

A silver bracelet mystery

SUBMITTED BY JAMES H. POWELL
 Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum

Interesting donations to the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum collections often come unexpectedly. Last month, the Museum received a donation of a silver cuff bracelet decorated with Native American designs. Museum staff has been unable to discover much information about the bracelet, including the connection of this style of bracelet and the designs on it to the Seminole Tribe of Florida.

In October, Judy Cox contacted the Museum and generously donated the bracelet to the Tribe. She and her husband, Julian, shared the story of the bracelet. Judy said her father, Marvin Scally, was a friend of Josie Billie. Judy explained that in the early 1940s, at the request of Marvin Scally, Josie Billie gave the bracelet to him in order to give it to his wife, Judy Cox's mother, Nellie Scally.

Judy and Julian Cox believe that Josie Billie may have made the bracelet and that he may have created it from repurposed silver dollars he received from Marvin Scally.

Although Museum staff is uncertain about this particular bracelet, it is certain that the Seminole Tribe of Florida has a small but strong connection to silverwork, even during the most difficult circumstances in the 1800s. Seminole silversmiths produced many types of silver items, including brooches, gorgettes, turban bands, and wrist and arm bands. Most commonly, these items were made from Spanish, British or U.S. silver currency coins and were stamped, incised or embossed with decorative lines and designs.

As part of its permanent exhibitions, the Museum has materials related to Seminole silverwork on display. Several notable silver items featured are on long-term loan from the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI). On display are earrings, brooches, bracelets,



Photo courtesy of Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum
Josie Billie, 1942.



Photo courtesy of Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum
This silver cuff bracelet with stamped Native American designs may have been made in the 1940s from silver coins.



Photo courtesy of Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum
Pictured is a pair of women's silver bracelets on loan from the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI), which were collected by NMAI from Lucy Gopher.

rings, gorgettes, turban band and a complete silver worker's toolkit.

But none of the silver items on display or any additional silver items held by the Museum resemble the bracelet donation. There is no maker's mark on the bracelet. In addition, many of the designs on the bracelet more closely resemble Native American designs of the Southwest.

If anyone has any information about

the bracelet or would like to help solve this mystery, stop by the Museum, visit www.AhTahThiKi.com or call 877-902-1113.

The Museum would like to thank Judy Cox and her family for their generous donation.

The bracelet will be added to the Museum's silver holdings, and the story of this bracelet will be added to the Museum's archive as the mystery unfolds.

Remembering the Huff Camp

SUBMITTED BY ERIC GRIFFIS
 Tribal Historic Preservation Office

The Tribal Historic Preservation Office Tribal Archaeology Section began research on the historic Huff Camp (Bird Clan) on the Brighton Reservation for possible inclusion on the Tribal Register of Historic Places at the request of the Huff family.

Research consisted of interviews with John Wayne Huff, who was raised at the camp, archival inquiries and an archaeological survey. John Wayne's parents – Frank Huff and Mary Osceola Huff – moved to Brighton sometime in the 1940s. Mary was originally from the Bluefield area, and John Wayne remembers his dad saying he moved to Brighton because the Trail was getting too crowded. The family periodically moved around to different places until they finally settled at the historic location of the camp on the west side of Reservation Road, just north of what is now Frank Huff Road. The family moved there in the early 1950s when the main road was being built so the children could more easily travel to school in Okeechobee.

Frank and Mary raised six children – Frank Jr., Stanley, John Wayne, Roy Rogers, Josephine and Agnes – and hosted many frequent visitors to their camp. Of course, many Bird Clan relatives would visit the camp, but many of Frank's relatives would as well.

Frank's mother, Jenny (Rosalie) Tiger, lived at the camp for a while, and Frank's father, Sam, would stay at the camp when he visited from Hollywood.

Mary's brother, Robert Osceola, lived at the Seminole Village at Silver Springs and his family would stay in one of the Huffs' visitors chickees when they traveled to Brighton.

The Huff family also took frequent trips to visit Robert's family in Silver Springs and to visit Sam who worked for Reverend Genus Crenshaw at the First Seminole Baptist Church in Dania. Other visitors to the camp included Onnie Osceola and her family, Stanford Jumper, Willie Gopher and John Henry Gopher.



Photo courtesy of Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum
Lena Gopher, right, grinds corn with a large mortar and pestle. Standing around her are Stanley Huff, Mary Osceola Huff holding James Jumper and Agnes Huff Jumper. Seated in front of Stanley is Josephine Huff holding Cardell Jumper.

Mary's other brother, the Rev. Billy Osceola, had a chickee built at the Huff Camp that served as a Baptist church. Billy led the efforts to adopt a Tribal Constitution. When the Tribe voted to incorporate in 1957, Billy was then elected to serve as the first Chairman – a position he held for several years. The New York Times' coverage of the constitutional election profiled Sam Huff, saying he was the oldest voter in the Tribe (thought to be 94 at the time) and noted that he was the last Seminole to always wear the traditional long shirt that was popular in the 19th century.

As if the Huffs didn't have enough visitors already, Mary had an arts and crafts chickee built next to Billy's church along Reservation Road to attract tourists to the camp. After Lottie Tiger married Stanley Huff, they eventually started a camp just north of the Frank Huff Camp. Lottie

worked at Mary's crafts store when she was younger and she continues that tradition from her own home today.

One more thing that drew people to the camp was a pool table that was kept on a concrete slab under a chickee that Frank acquired when the Recreation Department got rid of it. Frank was the director of Recreation at Brighton, and he enjoyed working with kids to give them activities to avoid bad influences. Many people would come to play at "Frank's Pool Hall."

Mary was known to welcome visitors at all hours of the day and night and was always happy to start cooking food for whoever showed up, even if it was 3 a.m. Between the Huffs and Osceolas' involvement in Tribal government, community events, cattle, tourism, church and recreation, as well as the central location in Brighton, the Huff Camp was an important institution for many years.

The camp was used as a holiday camp for years after family members moved into HUD houses. During the archaeological field survey for the project, John Wayne pointed out the location of all the historic structures and landmarks, and the crew recorded the layout of the camp using GPS coordinates. The survey also revealed evidence of many years of home-cooked meals and family fellowship in the form of dishware, animal bones and soda bottles. Now family members and descendants live around the site of the camp, and John Wayne would like to see some type of memorial chickees built to represent the camp where he was raised.

Each site found by the THPO is recorded so that the information is available for future generations. By understanding the past, THPO staff can better understand the ever-changing landscape on the Brighton Reservation. If you have any information about this site or any other historic places on any of the reservations, or would like any further information about the Huff Camp, contact the THPO at 863-983-6549.



Photo courtesy of State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory
Three Seminole children of the Huff family clean laundry on a log. The photo was taken at a creek or pond located south of the Huff Camp.

Betty Mae Jumper Wisdom from the past Faa-tee-empeke (Thanksgiving)

The following column was written by Betty Mae Jumper and printed in the November 26, 1997 issue of The Seminole Tribune.

Indian stories about Thanksgiving are a little different from the stories told by white people. Indians recall that when whites first arrived from Europe, they didn't know how to survive. Food was running out as the winter was approaching, leaving them hungrier and hungrier.

When the Indians saw the whites going hungry – especially the children – they knew they had to do something to help. They began to talk among themselves about what they could do.

They solved the problem by bringing deer meat and fish.

Some Tribes were afraid to kill turkeys because they believe turkeys

are spirits and you shouldn't eat those birds. But, others said white people won't mind eating turkey because they don't know better. Also, Indians had planted corn, pumpkins and all kinds of beans. The Indians sat down with the whites so they would see the food was good to eat. Afterward, they taught the whites how to make gardens of plants that would grow in their area. This is a belief among many Indians that this was the beginning of Thanksgiving, which we still celebrate to this day.

Most Indians today eat turkey, but whether you have turkey or not, Thanksgiving is a day to stop and think about what you have. It's a day to spend with family and friends and to give thanks for all that God has given you.

I hope you all take time to remember the real reason for *Faa-tee-empeke*, Thanksgiving.



◆ LAKE TUPKE From page 1A

with medicine, said Salina Dorgan, Snow's daughter.

"My mother's vision about the medicine to us in our family was she tried to educate us as to the importance of medicine among our Seminole people," Dorgan said. "One of the things she always explained was that the medicine songs were always in the Seminole (Creek) language but the medicine people were more often the people who spoke Mikasuki. That played an important role for my mother because she could speak in both languages. We were very fortunate because her father ... brought up his children – she was one of seven siblings – and made sure that each and every one of them knew both languages."

Dorgan said she convinced her mother to share her knowledge with the world.

"There were limited areas where you can find certain medicine," said Dorgan, who told her mother, "If you don't start to share some of this knowledge, there's gonna be nobody who knows where these plants are at. You got to give the location."

Snow agreed and the book was published.

"It doesn't give you the remedies; all it does is just talk about the plants or the herbs that the medicine man requires," Dorgan said.

Chairman Billie described Snow as a visionary, whose inspiration lasted for decades around important Tribal affairs.

"One inspiration of Alice's that I remember was, I think it was maybe about the middle of the '70s, Alice had this business side to her and she said she wanted about 2 to 3 acres to put a hotel up and a restaurant on the Brighton Reservation. I was sitting on the Council in those days and I remember thinking, 'What the heck is she gonna do with a motel and a restaurant?' That's how far backwards we were in our thinking. As time went along I kind of pondered on that. She did put up a little restaurant over there. It is called Alice's Restaurant. We

still visit that place and a lot of us folks eat our breakfast there.

"As time went along, the idea of the motel lingered among myself and our people, and it happened on occasion, in the last 10, 12 years or so, that Seminole Tribe businesses have flourished. Seminole Tribe's business is one of the best or is the best in the world. I didn't say in Naples, I said the world. It is branded Hard Rock cafes and hotels and casinos – over 153 locations on Earth.

"Our management is the best in the world. The country of Vietnam gave us a call the other day and I went over there to check them out. We flew into Hanoi. They told us they don't have casino management there, so they wanted our people to go over and help them and write the casino rules and regulations of casinos. That is the inspiration that Alice Snow gave us, and to this day we are very thankful that we knew her. I just wanted you to know that Alice Snow's ideas linger on and we are doing very well with them."

Also during the event, Henry and his family demonstrated several Tribal stomp dances similar to those that occur at the annual Green Corn Dance, while Chairman Billie narrated.

NBG executive director Brian Holley praised Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum staff for helping plan the event.

"What we never expected was the wonderful relationship that would begin to evolve with Ah-Tah-Thi-

Ki Museum and the staff. I think this has been a wonderful catalyst for wonderful things to occur in the future," Holley said.

Museum director and Tribal Historic Preservation Officer Paul Backhouse agreed. He described the NBG staff as "incredibly gracious and hospitable."

Attendees toured the garden's habitats and landscapes, many of whom stopped to stare out from the shoreline of Lake Tupke, calm and serene, honoring forever Tupke, the special Seminole herbalist also known as Alice Micco Snow.

"There are moments in one's life when things come together in ways that are almost magical; I think Alice probably had more of them than most of us, given her approach to life," he said. "She created (magical moments) for others and she is still doing so, as today is another one."

“There are moments in one’s life when things come together in ways that are almost magical; Alice ... created (magical moments) for others and she is still doing so, as today is another one.”

– Duane Burnham, philanthropist



Photo by Peter B. Gallagher
With Lake Tupke in the background, Bobby Henry leads his family in a stomp dance demonstration Nov. 15 for attendees of the dedication ceremony for Alice Micco Snow.