

Story-tellers

Spirit Tears

By

Lila Tabobondung 01/10/24

Spirit holding back the tears	Now you say it is not true
Only a trickle over the years	We only wanted the best for you
Silent experiment	A standard of living
No talk to voice	Like everybody else
Oppression and violence	But you need to reject
A blanket	Your Anishnawbe self
Hiding our wounds	Assimilation, christianization
Like a crusty old scab	The best way in our opinion
Medieval methods	No benefit being a goddamn
To remove the Indian	Indian
From the Anishnawbe Child	Spirit holding back the tears
Spirit holding back the tears	Only a trickle over the years
Only a trickle over the years	Waiting, watching, lessons not
Talk of residential schools	heeded
Sound like thunder in our ears	Lateral violence
Blasting back the blanket	Replaces before birth teachings
Ripping off the scabs	Time to wake up, take notice and
Pain, and violence, hurt, shame	think
Exposed as voices roll across	Using our Creator given gifts
the land	Our way of seeing is very
Stories told, legal action	important
No way we did that to all those	To the world and all that's in it
Nice little Indian Children	When the Spirits release our tears
Spirit holding back the tears	Anishnawbek vision will be clear.
Only a trickle over the years	

Documentary on wisdom keepers refreshing change from TV fare

By F. Henry Lickers

For the past 34 years, I have refused to have a television in my household. My wife and I agreed that the programming that we saw on TV did not reflect the values and methods of teaching which had been taught to us. This view has been reinforced over the years by the little amounts of TV that I have seen while on business trips. The Great Silver Eye, with its need for more and more action and stimulus, is not the way in which most people truly learn, and it is not the way most people live.

Mohawk Wisdom Keepers by Danny Beaton was a refreshing change from the normal fare which is dished up to us.

Story telling and life-learning techniques are methods used by native people to pass information from one person to another, from one group of people to another, and from one generation to another. The way in which this information is passed is intimate and personal. This documentary reflects the way native people teach. Each section of the film is like a Living Portrait of these wisdom keepers.

The documentary, *Mohawk Wisdom Keepers* is aptly named. Tom Porter, Harriet Jock, Judy Swamp, Alice and Lehman Gibson are known and acknowledged wis-



Elder Tom Porter and film-maker Danny Beaton

dom keepers among the Mohawk and all native people. To hear their voices and see their faces speak to me was a moving experience. It also helps to have known Anna and Harriet Jock as well as Tommy Porter and Judy Swamp. These people have always been true to the teaching of their Elders and leaders of their communities. As I listened to the words of these people the time seemed to melt away and before I knew it the film was finished. I didn't realize that 45 minutes had passed but I realized that I had to watch and listen to it again.

Harriet Jock spoke about her mother Anna in a way that will touch anyone who watches the film. Her expression softened as she spoke about the joy of living

with her mother and learning the things she needed to know.

Tom Porter spoke with his usual eloquence about the world's spiritual and physical conditions. While his message spoke of dire consequences of the modern world's actions, he did not leave us without hope. The original instructions that the Creator gave us are still here. All we have to do is listen to both our hearts and minds to understand the message.

Note: Danny Beaton's newest file project - "The Iroquois Speak Out for Mother Earth" will be broadcast on Vision TV at 9 p.m. on March 30th.

F. Henry Lickers is director, Department of the Environment, Mohawk Council of Akwesasne.

Writer will be well-fed

Delaware author Daniel David Moses has been named a recipient of Toronto's Harbourfront Festival Award.

Moses, from Six Nations, is currently the writer-in-residence at Concordia University. "The award is a nice surprise since, in the past, it's mostly gone to more

high-profile artists like my colleagues Mr. Highway or Ms. Atwood," said the author. The prize included \$7,000 worth of meals at Le Select Bistro, a fashionable Queen St. West restaurant. "My aged mother doesn't have to worry about her son eating well this winter," quipped Moses.

National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation

6" x 6"

Medicine Wheel Memorial

By Lila Tabobondung

We need your help
To build upon the land
A circle of healing rocks
That reminds the world
Of the Peoples and the Land
We need your help
To build upon the land
A reminder of all the years
That Anishnawbek Children were
Held against their will
We need your help
To build upon the land
A Memorial that holds
Names engraved in Stone
A record of decades of hurt and
pain
We need your help
To build upon the land
A Medicine Wheel
A Talking Circle
A place to help us heal
We need your help
To build upon the land
Something that will show
And tell the world
We are of the Creator and Mother
Earth

A few years ago, a woman had

a vision. In that vision she saw a big Medicine Wheel on the lawn in front of Shingwauk Indian Residential School now known as Algoma University College. On this big four-circle wheel, were engraved all that names of the Anishnawbek children who were subjects of the Shingwauk experiment.

It is the hope of this Anishnawbekwe, that this Medicine Wheel Memorial will act as reminder to all the peoples of the world that we must never allow our children to be subjects of government experiments again. The Medicine Wheel is a symbol of our worldview; our Children are our hope that life will continue. The Medicine Wheel Memorial will tell our story and provide a place for healing to begin.

Please help us build this Medicine Wheel Memorial by sending your donation to:
Medicine Wheel Memorial Fund
Algoma University College,
Sault Ste Marie, Ontario, P6A-2G4