PATRONS' RECEPTION

Reception Opens Exhibits, Honors Swigart

The Institute was bursting with nearly one hundred guests—patrons, trustees, volunteers and staff—on Friday evening September 23, 1983 for the annual Patrons' Reception. A hearty thank-you to our major donors, this reception was also the opening preview of two new exhibitions: Plants and Paints—Pigments Used to Decorate Woodspínt Baskets and Southern New England: The First One Hundred Years of Contact.

Special thanks were given to Kiyoshi Kanai of Washington, Connecticut and New York City who volunteered his outstanding design talents by creating the stunning First Contact exhibition and to Ann McMullen, AIAI Collection Manager, for her research and installation of Plants and Paints (see Research Brief, page 5).

Then the most deserved tribute of all was presented and unveiled. Trustee Beatrice Hessel, whose husband was the co-founder of the Institute, presented retiring President Ned Swigart with AIAI's first Distinguished Service Award in recognition of his twelve years as president.

In This Issue:

Shop Talk: Gifts from Native Hands p. 2

Native People Profile: Dave Richmond p.5

Research Brief: Pigments for Woodspínt Baskets p.5

Calendar of events for next three months p.6

To
Edmund K. Swigart
Co-founder and President
American Indian Archaeological Institute
In Appreciation for His Inspiration and Leadership from Trustees, Members, Staff and Friends A Man With A Dream, He Has Furthered The Discovery Of American Indian Heritage For The Greater Understanding of Our Civilization September 23, 1983

Ned, as of October first, will assume the chairmanship of the Board of Trustees and will begin to devote his time to his own research and writing. Will the next monumental event be the publication of the story of AIAI's founding and incredible growth?
GIFTS FROM NATIVE HANDS

All items shown on these pages can be purchased directly from the AIAI Shop or by mail or phone. Call for price inquiries. The Shop will also be happy to gift wrap or mail any direct purchases. VISA and MASTERCHARGE will be accepted. Shop hours are 10:00 to 4:00.

Always popular Mohawk sweet grass and ash splint baskets, these examples represent some new shapes, sizes and colors now available in the AIAI Shop. Many of the baskets were obtained this summer at various Pow Wows in New York State.

A very nice selection of Ojibwa porcupine quill boxes of fine quality has been obtained by the AIAI Shop, thanks to good fortune. These boxes which are becoming quite scarce, are made in the traditional way, using birch bark with sweet grass trim.

A selection of new ash splint baskets made by Micmac and Maliseet Indians of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. These baskets were obtained on a recent buying trip and include a typical potato basket and an interesting melon basket.
The AIAI Shop's selection of southwestern jewelry and pottery, although small in scope, emphasizes quality, variety and uniqueness. Included in some of the new jewelry items is an unusual Zuni squash blossom necklace and several styles of "ear cuffs," a type of earring now popular in the west.

Tama Tarbell's beautiful black pottery continues to be a best seller in the Shop. Her new pieces show a growing refinement of slip designwork and surface finishes. She has also been experimenting with new and larger shapes.

The one-of-a-kind pueblo pottery pieces found in the Shop are not only unusual and thoughtful gift possibilities, but also treasures that will increase in value as time goes by.
Sturdy, beautifully made Mohawk ash splint baskets are in good supply in the Shop this year, including several new round work baskets. Shown with them are our most special Cree tamarack decoys from James Bay, Ontario.

Old favorites, Sioux willow baskets and Ojibwa birch bark containers make marvelous gifts, interesting because of their origin and craftsmanship and highly useful and practical to use today. These baskets carry relatively inexpensive price tags for Native handcrafted items and are shown here with several Shop best sellers.

For last minute stocking stuffers or that small but unusual gift, there is always a selection of handcrafted jewelry, small baskets or small Indian-made items to choose from in the Shop.
Research Brief

Pigments Used to Decorate Woodsplint Baskets

A great deal has been said and written about natural dyestuffs and pigments used by early Native Americans to decorate leather, fiberwork, basketry, quills and the human body. Yet for many interested observers the question remains: how was the work actually done?

Coloring was applied to various surfaces and objects through three basic techniques: dyeing, staining and painting. Dye permeate the substance to be colored, stain superficially penetrate the material and paints (which normally consist of a vehicle or liquid spreading agent, and the pigment) adhere to the surface by means of a binder. On woodsplint baskets of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, paints and stains are most common. There is no evidence to suggest that woodsplints were dyed by basket makers before the late nineteenth century.

Early twentieth century studies of woodsplint basketry decoration yielded lists of plants that were said to have been used for painting baskets. But in experiments conducted at the Institute, it was found that the majority of these plants—such as bloodroot and poke—yielded only pale washes which do not replicate the colors seen on nineteenth century baskets. Walnut or butternut stain seemed to be the only exceptions to this discovery.

![Covered Storage Basket, Nipmuck, circa 1839.](image)

During an examination of Algonkian baskets, it was noted that a number showed evidence of vibrant colors reminiscent of those used in early nineteenth century New England landscape paintings, housepainting and furniture decoration. When compared to cakes of paint from a late eighteenth century watercolor kit, the colors proved identical. Thus it would appear that, while Native Americans did use some natural vegetal and mineral pigments to decorate woodsplint baskets, most of the colors that are preserved were of commercial origin. Purchased dry pigments were ground and mixed with water and size—a glue made of scraps of animal hooves and skin—in a technique called distemper painting. Such stains and paints could then be used to swab splints or paint designs on baskets.

This discovery, made with the invaluable help of Donna K. Baron, Registrar at Old Sturbridge Village, began a new chapter in our research on Eastern Algonkian basketry. The results of the preliminary research are presented in our new exhibition “Plants and Paints—Pigments Used to Decorate Woodsplint Baskets,” which includes the watercolor kit and the brightly colored baskets which prompted our first inquiries.

—Ann McMullen
Collections Manager

Dave Richmond
Mohawk

A decline in kerosene heater sales is partly responsible for returning a warm personality to the staff of AIAI. Dave Richmond, a former staff member from 1978 through 1980 rejoined the AIAI Education Department September 1. His friendly manner, knowledge of crafts, and deep understanding of his Mohawk heritage are again to be an important addition to AIAI programs.

Dave was born and raised on the St. Regis Reservation, Mohawk Nation, in New York State. He studied psychology in area colleges. Before first coming to AIAI, he had been the jobs developer for American Indians for Development in Meriden, Ct. While living in New York City he worked for the New York Board of Education in Indian education programs. He has been a member of our Native American Advisory Committee for the past five years.

Special congratulations are extended to Dave on his recent marriage to Trudie Lamb, director of American Indians for Development and former tribal chairman of the Schaghticoke of Kent, Ct. Teasingly we add: at long last a Mohawk has expressed peaceful intentions to a Connecticut Indian. Welcome back, Dave Richmond.
12 & 13/Sat & Sun, 2:30 pm film, Secrets of the Ice.
19/Sat, 10:30 am Thanksgiving Story Hour for Children by Karen Coody Cooper at North Haven Public Library, North Haven, CT.
19 & 20/Sat & Sun, 2:30 pm film, Forbidden City.
25/Fri, noon, Thanksgiving Story Hour by Karen Coody Cooper.
26 & 27/Sat & Sun, 2:30 pm film, The Peach Gang.

DECEMBER

3/Sat, 10 am-3 pm, Museum Shop Open House featuring silver jeweler demonstrating his craft. Special sale items.
3/Sat, 11:00 am, Woodland Indian Winter Tales Story Hour by Karen Coody Cooper.
3 & 4/Sat & Sun, 2:30 pm film, Ascent of Man: The Harvest of the Seasons.
10 & 11/Sat & Sun, 2:30 pm films, Search for Fossil Man and The Dig.
17 & 18/Sat & Sun, 2:30 pm film, Yes, Virginia, There Is A Santa Claus.
23 & 24/Fri & Sat, 2:30 pm film, Christmas in Appalachia.

NOVEMBER

5/Sat, 1 pm, History of Flooding of the Shepaug River by Dr. Peter Patton, geomorphologist from Wesleyan University.
5 & 6/Sat & Sun, 2:30 pm film, An Old Man Shall Inherit the Earth.
10/Thurs, 8:00 pm, Ethnographic Identification at Scoville Library, Salisbury, CT.
12/Sat, 1:00 pm slide lecture, Dream and Legend in Native American Art, by Dr. Raelene Gold, AIAI Trustee.

The Calendar includes programs at AIAI and in other locations. AIAI Chapters continue in Salisbury at the Scoville Library, in Simsbury at the Simsbury Historical Society and in Westport at the Westport Nature Center.

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