
Earthwatch of Belmont, Massachusetts can also make arrangements for college credit.
To sign up for this field school write directly to:
Earthwatch
10 Juniper Road
Box 127
Belmont, Ma. 02178

Request Connecticut Prehistory directed by Dr. Roger W. Moeller, of A.I.A.I.
Earthwatch will provide registration and fee information.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

In April the first meeting of the newly formed Education Committee was held at A.I.A.I. The purpose of this committee, chaired by Trustee Weymouth Somerset, is to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and recommendations that will guide the development of appropriate educational services, not duplicated by any other organization, as A.I.A.I. fulfills its charter responsibility as a regional resource center for the discovery, preservation and interpretation of over 10,000 years of American Indian prehistory and history. Members of the Education Committee have been drawn from all over Connecticut and include the following individuals, plus A.I.A.I. staff:

Dr. Arthur Soderlind, State Department of Education
Dr. Stephen Lovett, Chairman of Education Department and Director of Teacher Education, Wesconn
Carolyn Bolton, Chairman of Indian Parent Education Committee,

American Indians for Development
Richard Wood, Title IV, Waterbury
Ann Callahan, RESCUE
Dr. David McAllister, Wesleyan University
Hugh Slattery, Headmaster, St. Margaret's-McTernan
Robert Corvello, Chairman, Social Studies Department, Shepaug Valley Regional High School
Nancy Green, Teacher, Shepaug Valley Regional High School
Richard Hoffman, Principal, Washington Primary School
Elizabeth MacDonald, Ceramist, Brookfield Craft Center
Jan Shidle, Brookfield Craft Center
Peter Frisbie, Art Teacher, Region 12
Ruth Lovett, Principal, Mitchell Elementary School
Robert Alberetti, Chairman, Department of Art, Wesconn

We sincerely thank these educators for their willingness to serve on the Education Committee.
The A.I.A.I. was host to American Indians for Development on Friday, May 12th. This was the second in a series of six Indian speakers forums on issues facing Indian and non-Indian people today. The next forum will be Friday, July 14th—"Indians and the State of Connecticut" at 7:30 at Hartford University. The topic for the May 12th discussion was "Crafts, Dance and Music."

The overflow crowd attending was welcomed by President Ned Swigart of A.I.A.I. who then introduced Sarah Blanchard, Project Director of A.I.D. Sarah gave a brief description of the topics to be discussed and then turned the program over to Jack Preston, Greg Borst, and David McAllister.

All three men are well versed in their knowledge of native American music and musical instruments. Each man approached the subject of music from a different aspect.

David McAllister, an Ethnomusicologist from Wesleyan University, brought along tapes of Passamaquoddy and Penobscot music recorded over 25 years ago. Penobscot Indians in the audience, although they had not heard "Their" music since early youth, were visibly moved.

Greg Borst, a Musicologist, brought with him musical instruments; two flutes and a drum. He played some music and defined and interpreted it for the people. Mr. Borst also related one of the myths that exist on how the Indian received the flute.

Jack Preston, an Anthropologist, approached the subject from an academic point of view. Describing the viability of types and specific pieces of music in modern Indian culture and techniques of teaching music and dance to native Americans and non-native Americans.

All three men were well received and the program was both entertaining and informative. These forums are important both to Native Americans and non-Native Americans, for it is a learning experience for all groups. They teach those who may have forgotten; those who may never have known and those who have come to be reminded and appreciate.
The inclement weather that decended on the Northeast during the months of January, February, and March prevented all but a very few school field trips. However, many new ideas percolated during this lull, resulting in a variety of new plans, programs, and projects. But we missed the eager faces of visiting students and the stimulation of their curiosity.

Since April, a quiet moment is but a memory. The buses rumble down Curtis Road daily depositing groups of fifty students or more. The new classroom is a welcomed accommodation and has been fully initiated by approximately 2200 students from seventy different towns.

In March, AIAl was invited to present a program at the Ninth Annual Regional Conference on the Social Studies in Boston. Over 2000 social studies teachers attended and, subsequently, a number of them scheduled spring field trips. Also, over 150 education publishers exhibited their instructional materials during the four-day conference. Many of the publishers have been most generous with their complimentary copies and preview arrangements for films, filmstrips, and curriculum kits.

As a direct result, the Educational Resource Library is taking shape. It will be expanded further through the generosity of Readers Digest. At the present there are about 120 books on the American Indian in this non-circulating library. Any interested individual is welcome to use the Educational Resource Library by appointment.

Expanded educational resources, growing requests for varied programs to be presented both at AIAl and in the schools themselves and the need to provide teachers with enrichment materials require many, many hours of Education Department staff time. These educational services are now being provided by four staff members, ably supported by a loyal interpreters' corps. A new staff member is Jane French, a longtime volunteer. Jane is designing a pilot curriculum in cultural anthropology for high school students. Barrie Kavasch continues as an inspired interpreter and also serves as AIAl's resident ethnoanthropologist. In this position Barrie has assumed the responsibility of overseeing the development of the Habitat Trail, creating an herbarium, continuing research into the Native American peoples' uses of wild plants and establishing educational stations in AIAl's outdoor environment.

Outdoor horizons, functional areas designed for seasonal participation in the activities of an Indian's daily life, have been added to the Habitat Trail to enrich the "hands-on" learning experience of visiting students. A sugar maple will soon be planted in front of the Visitor Center and will celebrate the coming of spring each year with a "sugaring-off" festival.

Another horizon adjacent to the simulated site is a stone toolmaking workshop, invitingly surrounded by woodland seats.

Nearby is a firepit horizon from which charcoal is taken as a powdered base for a paste of wild mint/sweet
TWO NEW FALL COURSES

The following two courses will be offered by the Institute in the Fall. 

"Native American Women" will be concerned with the various behaviors, attitudes, positions in society associated with females in different Native American cultures as well as in contemporary "American" culture. A non-North American culture, the Kalahari Bushmen of Africa, will be used as a point of departure and for further anthropological comparison of females.

Barrie Kavasch makes "insect repellant".

To complete the outdoor horizons a pond environment will be created this summer and the first dwelling of the Indian encampment will be constructed. The last horizon on the Habitat Trail is the simulated archaeological site.

Two workshops are scheduled for late summer and early fall. In August Sterling Parker, noted botanist and geologist from Woodbury, Connecticut, will conduct an Herbarium Workshop and on September 23-24, Saturday and Sunday, Carol Hart will share her creative talent and expertise in a Basketry Workshop. Details may be obtained by phoning AIAI. The kick-off program for the fall season's Members' Meetings will be a Basketry narration, demonstration and slide presentation by Carol Hart on Friday, September 22 at 8 p.m. at the Visitor Center.

Also in the fall, we will initiate a number of Teachers' Collaboratives to introduce area educators to the activities of and resources on hand at AIAI. These collaboratives, supplemented by the Educational Resource Library, will provide teachers with the best and most accurate instructional materials—books, periodicals, films, slides, loan kits, et. al.—available about the Native American peoples.

The second course, "Art & Culture" will consider the roles and manifestations of Native American art in selected cultures across North America. Native American art will be compared to European and American art in an attempt to understand the esthetic side of Man as well as the particular part it plays in each culture.

Films, slides and other materials will be used to complement the seminar format of the courses. Sharon Wirt, of the Institute staff, will be the instructor.

The scheduling of the courses will depend upon the convenience of a majority of those interested in enrolling. The first meeting will be the third week in September. Please call the Institute (203-868-0518) early (by the first week in September) to submit your preference of course, day of the week (no Saturday or Sunday classes) and time of day or evening for the course, which will run 8-10 weeks.

The cost of a course is $30 for members of the A.I.A.I., $35 for non-members.

A course will be offered only if there is sufficient enrollment.
Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting was a bit different this year. The occasion afforded the staff at the Center the opportunity to "show-off"—"Show-off" our new wing at the Center that is! We held at the Center an Open House from three until five o'clock on May fourth. We were showing people around our new classroom, departmental offices, new library facilities, exhibit preparation room and in general having a wonderful time! We look forward to the use of the new wing and we're sure that we'll be better able to provide more programs with these facilities.

Once again the dinner was held at the Inn on Lake Waramaug. Dick Combs was host to the 140 people attending. Needless to say the staff at the Center was delighted to see the turnout. The service and the food were, as before, superb. A "well done" is in order for Mr. Combs and his staff.

Mr. Shoumatoff gave an interesting talk and was well received. As always, he managed to put an unique twist to his given topic, The Ethnobotany of the North Eastern Indians.

Another special event of the evening was a presentation of recognition to Mr. John I. Carlson, long time friend and advisor to the Institute. The plaque presented to Mr. Carlson read:

"To John I. Carlson in appreciation of the wise counsel and encouragement in all things, as well as his constant faith that the Center would become a reality. Without his calm and incisive advice our efforts would surely have faltered."

The night ended on a note of success and pleasure. Success in viewing our activities and discoveries of the past year and pleasure at the anticipation of the coming year at the Center.

Guest Speaker N. A. Shoumatoff
DEVELOPMENTAL EXHIBIT PROJECT AT AIAI

by Patty McNamara

The exhibits now being developed at the American Indian Archaeological Institute encourage visitors to adopt the viewpoint of the archaeologist. Visitors may examine artifacts and artifact reproductions, and then make inferences about prehistoric behavior patterns.

The visitors also participate in the exhibit development process. The ways in which visitors interact with an exhibit are taken into account as the exhibits are planned and constructed. Visitors may also have the opportunity to test their memory of exhibit topics before they leave the museum. The visitors may find they have actually learned something during their stay, and the exhibit staff is able to measure the exhibits' teaching effectiveness.

The exhibits are initially made of posterboard, and the labels hand-lettered with felt-tipped pens. The exhibits are thus easily changed until they meet the needs of both the visitors and the Institute staff. An exhibit will not appear in permanent form until it captures the visitors' attention and conveys some amount of information.

The Institute's exhibit development project is funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities. The project will be successful only if a large number of visitors interact with and react to the developing exhibits. Individuals who have visited the Institute in the past are encouraged to visit again; the changes have already begun and will continue over the next 16 months.

These changing and challenging exhibits are exciting and fun; members and potential visitors are invited to come and participate.

Iroquois Legend
THE LEGEND OF BEAR'S SHORT TAIL

Long, long ago, Bear had a long, black tail that would shine as he waved it around. It was his most lofty possession. Coyote, being Mother Nature's prankster, saw Bear and decided to play a trick on him.

Hatho, the Frost Spirit, had blown across the land at this time. Hatho pounded the trees with his enormous hammer and covered the lakes with ice.

Coyote proceeded to go about his trick. He cut a hole in the ice and piled fish all around it. As Bear came by and saw the fish he was interested. Bear wanted to know what Coyote was doing. Coyote told Bear he was fishing with his tail. Bear, with his long tail, wanted to fish also. Coyote said Bear could not fish in the same place, for all the fish were gone from there. Coyote would take Bear to a new place. Bear followed Coyote to another place. This place was known well to Coyote and was a shallow place. It was too shallow to catch the fish in winter. Coyote cut a hole in the ice. At the same time he told Bear what to do. Bear was to sit, his back to the hole, and with his long, long tail in the hole. Bear was told to keep very still and when a fish came and grabbed Bear's tail, Coyote would call out and Bear could pull the fish out of the water. Bear did as he was told. Coyote watched only long enough to see that Bear did as he was told. Coyote then went to his own home. Coyote stayed the night at his house. The next day he went back to the place where Bear was fishing. There was Bear asleep and covered with snow. During the night Hatho had made the snow fall. Bear's tail was frozen in the ice. Coyote thought the sight so funny he laughed and tears rolled down his face. It was time to wake Bear. Coyote came very close to Bear's ear and shouted! Bear woke up and pulled hard on his tail. The tail broke off.

Bear was so sad and angry at the same time. Coyote laughed and ran away.

As everyone knows to this day, Bear has a short, short tail. From time to time, Bear has been heard to moan and groan. It is because he remembers the trick Coyote played on him.
Siftings

AIAI HERBARIUM
An August Workshop

Noted botanist Sterling E. Parker of Woodbury will instruct an Herbarium Course this summer at the Institute. The course will include: making your own plant/flower press, and 4 to 5 two-hour field and class workshops. The cost: $10 for members; $15 for non-members. Please call 868-0518 for details and registration. This course will initiate our own AIAI Herbarium Collection, which will focus on the broad range of botanicals utilized by the Eastern Woodland Indians.

AIAI TRAIL ... 12,000 years of ecology and history ...

The "Quinnnetukut Habitat Trail" is being expanded and improved this summer to include a Woodland Indian encampment, our simulated archaeological site (at trail end), and our second Indian garden (surrounding the Institute). This quarter-mile loop walk was designed to give the hiker a perspective of the Woodland Indians' relationship with this land during the seasons.

The initial trail work was begun in 1975, and sponsored by the Washington Garden Club. Ask for the green 'Habitat Trail Guide' at the visitor center.

COOKBOOK

"What seems to be the most intelligent and brilliantly researched book on the food of the American Indians is titled Native Harvest: Botanicals and Recipes of the American Indian by Barrie Kavasch" were the opening words in Craig Claiborne's review in the New York Times in April. Sales soared! And now, Random House has offered to publish Native Harvests.

At Barrie's request a portion of the royalties from her book will be shared with AIAI to establish an Education Department Endowment. The primary focus of the endowment will be ethnobotany, the study of native plants and their varied uses. Since the original book project was essentially a volunteer effort on behalf of AIAI, we are most gratified by Barrie's sensitive consideration of an endowment. We applaud her accomplishment and generosity.

FALL COURSE AT HARTFORD UNIVERSITY

A fall course will be taught by Dr. Roger Moeller at the University of Hartford. The course entitled "Introduction to Archaeology." Soc. 338 will carry a credit value of 3 hours on the Undergraduate level.

The course will start September 12, 1978 at 4:15 p.m. and last until 6:45 on Tuesday evenings.

MAIL-A-MAP

New Directions, the publisher of Mail-A-Map, has used AIAI's Visitor Center as the cover for their new edition of the map of Washington.

Nine thousand six hundred of these maps are to be distributed by local businesses. Mail-A-Map, of Washington, is one of more than one hundred maps that are published by New Directions for towns throughout the state.

INDIAN ENCAMPMENT

The first work toward the building of an Indian Encampment has begun. It is to be an addition to the outdoor Habitat Trail. The project is funded by an education grant under Title IV. Mr. Dave Richmond, a Mohawk Native American, is the supervisor for the program.

Mr. Richmond, along with twelve Native American students from the Waterbury, Connecticut area, are going to start the encampment by building a longhouse dwelling.

ARTIFACTS

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A Quarterly Publication of the American Indian Archaeological Institute, P.O.Box 85, Washington, CT. 06793, Tel.: 868-0518