

“Language Art History”



**LANGUAGE - ART - HISTORY
BE A PART OF OUR NATION'S
FIRST CULTURAL WEEK
MAY 31, JUNE 4, 2004
IN WYANDOTTE, OKLAHOMA**

By Sallie Cotter Andrews

At our pow wow in September 2003, a group of members from our nation and The Wyandot Nation of Kansas met with Chief Bearskin and Second Chief Jim Bland to discuss our tribal culture and how we might better share with everyone the information that is available. A Cultural Committee was formed, and plans were made for our first Cultural Week. The dates for this event are May 31 through June 4, 2004, in Wyandotte, Oklahoma, at the Tribal Center.

During Cultural Week, tribal members of our four nations (The Wyandotte Nation of Oklahoma, The Wyandot Nation of Kansas, The Wyandot Nation of Anderdon, and The Huron Wendat of Wendake Canada) are invited to come together to meet,

study and learn from each other. Several experts will be with us including Bruce Pearson, a linguist from Columbia, South Carolina, and Michael Espinola of Wendake who will help us with our language.

Cultural Week is open to tribal members only and their spouses, not the general public. Members of the Seneca/Cayuga Nation of Oklahoma are also invited because they have always extended an invitation to our nation to participate in their ceremonies. This is a time of learning for us. We realize that some of our people may not be able to attend for the whole time, and everyone is welcome to come for however long they can participate.

There is no charge to participate. You should bring a notebook and materials for recording what is presented.

The Cultural Committee has been working very hard via email since September to do several things. First, we have discussed what areas of study are important to us; we have determined where we need to begin to bet-

ter educate ourselves to gain a deeper understanding of our culture; and we have been making plans for "Cultural Week." On March 22 and 23 the committee met in person to finalize plans for Cultural Week and presented an outline to Chief Bearskin and the Board of Directors for approval. It was approved!

Our schedule will begin with a welcome cookout at the pow wow grounds on Monday evening, May 31. Tribal members may camp there. On Tuesday morning we will begin our Cultural Week program focusing on Language, Art and History. Tuesday evening we will enjoy a traditional dinner provided by the Wyandotte Nation of Oklahoma. Wednesday and Thursday we will continue our studies with optional evening activities available, too. On Friday, we will conclude our first Cultural Week.

If you have had a desire in your heart to experience your Wyandotte heritage at a deeper level, to learn the basics of our language, to get a grasp of our historical timeline, and to express yourself through traditional forms of art, then take time to be a part of this first Cultural Week. You'll never regret it. By spending even one day at Cultural Week, you will have a big start on your personal journey. For more information and to let us know you are coming, please visit www.wyandotte-nation.org or return the form in the newsletter to the Tribal Center.



"Working on plans for Cultural Week - May 31 through June 4 - are (l - r) Richard Zane Smith, Sherri Clemons, Sallie Andrews, Lloyd Divine, Ronnie Burnside and Juanita McQuiston. Patty Garrison also met with the committee. The committee met for two days and presented a plan to Chief Bearskin and the Board of Directors, which was approved."



GYAH'-WISH ATAK-IA THE TURTLE SPEAKS

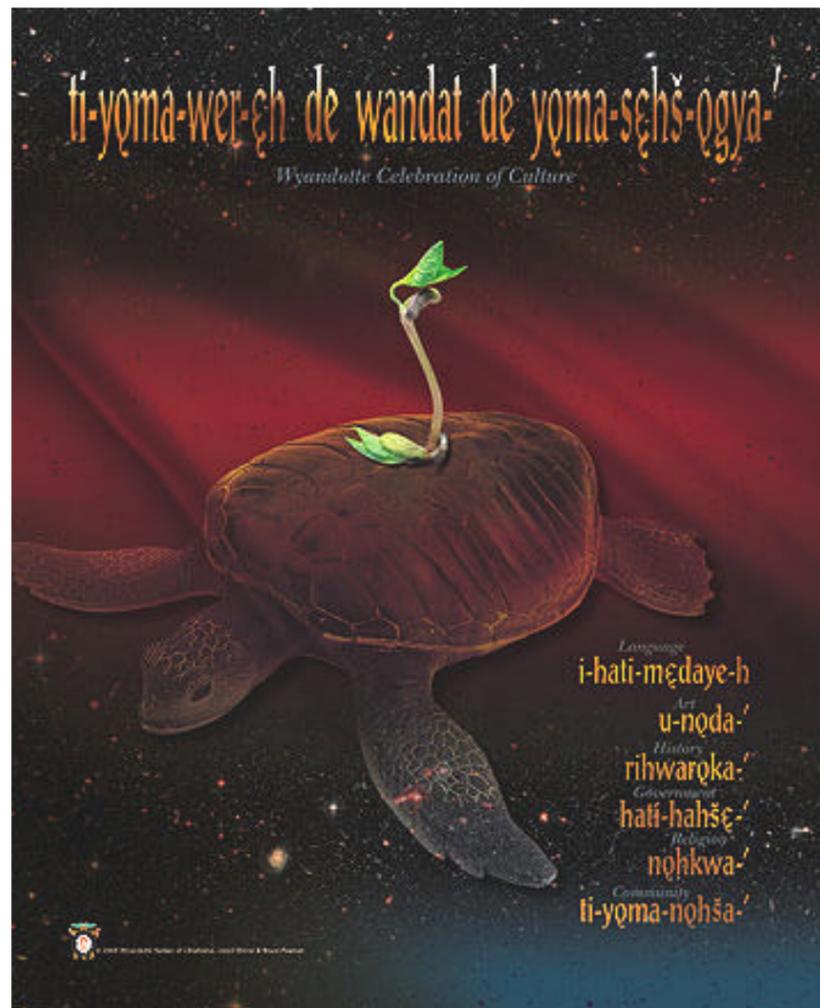
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April 2004

Wyandotte Celebration Cultural Week May 31 - June 4, 2004



The Wyandotte Nation of Oklahoma Invites all tribal members, spouses and children to participate in Cultural Week
May 31 through June 4, 2004

At the Wyandotte Tribal Center – Wyandotte, Oklahoma.
Come for as much time as your schedule will allow.

Come study our Language, History and Art
And have a great time learning with your fellow tribal members.

Come Study Your Language

A Message from Dr. Bruce Pearson

The plans for Cultural Week festivities in June offer an exciting promise for renewal of traditions and revitalization of heritage. While no one expects the Wandat language to replace English for day-to-day communication in the United States, a language—along with other elements of culture and a sense of shared history—is a vital part of who a people are.

People of all backgrounds today continue to study Latin because of the impact of Rome on world culture. In a similar way, students of Christianity take up the study of New Testament Greek to better understand their religious heritage. And the Jewish people, through study of the Hebrew scriptures, have brought their ancient language back to life and made it a living language again.

If people of Wandat descent wish to reclaim the linguistic portion of their heritage, it will come in much the same way. This is not to suggest that learning a language is easy. In many ways it is easier to learn facts of history or master handicraft skills and dance steps. But a language embodies so much of a people's outlook on life and way of community interaction that the rewards of language study are well worth the effort.

Children born into a living community learn the language naturally (and seemingly without effort!) just by hearing it spoken around them. Faced with the absence of living speakers, the next best thing is to expose oneself to the (story continued on page on page 2)

Proposed 2004 Cultural Week Schedule

Monday, May 31, 2004

3:30 p.m. - A time of gathering begins
5:30 p.m. - Cookout and covered dish dinner at the Pow Wow grounds hosted by the Cultural Committee
Evening - Social time

Tuesday, June 1

8:30 a.m. - Smoke ceremony - Dennis Smotherman, Wyandotte Nation of Oklahoma
 Morning prayers and thanksgiving - Richard Zane Smith, Wyandot Nation of Kansas
9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. - Language study at the Tribal Center; Artie Nesvold Community Building (hosted by linguists Bruce Pearson and Michael Espinola)
11:30 to 12:30 - Lunch on your own
12:30 to 3:00 p.m. - Art demonstrations at the Twin Bridges Annex Building (pottery, beadwork, flint knapping, bow making, horn rattles, hide tanning, and clothing)
3:30 to 5:00 p.m. - History, at the Twin Bridges Annex Building (1652 - 1701 hosted by Lloyd Divine, Wyandotte Nation of Oklahoma History & Cultural Committees)
6:00 p.m. - Traditional Dinner at the Tribal Center - Chief Leaford Bearskin, Wyandotte Nation of Oklahoma to speak to all participants about our culture and traditions. All Chiefs present will be asked to speak to participants.
Evening - Social time

Wednesday, June 2

8:30 a.m. - Smoke ceremony - Dennis Smotherman
 Morning prayers and thanksgiving - Second Chief Jim Bland, Wyandotte Nation of Oklahoma
9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. - Language study at the Tribal Center; Artie Nesvold Community Building (hosted by linguists Bruce Pearson and Michael Espinola)
11:30 to 12:30 - Lunch on your own
12:30 to 3:00 p.m. - Art demonstrations at the Twin Bridges Annex Building (pottery, beadwork, flint knapping, bow

making, horn rattles, hide tanning, and clothing)
3:30 to 5:00 p.m. - History, at the Twin Bridges Annex Building (1702 - 1843 hosted by Chief Jan English of the Wyandot Nation of Kansas)
6:00 p.m. - Dinner on your own
Evening - Social time

Thursday, June 3

8:30 a.m. - Smoke ceremony - Dennis Smotherman
 Morning prayers and thanksgiving - Richard Zane Smith
9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. - Language study at the Tribal Center; Artie Nesvold Community Building (hosted by Linguists Bruce Pearson and Michael Espinola)
11:30 to 12:30 - Lunch on your own
12:30 to 3:00 p.m. - Art demonstrations at the Twin Bridges Annex Building (pottery, beadwork, flint knapping, bow making, horn rattles, hide tanning, and clothing)
3:30 to 5:00 p.m. - History, at the Twin Bridges Annex Building (1844 - Present hosted by Sallie Andrews, Wyandotte Nation of Oklahoma History & Cultural Committees & Chief Steve Gronda of the Wyandott of Anderdon)
6:00 p.m. - Dinner on your own
7:30 p.m. - Special Night - Display of items from the Historical Office at the Tribal Center; Artie Nesvold Building presented by the Cultural Committee
Evening Social Time

Friday, June 4

8:30 a.m. - Smoke ceremony - Dennis Smotherman
 Morning prayers and thanksgiving Second Chief Jim Bland
 Wrap up of 1st Cultural Week Language, Art and History
 Words from participants (what you liked and what you recommend for next year)
 Closing words from Cultural Committee members
 Closing words from Chief Gronda, Chief English, Chief Bearskin and Second Chief Bland
Noon - Farewell

Message (cont.)

literature of the language and commit as much of it as possible to memory. That doesn't necessarily mean memorizing entire stories. It is enough to fix in mind certain phrases from key points in a story. Then, faced with a similar situation, you can say to yourself, "This is just like when the girl in 'The Medicine Men' said *yehawi' d' uda'tara'* (I carried off the bread)." And having fixed that in mind, it becomes possible to substitute any other noun for "bread" to make

similar statements.

Test this in your own experience. We all know the words to familiar songs and can call up these words at will. If you had to memorize poems or lines from Shakespeare in school, chances are you still remember many of these passages. If you were ever in a school play, you may still remember many of the speeches you learned. Suppose you had memorized this in an unfamiliar language. You would still have a few key words and phrases at your disposal for building a full command of the lan-

guage.

Don't be afraid to make mistakes. Children make mistakes all the time, but they are still understood. And eventually they correct themselves when it becomes important enough to them. A living language is always undergoing change. New words are added and old words fall into disuse. People find new ways of saying things because a living language needs to grow, and it belongs to the people who use it. Jump in and have fun! **Come to Cultural Week.**



Dr. Bruce L. Pearson
Linguist & Anthropologist

Bruce L. Pearson is the linguist who has been working with the Wyandotte Nation of Oklahoma in developing materials to help the community recover its language, which has not been spoken since the mid-20th century.

The focus of his study has been a collection of forty narratives told by Catherine Johnson, Smith Nichols, John Kayrahoo, Star Young and Mary McKee and transcribed by the

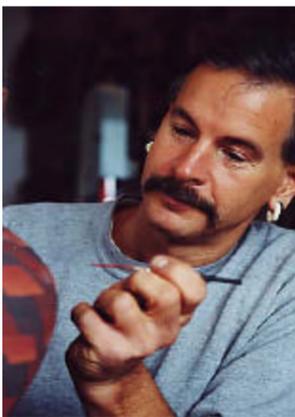
Canadian anthropologist Marius Barbeau in 1911-12. Pearson's edited version of the stories was published in a preliminary edition in 2001. He is still revising and correcting the work and compiling a handbook and dictionary to accompany it while preparing to take part in the Tribe's Cultural Week activities.

In 1988 he met his wife, Julie, while attending a conference on the Delaware Indians at Schoenbrunn, a living history museum in northeastern Ohio, where Julie was then working. Several years later, in 1994, while attending another conference at the same location the Pearsons met Jim Bland, Second Chief of the Wyandotte Nation, who asked Bruce to tackle the Wyandotte language, a member of the Iroquois language family. Bruce did so and discovered, among other things, that the language's own name for itself is Wandat.

To help you learn the Wyandotte language, it is recommended that you purchase a CD of Wyandotte words for \$5, and the Wyandotte Narratives book by Marius Barbeau and translated by Dr. Pearson. The book is \$20 at Cultural Week or \$25 in advance including postage. Call 918-678-2297 ext. 244.

Art, History & Social Time Round Out Daily Plans

During Cultural Week, learn a traditional skill from our artists. Richard Zane Smith, Ronnie Burnside, Michael Espinola, Juanita McQuiston and others will demonstrate Wendat art and help participants understand our



Richard Zane Smith
Master Potter

culture and history through art. Pottery, beadwork, flint knapping, bow making, horn rattles, hide tanning and clothing sessions will be presented each day.

Come learn some history from our members who have been studying for years. Let's share our knowledge and resources. Bring your books and materials for discussion, too.

Evening time around the drum - let us enjoy knowing each other, singing our traditional songs, learning new dances, and talking about the spiritual aspect of our nation and our future. Bring your lawnchairs, bring the kids, bring yourself. Don't miss the opportunity, even if you can only come for one day - just come. Cultural Week 2004 - it's a first.

Please Register For Cultural Week - FREE

Name _____

Address _____

I am a member of which Wendat Confederacy Nation or The Seneca/Cayuga Nation of Oklahoma _____

Number Planning to Attend Culture Week _____

I plan to attend all five days _____

I plan to attend at least one day _____

Comments, Questions or Requests _____

Register online at www.wyandotte-nation.org or return this form to Sherri Clemons,
 Wyandotte Nation of Oklahoma, P.O. Box 250, Wyandotte, OK 74370