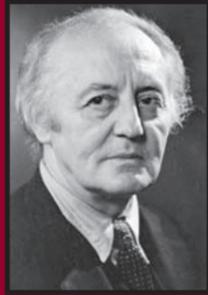




A GATHERING OF TRADITIONS



A Centennial Celebration of Dr. Charles Marius Barbeau in Oklahoma

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Sam Noble Museum
University of Oklahoma



Sam Noble Museum
The University of Oklahoma
2401 Chautauqua Ave., Norman
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THE HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTE NATION

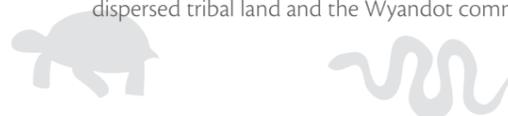
Like most Oklahomans, the citizens of the Wyandotte Nation are the children of immigrants. The complicated history that explains their residence in the state's far northeast corner is unique. It is a story that is a testament to the Wyandotte's dedication to each other and to their persistence as a people.

The small town of Wyandotte, Oklahoma is the center of the Wyandotte Nation today, but the locations in which the Nation settled read like a road atlas spanning from their traditional homeland on the eastern shore of Lake Huron in Ontario, Canada to villages in Michigan and Ohio. After the founding of the United States, the Wyandot faced enormous pressure to surrender their lands in the Great Lakes region. In 1843 they were forced to relocate to present-day Kansas.

A treaty in 1855 ended Wyandot government in Kansas and dispersed tribal land and the Wyandot community moved

again, this time onto lands in Indian Territory, present day Oklahoma. The land in Indian Territory was purchased from their old friends from the Ohio country – the Seneca. The Seneca under the Indian Reorganization Act of 1937 became known as the Seneca-Cayuga Tribe of Oklahoma.

Since coming to what is today Ottawa County, Oklahoma, the Wyandotte have actively pursued their own community, economic, and cultural projects while also engaging with their native and non-native neighbors.



DR. CHARLES MARIUS BARBEAU



Dr. Charles Marius Barbeau (1883-1969) is widely recognized as a pioneer in the fields of anthropology and folklore studies. Barbeau studied law at the Université Laval and won a Rhodes Scholarship, which enabled him to go to Oxford University in England. It was there that he studied anthropology. He earned his degree in 1911 and returned to Canada, where he joined the staff of the National Museum of Canada (known today as the Canadian Museum of Civilization).

While he would later undertake studies of French Canadian folk culture and of Native communities in Western Canada, the focus of his earliest work was Wendat (Wyandotte) traditional culture. Barbeau visited communities in Quebec, in Ontario (near Detroit, Michigan) and in Oklahoma.

A particular focus of his efforts in Oklahoma was documenting traditional stories. In 1915, these were published in a book titled *Huron and Wyandot Mythology*. The narratives told

by Wyandotte elders and gathered by Barbeau testified to the richness of the nation's culture and to the artistry of Wyandotte people.

While among the Wyandotte in Oklahoma, Barbeau became acquainted with the Seneca-Cayuga. In a sense, his Oklahoma studies considered both peoples. This is evident in his efforts to collect objects representative of both Wyandotte and Seneca-Cayuga ways of life.



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A PRICELESS LEGACY

The work that Marius Barbeau and elders of the Wyandotte Nation conducted together a century ago represents a priceless legacy today.

The Wyandotte Nation is working to revive its language through recordings and documentation that Barbeau gathered from community members in 1911 and 1912. This work would be greatly hindered without Barbeau's recordings made at a time when recording technology was brand new, travel was difficult, and Barbeau was an inexperienced young scholar.

For the citizens of the Wyandotte Nation the objects that Barbeau collected, for what is now the Canadian Museum of Civilization, form a unique resource. Several of these once relatively commonplace objects are now unique and considered cultural treasures. As such, Barbeau's collections help contemporary community members learn more about their ancestors and the lives they lived.

- Objects (courtesy of the Canadian Museum of Civilization):
- 1 Maggie Coon, Handbag, III-H-278
- 2 James Logan (Seneca-Cayuga), Drum, III-I-463a
- 3 Mary McKee, Leggings, III-I-86a-b
- 4,5 Daylight Davis (Seneca-Cayuga), Dolls, III-I-520, III-I-521
- 6 Catherine Johnson, Sap Trough, III-H-243
- 7 Smith Nichols, Club, III-H-239
- 8 Becky Dushane, Moccasins, III-H-290a-b
- 9 Margaret Winney (Seneca Cayuga), Basket, III-I-480
- 10 Becky Dushane, Tobacco Pouch, II-H-296