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MAKING AND REMEMBERING VISUAL AND MATERIAL HISTORIES
OF DESHKAN ZIIBIING

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A PLACE FOR US TO SIT:
MAKING AND REMEMBERING VISUAL AND MATERIAL HISTORIES OF DESHKAN ZIIBIING

A DISSERTATION APPROVED FOR THE
SCHOOL OF VISUAL ARTS

BY THE COMMITTEE CONSISTING OF

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ABSTRACT

A Place for Us to Sit: Making and Remembering Visual and Material Histories of Deshkan Ziibiing tracks the journey that I undertook to locate ancestral belongings and to learn the stories and practices of making that are unique to the Anishinaabeg of Deshkan Ziibiing (Chippewas of the Thames First Nation)—a First Nation community located in southwestern Ontario, Canada. Through visits to museum collections and archives, this dissertation traces a journey of reconnecting with Deshkan Ziibiing material culture, which I refer to as gete-anishinaabeg, the old ones. This process is further enriched by oral histories that identify how colonialism has impacted Deshkan Ziibiing makers and how the community is and has been reclaiming practices of making.

This dissertation was inspired by a collection of gete-anishinaabeg that now resides at the American Museum of Natural History. The collection, acquired by American Anthropologist Mark Raymond Harrington in 1907, raises critical questions for me as someone who has grown up not knowing, seeing, and engaging with the arts of my ancestors—furthering the desire to learn about what was happening in the lives of Deshkan Ziibiing families before and after Harrington's collecting expedition. Through the recovery and reengagement with the things our ancestors left behind, I resituate gete-anishinaabeg in a continuum of making practices that embody Anishinaabe futurity. Grounded in Indigenous methodologies such as Biskaabiiyang, Storywork, Felt Theory, and Native Feminist Analysis this dissertation reveals complex layers of interconnected histories and adds to the emerging discourse of art histories that are specific to Indigenous communities and place. This work builds upon decolonizing praxis as theorized by Michelle M. Jacob (Yakama) and fosters a process of reconnecting Indigenous minds and bodies to the things our ancestors made, the experiences they felt, and the knowledge they created.

CHI-MIIGWECH

This dissertation project has been deeply enriched by the love, kindness, and care of Deshkan Ziibiing Anishinaabe kwewag Nancy Deleary, Maxine Hendrick, Gina McGahey, Syb Young, Donna Young, Felicia Huff, Sherry Waddilove, Betsy Kechego, Sarah Riley, Candace Doxtator, and Beverly Deleary. I am very honored and appreciative of the time you spent with me and for allowing me to document, share, and steward the stories that we exchanged. I loved every minute we spent together. Chi-miigwech to Chippewas of the Thames First Nation (COTTFN) Chief and Council for supporting my work in the community. I extend my sincerest gratitude to Brandon Graham, Treaty Research Coordinator for COTTFN Treaties, Lands, and Environment Department. Miigwech for sharing your knowledge and expertise on COTTFN treaties and histories.

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This dissertation project has been a family endeavor right from the beginning. I extend my sincerest appreciation and profound gratitude to my lifelong partner Blue whose companionship provided me with the space and time I needed to conduct research and write. Aiden and Locv, your love, patience, and encouragement kept me going during the times we

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BEZHIG (ONE): INTRODUCTION

> In the old days, it was important to take care. It was important to nurture, and to love with all your heart. Nanabush taught us that one. Oowah. He used to walk all over, visiting with us, making sure we had enough food, water, medicine. Making sure our kids weren't sick. Making sure we were all getting along. Visiting. Why did we stop visiting?
>
> Leanne Simpson[1]

My mother instilled a deep appreciation and curiosity of art and art making practices. I remember her teaching me how to make beaded hair barrettes on a loom at the kitchen table. My mother, Nancy Deleary, is a citizen of the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation. She is a maker, muralist, and lifelong learner and advocate of Anishinaabe'aadziwin[2] and Anishinaabemowin[3]. In my earliest memories, she was always making something. It didn't matter whether it was a quilt, a drawing, pow wow regalia, or community event she always made sure to put the same love, care, and kindness in the things she created. It is through her creativity and influence that my learning journey continues in the research I have undertaken and the pages I have constructed in this dissertation. This work is inspired by my personal experiences and memories of making and the eagerness to learn about the arts of my relatives and ancestors. Stories and experiences about art making have been erased, misplaced, and systematically silenced. I seek to recover and make sense of the stories and experiences of Deshkan Ziibiing

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[1] This excerpt is from the beginning paragraph of "The Gift is the Making" in *The Gift is the Making* by Leanne Simpson.
[2] Anishinaabe'aadziwin is Anishinaabe way of life.
[3] Anishinaabemowin is Anishinaabe language.

Anishinaabeg, my relatives, and recall the ways in which we generate and create Anishinaabe'aadziwin through the things we make.

In 2020, as the coronavirus pandemic spread rapidly across the world, many organizations were closing their doors or scrambling to transition their programming and services to online based platforms. For Chippewas of the Thames First Nation (COTTFN) Anishinaabe'aadziwin Department, they began developing art classes for their citizens. Since major events and gatherings were shut down, the Anishinaabe'aadziwin team started focusing on increasing the presence of art and art making skills in the community. With the social and cultural wellbeing of the community in mind, introductory classes on jewelry, hide tanning, and maple syrup making were offered outdoors to accommodate social distancing mandates and to encourage participation. These classes were and are still part of an initiative by the COTTFN Anishinaabe'aadziwin Department to direct attention to the legacies and profound wounding colonialism and the coronavirus pandemic had on culture, language and art making practices in First Nations communities and families. On May 6, 2020, the inaugural art class flyer states,

> Colonization is a system that is designed to destroy a way of life for the original people of the land. This system forced our ancestors to drop the knowledges of "making" and prevented them from passing on the essential skills for living to their children, and their children's children.[4]

Since then, the COTTFN Anishinaabe'aadziwin Department continues to explore and support local art classes and markets by encouraging all generations to visit, imagine, and explore their own creativity as makers.

Additionally, over the last five years or so, the COTTFN Anishinaabe'aadziwin Department, supported by Gina McGahey, Nancy Deleary, Sarah Riley, Elijah Jewell, Monty

[4] Chippewas of the Thames Anishinaabe'aadziwin Department Art Class Flyer. "Attention: COTTFN Community Members!" Facebook. May 6, 2020.

McGahey, and Betsy Kechego and many community volunteers, has hosted a spring camp to reintroduce the process of making ziiyagmide,[5] a community wide initiative that has not been supported in the community for quite some time.

With the help of the Paaswe'aatigook Anishinaabemowin Adult Language Program, COTTFN Anishinaabe'aadziwin offers community access to the seasonal practice and teachings of ziiyaagmide. It has become an annual and community-wide process and celebration. Ziiyaagmide is and has always been an important life-sustaining food for Anishinaabe. There was a time when ziiyaagmide, the sweet maple syrup we know today, flowed directly from Ninaatigoog.[6] This caused Anishinaabe to be entranced by its ever-flowing stream of sweet syrup and, as you can imagine, began to cause a great deal of problems. Leanne Simpson, Michi Saagig Nishinaabe kwe[7], shares a version of this story in her book, *The Gift is in the Making: Anishinaabeg Stories*. I am going to share a version of this story here, but before I do, I must acknowledge that stories about Nanabush are often told in the winter, when snow is on the ground. That way, we Anishinaabe can see the footprints of those spirits. When we know they are around, we respect their presence and do not share stories about them so that we do not embarrass them. Simpson honors the teachings of her elders by not speaking of or breathing life into these stories outside of winter. She writes, "the spirits are further away from the earth and there is less chance of embarrassing any of the beings that guide me through my life."[8] I too respect these teachings and share pieces of the story here as an analysis of how Nanabush, for the Anishinaabeg, is our original researcher and teacher. It is through stories of Nanabush's

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[5] Ziiyaagmide is maple syrup.
[6] Ninaatigoog are maple trees.
[7] Kwe is woman.
[8] Leanne Simpson *The Gift is in the Making* (Winnipeg: Highwater Press. 2013), 5.

adventures that offer us guidance and advice for living mino bimaadiziwn[9] with all our human and more-than-human relatives. As I read and re-read Simpson's story about how Anishinaabe learned to make ziiyaagmide, I became more and more interested in how Nanabush's journeys and teachings inform research methods that are rooted in Anishinaabe epistemology and ontology.

Nanabush is many things, all at once. Born to a human mother and Epingishmook (spirit of the west), Nanabush is gender fluid, neither male or female and is a master transformer and teacher. Gzhwe mnidoo, our loving and kind Creator, sent Nanabush to help the Anishinaabeg and teach them about living a good life.[10] Nanabush is a powerful being who loves and cares deeply for all Anishinaabe and for all of creation. After Nanabush's mother died, his Nokomis[11] raised him. When Nanabush is in need of guidance or help, Nokomis is there to encourage him and she offer's him guidance and advice. That is the case when Nanabush went looking for the Anishinaabeg and couldn't find them. In Simpson's rendition of the story, she assigns Nanabush he/him pronouns. As I share parts of her story, I will do the same.

One day, Nanabush went out to visit with Anishinaabeg in the south, the place where the Mississauga and caribou clans live. When he arrived, he was astonished to find no Anishinaabeg anywhere. Simpson writes,

> He can't find any of them there. No Children. No Fish smoking. Empty Lodges. That Nanabush, he knows something is wrong, something is not right. Its ziigwan[12]. The Nishinaabeg should be mending nets, setting nets, smoking fish. The ice is off the lake. The winter is in retreat. There should be wood piles, fires, but, instead, there is nothing.[13]

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[9] Mino bimaadiziwin means living a good life.
[10] Basil Johnston writes about the Nanabush in his book *Ojibway Heritage* (University of Nebraska Press, 1990), 17.
[11] Nokomis is grandmother.
[12] Ziigwan is spring.
[13] Leanne Simpson, *The Gift is in the Making* (Winnipeg: Highwater Press. 2013), 21.

Nanabush decided to go looking for Anishinaabe. He looked for a very long time and when he couldn't find them, he started to feel very sad and he started to blame himself. If only he was there earlier, perhaps he could have been there to help them if they were in need. After quite a few days of looking, Nanabush sees something off into the distance. He is not quite sure what it is, but it's over where Ninaatigoog are. Simpson writes,

> He sees something, and at first he thinks he is seeing things from all the looking, but, as he gets closer, he starts to understand. He sees brown feet and brown legs sticking straight up in the air. He gets closer. He sees brown back lying flat on the snowy ground in fact the snowy ground is kind of melty now, but brown back doesn't care. He gets closer. He sees a big mouth wide open. Like the big mouth is at the dentist.[14]

Nanabush sees Anishinaabe lying in the melting snow right under Ninaatigoog with their mouths wide open and ziiyaagmide flowing right in. This was a time when "Ninaatigoog gave that syrup right out of their bodies, right over to whoever wants to drink it. And those Nishinaabeg, they always wanted to drink it."[15] Nanabush tries to get their attention. He begins to yell really loud, he sings, and stomps around but no one moves. Not one Nishinaabeg notices. He starts to realize that he needs help. Simpson writes,

> This is a big problem, and Nanabush has to think up a big solution. And sometimes even Nanabush doesn't have any ideas. But he knows who does: Nokomis. That old lady will know what to do. That old lady will know how to solve this big problem. Those Nishinaabeg are going to get sick. They are not eating good food. They are not taking care of each other. They are getting weak just lying there on their backs with their furry feet up in the air all day. They're getting soft in the mind, not thinking ahead, not looking ahead.[16]

Nanabush begins his journey to see Nokomis. When he arrives to her house, he offers her semaa,[17] sits in her lodge by the fire and begins to tell her his dilemma. Once finished, Nokomis

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[14] Ibid, 87.
[15] Ibid, 87.
[16] Ibid, 88.
[17] Semaa is tobacco

yells "aambe!"[18] and they get to work. Nokomis is fast and strong and by this time, Nanabush has been all over and he is tired and his feet are sore. What he really wants is a snack and to rest, but he must follow Nokomis. She tells Nanabush to "go to the south side of the tree and make a hole."[19] He does this and then attaches their akik[20] and the ziiyagmide starts to drip into the akik. Nokomis then tells Nanabush to take a drink. As he does, he yells "Gaa Gaawin! It tastes like Nibiish!"[21] Rather than the sweet syrup Nanabush is used to, it is sweet water, ziisbaakdaaboo.[22] Simpson writes.

> Nokomis tells Nanabush that the sap, the ziisbaakdaaboo, is medicine, that it cleans us out. It cleans our bodies out for spring. "Its spring cleaning," she says, laughing under her breath. Zhaganosh thinks that means wash the curtains. Oowah. Washing your curtains don't clean out nothing. Drink ziisbaakdaaboo every day of Ziisbaakdooke Giizis. Then you'll be ready.
> "Ready for what?" asks Nanabush.
> "Ready for what happens next," says Nokomis.[23]

Nokomis then teaches Nanabush how to take care of ziisbaakdaaboo and turn it into maple syrup and sugar. These instructions were so important that Anishinaabeg still remember and do it to this day. Turning ziisbaakdaaboo into ziiyagmide takes many hours, lots of work, and a consistent watchful eye. After a while, even the animals began to help Nokomis and Nanabush. When all the hard work was done Nanabush wanted a party. He worked so hard for many days, but Nokomis sent him back to the Nishinaabeg. "Life is a party," she says. "Party down the trail and go make things right with the Nishinaabeg."[24] Nanabush returns to the Anishinaabeg and

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[18] Aambe means "come on, let's go".
[19] Ibid, 89.
[20] Akik is bucket.
[21] Gaa and Gaawin means "no" and Nibiish is water.
[22] Ziisbaakdaaboo is sap.
[23] Ibid, 90.
[24] Ibid, 91.

finds them in the same position as he saw them last with their feet in the air and mouths wide open. Simpson writes,

> "Bozhoo, Nishinaabeg!" Nanabush yells.
> Nobody pays any attention.
> Nanabush figures he's got to get tricky at this point. Otherwise, he's going to have to do a whole bunch more walking, and he's never going to get any soup or blanket, and his feet are still so wet. So he gets tricky[25]

Nanabush goes to the river with a bucket and fills it with water. Then, he takes his bucket full of water and climbs up Ninaatig and pours the water down over the tree. Nanabush "goes back and forth and he does this thirty times—one time for every day in Ziisbaakdaaboo Giizis."[26] Remember, Nanabush can be tricky. Simpson adds that maybe he poured the bucket of water over the tree and maybe be didn't. Maybe he saved himself a few trips and took a great big pee all over the tree. However it happened, it happened and Simpson writes,

> by the time that "water" got filtered all the way through Ninaatig, and by the time Nanabush did every tree in that sugar bush, the ziiyaagmide dripping into the mouths of Nishinaabeg wasn't ziiyagmide anymore. It was more like Nibiish. It was more like tree pee.[27]

Once Anishinaabeg noticed, they closed their mouths and got up. "Now it was Nanabush's turn to be Nokomis."[28] He showed Anishinaabeg everything Nokomis showed him. He told Anishinaabeg "how much he loved them and how sad he felt when they forgot about the four sacred foods, and their responsibilities to each other and to the other clans."[29] Nanabush told the Anishinaabeg that he wanted to walk the earth with them for a very long time. He told them how much he loved them, and that others would come help. Simpson writes,

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[25] Ibid, 91.
[26] Ibid, 93.
[27] Ibid, 92.
[28] Ibid, 92.
[29] Ibid, 92.

> The Nishinaabeg accepted that gift from Nanabush. And, every year, no matter how hard it is, they make sure their lips taste the sweetness of ziisbaakdaaboo, even if it is just once. …They take their kids. They tell the story of Nanabush. They listen for the heartbeat of their mother as that ziisbaakdaaboo falls into their pails.[30]

Anishinaabeg all over Anishinaabe aki[31] continue the teachings Nanabush shared with them so long ago. In many First Nations communities the teachings have been stored away, in others they maintain the practice, and for many others they are relearning them. In concluding the story, Simpson adds that "in their heart knowledge, hidden away in the most precious parts of their beings, they know that ziinzibaakwad wasn't the real gift. They know that the real gift was in the making, and that, without love, making just wasn't possible."[32]

As Deshkan Ziibiing reclaims ancestral teachings, they also reclaim the love, care, and kindness that Nanabush shared with them. This process has not been an easy one. It's taken time, healing, recovery, and many other moving parts and dedicated people to recover from a period of extreme violence enacted on Anishinaabeg bodies and lands. Nanabush reminds us to offer semaa, seek guidance from your elders, don't shy away from hard work, be patient, and to carry love into all things that you make. This is what I aimed to do in this research project. It is very much a personal journey of recovering what it means to be Anishinaabe kwe and a good relative. I am not the only one doing this work in our community. There have been Anishinaabeg across many generations who have embarked on a similar journey. Their work informs mine and I am grateful for the paths they have created so that I may follow and add what I can.

In honoring the community work of re-making ziiyaagmide in Deshkan Ziibiing, Nancy Deleary created a mural that now resides on the Chippewas of the Thames Band Administration

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[30] Ibid, 93.
[31] Aki is earth.
[32] Ibid, 93.

Office. Inspired by beaded bandolier bags, she merged historical designs with contemporary references to tell a story of how Deshkan Ziibiing Anishinaabeg is practicing their original teachings—their original instructions. In the mural, the words *Anishinaabe Pane Gwa Maampii Nii-yaami* are spelled out along the top edge of the mural and translates to "Anishinaabe will always be here" (see Figure 1). Deleary constructed a special loom so that she could bead the image before it was photographed for large format printing (see Figure 2). The original image, a source of inspiration for Deleary's mural, comes from a bandolier bag that now resides at the National Museum of the American Indian. Attributed as being Potawatomi and the maker once known, the "shoulder pouch bag" was constructed circa 1880 and was possibly collected and donated to the museum by Thea Heye, wife of renowned collector George Gustav Heye (see Figure 3). Deleary kept a few of the original design components, but as mentioned before, blended them with her own.

Three black thunderbirds fill the sky and upper portion of the mural. Jagged lines emanate from their wings signaling their return in the springtime. On the left side of the mural, the house, as it was constructed in the 1880 Potawatomi bag is replicated here. The male figure, who is dressed in black, is also recreated in Deleary's design. The male figure wears a wide brimmed hat and carries one pail in each hand. One can only assume that the pails are filled with ziisbaakdaaboo. Beside the male figure, Deleary added a partner, a friend, a woman who is tending to the ziisbaakdaaboo in the kettle that sits over the fire. Keeping a consistent fire and boiling the sap down to syrup or sugar is an important part of the process. On the other side of the fire, directly in the center of the mural, stands a large brown bear clawing up toward the sky. The bear is another important relative to Anishinaabeg. In a recent discussion with the artist, she shared the following description,

> the bear, when it first comes out if hibernation, it will go to a maple tree and claw the maple and sap will come out. It's from this observation that we learned this nourishment from the tree is immediate food. We are part of creation, and the bear is a very important relative of ours.[33]

The right side of the mural is symmetrical and nearly identical to the left side of the mural. However, a few key distinctions are made that indicate the passing of time and the transmission of intergenerational knowledge. The house on the right side of the mural is updated with a satellite dish on the roof and a red maple tree put front symbolizes the growth and stability of the community. The fire continues to burn as Deshkan Ziibiing Anishinaabeg remember, enact, and continue the original instructions that were given to us by Nanabush and our more-than-human kin. The relationship between the loom, the bag, and the mural demonstrates how our *now* is informed by our *then*. That even then we knew the power of our stories.

The placement of the mural can be seen by those entering and leaving the Deshkan Ziibiing Kinoomaagegamig Elementary School, Enji-Maajtaawaad Early Years Centre, and the Community Centre. It reminds visitors of the beauty that is inherent in Deshkan Ziibiing Anishinaabe'aadizwin and gikendaasowin. The mural signifies the reclamation and rematriation of stories that have been silenced and communal practices that have been disrupted. It's a powerful message and reminder of Nanabush's love and care for all Anishinaabeg.

Recovering our making practices has always been a desire of mine. I had always wondered where our ancestral belongings were and until I undertook this research project, I had little to no knowledge of Deshkan Ziibiing ancestral practices of making and where, if any, the material evidence had gone. It became abundantly clear as I began this research project that there were indeed ancestral belongings out in the world, and I wanted to reconnect with them.

[33] Nancy Deleary. Personal communication with the author. June 12, 2023.

In the summer of 1907, Mark Raymond (M.R.) Harrington (1882-1971), an American anthropologist, visited Munceytown, home to one of three Lenape communities in southwestern Ontario, Canada. Harrington's trip was intended to locate and collect specimens that "might cast light on old [Lenape] material culture."[34] After canvasing house to house, Harrington collected a considerable number of items from the Lenape at Munceytown, most of which is now located at the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) in New York City. Afterward, Harrington published extensively about his visit with the Lenape and the things he collected from them. What is lesser known, however, is his time spent with the Anishinaabe at Deshkan Ziibiing[35] (Chippewas of the Thames First Nation) whose lands the Lenape share. As reflected in his scholarly work, Harrington drew questionable conclusions from his visits, writing "Although retaining Indian physical characteristics to a large degree (pl. xxiv), all these bands are rapidly losing what little remains of their old culture."[36] Harrington observed that the process of assimilation appeared to be successful. Then, through the practice of salvage anthropology, Harrington acquired and removed the last physical vestiges of what he perceived as a vanishing culture.

It has been over 100 years since Harrington declared that the last bit of material culture was removed from the hands of our community members, our relatives. Harrington's trip raises

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[34] Mark Raymond Harrington. "Vestiges of Material Culture among the Canadian Delawares," *American Anthropologist* Vol. 10, No. 3 (July-Sept., 1908): 408.

[35] The term Anishinaabe refers to the Ojibwa, Potawatomi, and Odawa who make up the Three Fires Confederacy. Anishinaabe is a more inclusive term and recognizes the interconnectedness of our histories, ancestry, and identities. In the Anishinaabe language, Deshkan Ziibiing translates to Antler River, one of the traditional names of the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation.

[36] Mark Raymond Harrington. "Vestiges of Material Culture among the Canadian Delawares," *American Anthropologist* Vol. 10, No. 3 (July-Sept., 1908): 408

critical questions for me as an Anishinaabe Kwe[37] from Deshkan Ziibiing. As someone who has grown up not knowing or seeing or engaging with the arts of my ancestors, I want to know what Harrington took with him and what was happening in our community and families in the 100 years after he visited. I want to know how the Lenape and Ojibwa in the area were responding to settler colonialism, residential schools, and assimilation during and after Harrington's visit. Did my ancestors stop making things and why did they give their cultural possessions away? Are there other collections that show material culture from this area prior to 1907? These questions have informed the research project that is outlined in this dissertation.

As I uncover these answers, I explore how memories, stories, and making are critical components in the resurgence of Deshkan Ziibiing Anishinaabe aadiziwin (ways of life) and gikendaasowin (ways of knowing). I posit that revitalizing Anishinaabe art making and connecting First Nation communities with their ancestors is a decolonizing praxis that supports Biskaabiiyang—a process of returning to ourselves. To facilitate this research direction, I have developed a series of questions that I would like to address: (1) Where is and what happened to ancestral objects created by Deshkan Ziibiing Anishinaabeg?, (2) How has colonialism and settler colonialism impacted making practices in Deshkan Ziibiing?, (3) What does the community remember about ancestral practices of making?, (4) What does making look like today?, (5) How are practices of making being reclaimed as part of a larger resurgence project to assert nation building, sovereignty, and self-determination? Additionally, layered throughout this inquiry is an examination of the sources and breadth of our oppression and the ways in which we, as Deshkan Ziibiing Anishinaabeg, continue to dream, create, and make as a part of our own

[37] Kwe is woman.

liberation, self-determination, and sovereignty—all of which ensure the creation and continuity of Anishinaabe futurity.

Throughout this dissertation, I use the term *making* to broaden the scope and range of artistic considerations within an Anishinaabeg context and to encourage discussions about gete-anishinaabeg. I hope that using this term will encourage generative conversations about Deshkan Ziibiing making practices that are not just related to art. I also use the term Gete-Anishinaabeg broadly and interchangeably to describe the ancestors of present-day descendants of Deshkan Ziibiing and the things created by them. To support reader access to the terms and ideas in this dissertation, I use Gete-Anishinaabeg when referring to people, and use gete-anishinaabeg when referring to their belongings. Using terms such as gete-anishinaabeg, ancestor, ancestor belongings, relative, entity, and friend in place of object or item, recognizes animacy, kinship, social agency, and the personhood that is inherent in the things made by Anishinaabe and Indigenous people throughout the world. This line of thinking follows current scholarly discourse on the personhood and kincentricity[38] of gete-anishinaabeg and recognizes the multiple and complex biographies ancestor belongings carry.[39] Scholar and curator Maureen Matthews highlights the animacy of Indigenous artefacts when she writes of a drum belonging to an Anishinaabe medicine man named Naamiwan. Matthews writes,

> [t]hinking of artefacts at their most person-like involves considering the possibility that they may be simultaneously owned by the socially active ghost of a medicine man and by

[38] For discussion of kincentricity see heather ahtone, "Indigenous Arts as a Beacon of Survival," in *Art for a New Understanding: Native Voices, 1950s to Now*, eds. Mindy Besaw, Candice Hopkins, and Manuela Well-Off-Man. (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2018), 19-27.
[39] See Alicia Harris, "These Objects Call Us Back: Kinship Materiality in Native America," in *Inappropriate Bodies: Art, Design, and Maternity,* eds. Rachel Epp Buller and Charles Reeve. (Bradford: Demeter Press, 2019), 213-225., and Ruth Phillips "Things Anishinaabe: Art, Agency, and Exchange Across Time," in *Before and After the Horizon: Anishinaabe Artists of the Great Lakes,* eds. David Penney and Gerald McMaster. (Washington D.C: National Museum of the American Indian, 2014), 51-58.

> a museum, claimed by repatriation activists, be kin to Ojibwe families, and be the ceremonial partners of entire communities; it generates a picture of artefacts which entertain confusingly contradictory and often secret relationships.[40]

The quote above highlights gete-anishinaabeg and human relationality and the wealth of knowledge that gete-anishinaabeg carry and the relationships that they maintain with their maker and more-than-human beings. Additional scholars who follow this same vein of thought include Ruth B. Phillips, Sherry Farrell Racette (Metis), and Alicia Harris (Assiniboine).

Phillips posits that "agency is located not solely in human beings, but is also distributed across material" and "things both make and carry history."[41] Farrell Racette reminds us that "the notion that objects are alive and infused with spirit is articulated throughout the Indigenous world."[42] She adds that encountering such items in collections or museums is like visiting family and "all relationships, even with objects, take time to nurture."[43] Harris affirms that "objects have power. Their material components archive stories and narrative, expressing diverse histories and heritages while underwriting those objects' inherent meaning and value."[44] As Harris eloquently expresses, the materials used to construct gete-anishinaabeg act as an archive which informs our present and connects us with our ancestors. Engrained within this project is an exploration of

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[40] Matthews, Maureen. *Naamiwan's Drum: The Story of a Contested Repatriation of Anishinaabe Artefacts* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016), 20.
[41] Ruth Phillips, "Things Anishinaabe: Art, Agency, and Exchange Across Time" in *Before and After the Horizon: Anishinaabe Artists of the Great Lakes,* eds. David Penney and Gerald McMaster (Washington D.C: National Museum of the American Indian, 2014), 53.
[42] Sherry Farrell Racette. "Pieces Left Along the Trail: Material Culture Histories and Indigenous Studies," in *Sources and Methods in Indigenous Studies*. Eds Chris Andersen and Jean M. O'Brien. (London: Routledge, 2017), 226.
[43] Ibid, 226.
[44] Alicia Harris, "These Objects Call Us Back: Kinship Materiality in Native America" in *Inappropriate Bodies: Art, Design, and Maternity*, eds. Rachel Epp Buller and Charles Reeve (Bradford: Demeter Press, 2019), 213.

animacy and relationality by locating Deshkan Ziibiing gete-anishinaabeg and learning to see and listen to the stories they have to share.

To locate stories embedded in the visual and material histories of Deshkan Ziibiing, I looked to two key areas: (1) the historical record (collections and archives) for traces of identifiable Deshkan Ziibiing ancestors in material, audio, or visual forms, and (2) an oral history project to document local stories of making that are specific to Deshkan Ziibiing. Employing a multidisciplinary research approach, I draw heavily from scholars working across Indigenous Studies, Rematriation, Native Feminisms, Museum Studies, Ethnography, Anthropology, and Art History to guide my work. Additionally, Indigenous research frameworks such as *Biskaabiiyang*, *Storywork*, *Felt Theory*, and *Native Feminist Analysis,* inform my research ethic and methodology and encourages a research framework that is inclusive and respectful of Anishinaabe dibaajimowinan (life experience stories), Anishinaabe'aadiziwin (way of life) and Anishinaabe gikendaasowin (ways of knowing). These frameworks also encourage reciprocity whereby the researcher must consider the ways in which they can give back to the community. This research project has the potential to inform and broaden theoretical and practical understandings of Indigenous methodologies and contributes to the developing discourses on emergent Native art histories and experiences that are specific to Indigenous communities.

With a strong methodological foundation, I propose to locate gete-anishinaabeg, dibaajimowinan*,* and practices of making that are unique to the Anishinaabeg of Deshkan Ziibiing. This research will begin by searching collections and archives for gete-anishinaabeg in material forms that have potential Deshkan Ziibiing origins and hold knowledge about makers, making practices, and making knowledge. I posit that these ancestors, wherever they may be in the world, narrate a life of their own as they move through space and time changing hands and

entering collections and museums. If I can locate and visit with them as relatives, there are stories they can share with us. Stories that are embedded and carried through their materiality that can contribute to developing a tribalography—a term I borrow from Choctaw scholar LeAnne Howe.[45] Howe describes tribalography as a rhetorical space where "Native people created narratives that were histories and stories with the power to transform."[46] Like many Indigenous groups, Anishinaabeg created visual and material manifestations that embodied histories, stories, and reflections of life. I look to these gete-anishinaabeg to ignite memory, to recall stories, and to imagine an Anishinaabe futurity. I seek to create a space where our ancestors are part of community conversation and transformation.[47] Mvskoke scholar Laura Harjo tells us that futurity is not some distant abstract spatiality and involves "living out the futures of our ancestor relatives." I extend Harjo's conceptualization of futurity to ancestral belongings that exist in spaces within and outside of their community of origin. The idea that ancestral belongings are performing futurity motivates me to do this work. Gete-anishinaabeg in collections are enacting futurity and many are waiting to be called upon and visited.

My approach to this work is also informed by Nishinaabe scholar Leanne Simpson. In *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom Through Radical Resistance*, Simpson discusses how processes of making, generating, and creating are integral to Anishinaabe aadzi (life). Simpson writes, "Our knowledge system, the education system, the economic system, and the political system of the Michi Saagiig Nishinaabeg were designed to promote more life. Our way

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[45] See LeAnne Howe. "Tribalography: The Power of Native Stories." *Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism* (1999): 117-126.
[46] Ibid, 118.
[47] See Laura Harjo, *Spiral to the Stars: Mvskoke Tools of Futurity.* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2019).

of living was designed to generate life—not just human life but the life of all living things.[48] I apply this knowledge to the things Anishinaabeg made and continue to make as an extension of themselves. Simpson's emphasis on generating more life for all living things informs my principal research question: how did the Anishinaabeg of Deshkan Ziibiing generate, or make, Anishinaabe life and how do they continue to make Anishinaabe life into the future? Ojibwa author, Basil Johnston-baa[49] also writes that being Anishinaabe is "something that we are and we do at the same time."[50]

As mentioned previously, this research project will be guided by Biskaabiiyang, Storywork, Felt Theory, and Native Feminist analysis. These methodologies will inform my approach to community collaboration and participation, critical analysis, and personal reflection. In Anishinaabemowin,[51] Biskaabiiyang is a process of rematriation and a method of "returning to ourselves, to decolonize ourselves."[52] Biskaabiiyang is a useful decolonial methodological approach for undertaking research and was developed by the Seven Generations Education Institute in Ontario, Canada. Anishinaabe scholars Wendy Makoons Geniusz and Leanne Simpson discuss Biskaabiiyang methodology, and I look to their scholarship to inform mine. Both Geniusz and Simpson describe Biskaabiiyang as a process of evaluating how oneself has

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[48] Leanne Simpson, *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom Through Radical Resistance* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2017), 36.
[49] Adding -baa at the end of a person's name indicates they are deceased and will appear at the first mention of a person's name. This is common practice among Anishinaabe speakers in paying respect to those who have passed on.
[50] Jill Doerfler, Niigaanwewidam James Sinclair, and Heidi Kiiwetinepinesiik Stark, eds. *Centering Anishinaabeg Studies: Understanding the World through Stories* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2013), xvii.
[51] Anishinaabe language.
[52] Wendy Makoons Geniusz, Our Knowledge is Not Primitive: Decolonizing Anishinaabe Teachings. Page 105

been affected by colonization and to reengage with the things we have left behind as a result of colonialism and settler-colonialism. Geniusz writes,

> Biskaabiiyang research begins with the Anishinaabe researcher, who must look at the baggage that he or she carries as a result of colonization. That researcher must then rid him or herself of that baggage in order to return to inaadiziwin [Anishinaabe way of being]. Part of this decolonization is discovering or accepting that the Gete-anishinaabeg [the old ones] know a great deal about the world and had the technology to survive in it.[53]

Simpson asserts that Biskaabiiyang is something we must also live out in our daily lives. It is not something we pick up at the beginning of a project and leave behind once it is done. To Simpson, Biskaabiiyang means "encouraging the self-determination of individuals within our national and community-based contexts; and it means re-creating an artistic and intellectual renaissance within a larger political and cultural resurgence."[54] Biskaabiiyang helped to guide me as I developed a critical self-reflection of my participation in this project. In addition, self-reflexivity, in the form of journaling, documented my personal experience conducting this research and is used to bring in an autoethnographic perspective.

Like the many things created by our Indigenous ancestors, "stories remind us of who we are and our belonging. Stories hold within them knowledges while simultaneously signifying relationships."[55] Storywork is theorized and practiced by Stó:lo and St'at'imc First Nation educational practitioner Jo-ann Archibald Q'um Q'um Xiiem. She coined the term Indigenous Storywork as she sought to better understand "Indigenous traditional and life experience stories for educational purposes at all levels of education."[56] Archibald developed the following seven

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[53] Ibid, 105.
[54] Leanne Simpson. *Dancing On Our Turtles Back: Stories of Nishinaabeg Re-Creation, Resurgence and a New Emergence.* (Winnipeg: Arbeiter Ring Publishing, 2011), 51.
[55] Margaret Kovach, *Indigenous Methodologies: Characters, Conversations, and Contexts* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010) 95.
[56] Jo-anne Archibald Q'um Q'um Xiiem, Jenny Bol Jun Lee-Morgan, Jason De Santolo, *Decolonizing Research: Indigenous Storywork as Methodology* (London: Zed Books, 2019), 1.

principles for working with Indigenous stories and story keepers: respect, responsibility, reverence, reciprocity, holism, interrelatedness, and synergy. The first four principles act as an ethical guide, and the last three enhance the meaning making process.[57] This methodology informed how I conducted my community interview process and ensured a plan for reciprocity with Deshkan Ziibiing. It also encouraged me to spend time with and look more closely at Anishinaabeg stories about creation, our emergence into this world, and Nanabush.

Tanana Athabascan scholar, Dian Million discusses the social impact of Native women's first-person and experiential narratives in her essay, "Felt Theory, An Indigenous Feminist Approach to Affect and History." Millon brings together the early works of writers and creative minds such as Maria Campbell, Lee Maracle, and Ruby Slipperjack as she discusses how these "authors developed a new language for communities to address the real multilayered facets of their histories and concerns by insisting on the inclusion of our lived experience, rich with emotional knowledges, of what pain and grief and hope meant or mean now in our pasts and futures."[58] She further writes that "our felt scholarship continues to be segregated as a "feminine" experience, as polemic, or at worst as not knowledge at all."[59] She connects this issue with the gatekeeping practices of academia whereby *felt* knowledge and experience are dismissed as unscholarly and victim narratives. Million further elucidates that the knowledge early native women writers produced about their lived experiences were critical junctures in the emerging discourse of Indigenous feminisms. Million's work also uncovers the power of experiential narratives as critical tools for confronting colonial and gendered violence enacted

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[57] Ibid, 1-2.
[58] Dian Million. "Felt Theory: An indigenous Feminist Approach to Affect and History." Wicazo Sa Review, Vol. 24, No. 2, Fall 2009, pp. 54.
[59] Ibid, 54.

upon Indigenous women, bodies, and nations. I look to Million's scholarship to guide me as I encounter stories and how the experiences and knowledge held by Deshkan Ziibiing are critical to Anishinaabe futurity. Million's work encourages me to listen and recognize that our felt knowledge is a source of Indigenous knowledge.

Indigenous Feminist analysis provides another analytical lens and encourages the researcher to confront gender disparities, colonialism, and settler colonialism in their work. To inform my research process and development of critical analysis are Native Feminist scholars such as Dian Million, Lee Maracle, Mishuana Goeman, Jennifer Denetadale, Renya Ramirez, Lisa Kahaleole Hall and Cutcha Risling Baldy, just to name a few. In Baldy's scholarship she writes that, "Native feminisms must critically analyze patriarchal structures of authority and also work to decolonize and rebuild Native nations and identities."[60] Baldy's scholarship about the recovery of Hupa coming of age ceremonies encourages me to examine how the force of colonialism, the structures of settler colonialism, and the gender violence that both inflict have affected Deshkan Ziibiing makers and making practices.

In addition to the above key methodologies, I used art-historical methods to analyze objects, locate or develop object biographies, assess materials, document and identify imagery, and determine the potential for such objects to narrate a history of Deshkan Ziibiing. My approach to object research and inquiry was guided by Sherry Farrell Racette's method of "slow" research and drawing as conversation. Farrell Racette asserts that "material culture is visual culture; in order to study it one must learn to see."[61] Her methodological approach to working

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[60] Cutcha Risling Baldy. *We are Dancing for You: Native Feminisms and the Revitalization of Women's Coming-of-Age Ceremonies* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2018), 8.
[61] Sherry Farrell Racette. "Pieces Left Along the Trail: Material Culture Histories and Indigenous Studies," in *Sources and Methods in Indigenous Studies*. Eds Chris Andersen and Jean M. O'Brien. (London: Routledge, 2017), 226.

with ancestral belongings begins with “developing a maker’s eye” and is further “grounded in the notion of objects as master teachers, as animate storytellers.”[62] “You must train your eyes to *see* stories,”[63] she writes. Farrell Racette uses drawing to begin the conversation with objects. While it is not a new method to art history or museology, I attempted to adopt a similar approach to begin a conversation with gete-anishinaabeg I encounter, which is why visiting them in collections becomes an important component to this research. I couldn’t draw or sketch at all the sites I visited, but the process was generative in the instances it occurred.

Literature Review

There is a growing body of literature regarding the arts, stories, culture, and language of the Anishinaabeg. Although the field is growing, little to no scholarship exists regarding the history of specific First Nation communities in southwestern Ontario. Equally important is that the history of Deshkan Ziibiing Anishinaabeg and their experience with colonialism and settler colonialism throughout history has not been collectively documented and made accessible to our community. To locate traces of visual culture and making practices, it was necessary to research the history of Deshkan Ziibiing to track the movement of people and material culture in the region.

Two authors write about the colonial history of the Ojibwa located in southern Ontario. In 1991, Peter Schmalz authored *The Ojibwa of Southern Ontario,* and it provides an in-depth examination of the histories, experiences, and struggles of the Ojibwa in Southern Ontario. Schmalz observes that while the ancestors of present-day Ojibwa “have been in contact with

[62] Ibid, 226
[63] Ibid, 227.

Europeans for over 350 years, no scholar has attempted to write a definitive work on the history of this particular group, which has commonly been placed within the Southeastern Ojibwa of North America."[64] This book was published in 1991, and nearly 30 years later, I find it concerning that the history of the Ojibwe whose traditional territory is located in southwestern Ontario has not been compiled and told from an Anishinaabe perspective. Schmalz, a settler scholar and high school teacher, covers the history of Ojibwa relations and interactions in southern Ontario from the early 1700s to the time his book was published. While no book can tell a complete history, his work provides a glimpse into the lives of my ancestors and points me to places that I can go digging for more information such as the British Indian Affairs correspondence records.

In the book *The Archaeology of Native-lived Colonialism: Challenging History in the Great Lakes,* settler scholar and author, Neal Ferris discusses the archaeology of the Iroquois, Ojibwa, and Delaware in southwestern Ontario. Ferris confronts common rhetoric about cultural loss and abandonment and constructs a narrative that seeks to develop the following,

> an understanding of how native communities in southwestern Ontario negotiated the rise of colonialism in the 18th and 19th centuries through a process of changed continuities: that is, they maintained identity and historically understood notions of self and community, while also incorporating substantial material changes and revisions to those identities.[65]

While cultural and language revitalization are actively taking place now, narratives of loss and damage that Ferris refers to were commonplace as I was growing up and they still exist today. Ferris provides an archaeological context to better understand the changes that have occurred to

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[64] Peter S. Schmalz, *The Ojibwa of Southern Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991), ix.
[65] Neal Ferris. *The Archaeology of Native-lived Colonialism: Challenging History in the Great Lakes* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2009), 1.

Indigenous lifeways in southwestern Ontario and asserts that while so much was changing, cultural and subsistence continuity can be seen up until the early 1800s.

Ferris' third chapter is most pertinent in shaping my understanding of the Ojibwa experience in Ontario because he makes the most mention of Deshkan Ziibiing which he refers to as Muncey, the only interior Ojibwa community located along the Thames River. This is the same river where Shawnee leader Tecumseh lost his life in the Battle of the Thames. Ferris substantiates his argument that the Ojibwa communities in this area "maintained a traditional livelihood well into the 19th century."[66] He also points out that his argument is in stark contrast to the "master narrative of decline, dependency, and irrelevancy portrayed for the Aboriginal nations of the Northeast in past conventional, historical, and anthropological literature."[67] Both Schmalz and Ferris produce scholarship on the Ojibwa in southern Ontario, and take into account the few early Anishinaabe authors such as Peter Jones, a Mississauga missionary.

Anishinaabe scholar Alan Corbiere (M'Chigeeng First Nation), acknowledges that Anishinaabe history is predominantly documented through colonial records such as missionary journals, Jesuit diaries, government documents, and church records.[68] While these are good sources of primary information in the historical record, this points to a larger problem whereby voices of First Nation people are not included in the narration of their own histories. Looking to colonial sources is important to this project, but I find it essential, if not urgent, to incorporate the voices of present-day Deshkan Ziibiing Anishinaabeg.

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[66] Ibid, 35.
[67] Ibid, 35.
[68] See Alan Corbiere, "Sources of Anishinaabe History: Narratives, Archives and Museum Collections" (online presentation, The Indigenous Environmental Justice Project, York University, Toronto, ON, July 30, 2020).

Native feminisms and Native feminist analysis are relatively newer terms being theorized and put into practice by many Indigenous scholars. While these terms are new, the purpose for which they exist have always been integral to Indigenous systems of kinship and care. In the guest editor's introduction for a series of essays on Native feminism in the Wicazo Sa Review, Mishuana Goeman and Jennifer Denetdale delineate common goals of Native feminism. They write the following,

> [A]s Native feminists, our dreams and goals overlap; we desire to open up spaces where generations of colonialism have silenced Native peoples about the status of their women and about the intersections of power and domination that have also shaped Native nations and gender relations. We rely on still developing frameworks for Native feminisms to examine and reflect upon the reverberations in our Native homelands.[69]

As an emerging scholar, I turn to a growing body of scholarship on Native Feminisms as a conceptual and methodological framework to interrogate museums and collecting practices as an extension of settler colonialism. Additionally, Native feminist analysis supported my investigation of the impact settler colonialism has had on Deshkan Ziibiing makers and how that is felt by my community today.

Renya Ramirez (Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska), author of the essay *Race, Tribal Nation, and Gender: A Native Feminist Approach to Belonging*, writes that Native feminism,

> has the potential to help Indigenous men and women understand the underlying causes of many social problems that plague our communities… Native feminist consciousness could, furthermore, encourage both sexes to rid themselves of dominant notions of masculinity and femininity, building stronger senses of well-being and at the same time strengthening interpersonal bonds that sexist notions of proper gender relations erode.[70]

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[69] Mishuana R. Goeman and Jennifer Nez Denetdale. "Native feminisms: Legacies, Interventions, and Indigenous sovereignties." *Wicazo Sa Review* 24, no. 2 (2009): 9-13.
[70] Renya Ramirez. "Race, Tribal Nation, and Gender: A Native Feminist Approach to Belonging." *Meridains: Feminism, Race Transnationalism* 7, no.2 (2007): 33-34

Using Native feminisms as a theoretical lens is integral for examining how colonialism and settler colonialism has impacted Anishinaabeg structures of gender but also how it has wounded Anishinaabe structures of knowledge keeping and dissemination. Ramirez also asserts that "race, tribal nation, and gender should be non-hierarchically linked as categories of analysis in order to understand the breadth of our oppression as well as the full potential of our liberation."[71]

Cutcha Baldy Risling, author of *We Are Dancing for You: Native Feminisms and the Revitalization of Women's Coming of Age Ceremonies,* provides a critical entry point into the scholarly discourse of Native Feminisms as she embarks on a journey to revitalize and normalize women's coming-of-age ceremonies. She draws heavily on Native Feminist analysis and establishes Hupa women's coming-of-age ceremonies as decolonial praxis—a term informed by Yakama scholar Michelle Jacobs. Regarding the revitalization of women's ceremonies, Baldy asserts the following,

> These revitalizations are not just about the young women or only for women in general; they are also focused on developing a decolonized communal spirituality and society. In focusing the (re)riteing aspect of this project, I am exploring how ceremony combats the ever present systemic gendered violence of settler-colonialism and (re)rites systems of gender in Indigenous communities through Indigenous ceremonies[72]

Throughout Baldy's narrative, she uses (re)writing, (re)righting, and (re)riteing, a framework informed by Linda Tuhiwai Smith, to demonstrate how ceremony is recovering Native Feminisms for the betterment of the entire community. Baldy also argues that she is not calling for a return to the past, but "instead…to demonstrate how these epistemologies are also modern philosophies of decolonization that can build Indigenous futures."[73] I am deeply inspired

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[71] Ibid, 23.
[72] Cutcha Risling Baldy. *We are Dancing for You: Native Feminisms and the Revitalization of Women's Coming-of-Age Ceremonies* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2018), 9.
[73] Ibid, 8.

by Baldy's research approach and sought to embark on a similar journey during my research and writing process.

In 2007, Gwyneira Isaac published her book, *Mediating Knowledges: Origins of a Zuni Tribal Museum.* At the root of her inquiry was how the Pueblo of Zuni navigated and constructed strategies to mediate and accommodate differences in knowledge keeping systems. She argues that the museum has played an integral role in mediating and developing strategies to aid in the transmission of community and esoteric knowledge within Zuni and to outsiders. Isaac provides a brief history on the development of tribal museums along with scholars who have written about the need to create tribally specific museums. Isaac makes note of the many issues facing Indigenous nations which includes disruption in knowledge making and transmission practices.

Indigenous people practice handing down knowledge through oral traditions and ritual practices, however "complex demographic shifts and a growing gap between younger and elder generations have profoundly inhibited these practices today."[74] Because of this increasing disparity, scholars such as Nancy J. Fuller and Susanne Fabricus observe that the "rapid erosion of tribal knowledge" along with what Isaac observes as the "increased sense of self-determination" many tribes are seeking a new forum for the transmission of cultural knowledge.[75] Isaac also cites Patricia Pierce Erikson, "who sees tribal museums as a response to Anglo-American colonialism, external control, and the problems of being defined by others."[76]

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[74] Gwyneira Isaac, *Mediating Knowledges: Origins of a Zuni Tribal Museum* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2007), 10.
[75] See Nancy J. Fuller and Susanne Fabricus, "Native American Museums and Cultural Centers: Historical Overview and Current Issues" in *Zeitschrift für Ethologie* 117: 223-237.
[76] Gwyneira Isaac, *Mediating Knowledges: Origins of a Zuni Tribal Museum* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2007), 10.

All of the above reasons provide substantial justification for tribes to explore the museum as a viable model to research and care for collections and to support cultural activities, art making practices, language revitalization and to combat invisibility and erasure. Equally enticing is the immense amount of power that western museums wield and their strong educational, social, and cultural impact. Isaac contends that if tribal museums are intended to be the vehicles of knowledge transmission then she asks the following critical questions:

> Who develops and directs them? what facets of culture and history do they emphasize? which individuals do they seek to recognize as tribal historians, and, who receives this knowledge? In short, who empowers whom within the community?[77]

Isaac's case-study examines these questions and seeks to understand the Zuni museum as a space to understand Indigenous cultures and the ways in which knowledge is produced and transmitted. Isaac sheds light on the tumultuous development of tribally specific museum subjectivities and identifies the need for a framework for understanding tribal museums and "one that is also sensitive to internal tribal politics and to tribes' mechanisms for the control of knowledge."[78]

Amy Lonetree's scholarship addresses the questions posed above by Isaac. *Decolonizing Museums: Representing Native America in National and Tribal Museums,* is the most recent comprehensive review of what a museum decolonizing praxis looks like. She also examines and advocates for a transformative decolonizing museum praxis that is in the service of community wellness through social change and advocacy. Lonetree affirms that museums and museum practices are closely tied to the colonization process, so it begs question: why are tribal nations adopting the museum as a model for the preservation and revitalization of language, culture, and art-making practices? The role as mediator between Indigenous communities and ancestral

[77] Ibid, 10.
[78] Ibid, 13.

belongings has not always been a part of the museum mission and scope. However, building relationships, facilitating knowledge production, and reuniting Indigenous ancestors, ancestral belongings, and communities are becoming central aspects to its practice today.

Lonetree argues that her scholarship goes beyond the case-study approach by tracking three key developments contributing to the growing number of tribal museums: (1) collaborative partnerships, (2) self-determination of the 1970s, and (3) exclusively tribally owned cultural centers and museums. She also pushes the idea that tribal museums can be more than sites of mediation to sort out knowledge keeping systems, but rather, they can (and do) participate as sites of knowledge making and remembering and that they have the capacity to "assist in tribal nation building, empowerment, and healing."[79] Museums, according to Lonetree, should be in the service of creating social change, confronting the hard truths of colonialism, and engaging in truth telling. Lonetree's understanding of decolonization is informed by the scholarship of Cree scholar Winona Wheeler. She states,

> decolonization entails developing a critical consciousness about the cause(s) of our oppression, the distortion of history, our own collaboration, and the degree to which we have internalized colonist ideas and practices. Decolonization requires auto-criticism, self-reflection, and a rejection of victimage. Decolonization is about empowerment – a belief that situations can be transformed, a belief and trust in our own peoples' values and abilities and a willingness to make change. It is about transforming negative reactionary energy into the more positive rebuilding energy needed in our communities.[80]

Wheeler's description of decolonization coincides with the notion of a decolonizing praxis that is discussed in the scholarship of Cutcha Risling Baldy and Michelle Jacobs. Jacobs defines a decolonizing praxis, as "drawing from traditions to undermine settler-colonial-imposed

[79] Amy Lonetree, *Decolonizing Museums: Representing Native America in National and Tribal Museums*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 4.
[80] Ibid, 4.

hierarchies and reasserting importance of spiritual relations between humans and our surroundings."[81] Decolonizing praxis is a method that I, as well many other scholars cited in this dissertation, view as critical interventions for reconnecting Indigenous minds and bodies to Indigenous knowledge located in the things our ancestors made and the knowledge they created.

This dissertation project advocates for the creation of critical spaces such as archives, museums, and research centers in First Nation communities. Such spaces have the potential to assist in healing, recovery, and resurgence of Anishinaabe history, culture, arts, and language. Through this project, I hope to demonstrate that connecting with ancestral belongings in museum collections is vitalizing and a way of making Deshkan Ziibiing.

One of the many challenges facing the development of community specific making practices, is the complexity of colonial and tribal histories and the difficult work required to reconnect lines of kinship and relationality to ancestral belongings that have been stolen, purchased or in some way violently removed from Indigenous hands and bodies. It is common to find objects that do not have a biographical record, or they have been documented through colonial accounts. Employing a decolonial praxis supports the reunion of objects and community ultimately adding to the biography of ancestral belongings. Thus, creating a new story and one that involves taking care of the people and making and generating more life.

Chapter Outline

Throughout all the chapters, I share dibaajmowinan that emerged from discussions with family and community, and personal memories and reflections that surfaced as part of the research and

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[81] Michelle M. Jacob, *Yakama Rising: Indigenous Cultural Revitalization, Activism, and Healing* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2013), 12.

writing process. My lived experience, the relationships I maintain, and the knowledge I carry have also been integral components to the development of this dissertation. This project has also encouraged me to strengthen family and community relationships and to re-ignite a passion that always existed which was to learn and share the experiences of Deshkan Ziibiing Anishinaabeg in the hopes that our children will pick up where we left off and continue the story.

In *Neesh (two)*: *The Deshkan Zibi,* I introduce the readers to Deshkan Ziibiing Anishinaabeg and the Deshkan Zibi (Antler River) which is also known as the Thames River.[82] The Deshkan Zibi has been a major life sustaining relative for millennia. It flows in a south westerly direction making a great route for water travel and trade. This area is also part of the third stopping place along Chibimoodaywin, the Anishinaabeg Great Migration that lasted over 1000 years. The Anishinaabeg who stayed at the third stopping place refer to this land as Wawayatanong (Round Lake). After a series of land negotiations and treaties beginning as early as the 1700s, Deshkan Ziibiing Anishinaabeg whose traditional territory is located across present-day southwestern Ontario were confined to a small reserve disrupting their access to life-sustaining and life-generating seasonal practices. This chapter explores who the Deshkan Ziibiing Anishinaabeg are, how they arrived at their present location, and how the community has been impacted by colonialism. This chapter also becomes an exercise in exploring our lineage across space and time.

N'swi (three): Locating Deshkan Ziibiing Gete-Anishinaabeg summarizes the collection visits I conducted and highlights my research visits to the Chicago Field Museum, the American Museum of Natural History, Western University Libraries, Archives, and Special Collections, and the Canadian Museum of History. In this chapter, I discuss early responses to Indigenous

[82] Zibi is river.

material culture in southwestern Ontario, the colonialism of Anishinaabe gikendaasowin giving way to salvage anthropology, and how the absence of gete-anishinaabeg in our lives perpetuates the trauma of colonialism. In addition to the summaries of my research visits, I focus on the importance of family and community in this process and how we explored visiting, close looking through drawing and sketching, adding to the biography of gete-anishinaabeg while building our own archive. This chapter also includes an auto-ethnographic response to my research in locating Deshkan Ziibiing gete-anishinaabeg.

Niiwiin (four): Making Anishinaabe'Aadiziwin: Conversations about Memory, History, and Making on Deshkan Ziibiing shares the stories of Mindimooyah from Deshkan Ziibiing, the matriarchs who hold our world together. During my visits to Deshkan Ziibiing I shared valuable space and conversations with Donna Young, Maxine Hendrick, Sybil Young, Felicia Huff, Gina McGahey, Beverly Deleary, Candace Doxtator, Sherry Waddilove, and Nancy Deleary. Their experiences and stories provided a window into their lives and family histories. What emerged in our conversations was how Deshkan Ziibiing Anishinaabeg and practices of making were negotiated due to colonialism and rapidly changing lifeways throughout the 1900s. In this chapter, I highlight the interviews I conducted with Nancy Deleary, Gina McGahey, Donna Young, Maxine Hendrick and Syb Young, and Felicia Huff.

In the final chapter, *Naanan (five)*: *A Place for Us to Sit*, I offer final thoughts and a personal narrative on my research process. I share my story in hopes of inspiring other scholars who are wanting to undertake a similar project with their communities.

FIGURES

Figure 1, Anishinaabe Pane Gwa Maampii Nii-yaami (Anishinaabe will always be here), 2022
Mural on the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation Band Office
Mural by Nancy Deleary
Photograph by Mary Deleary

Figure 2, Nancy Deleary beading image on loom for Anishinaabe Pane Gwa Maampii Nii-yaami mural, 2022
Image courtesy of Nancy Deleary

Figure 3, Shoulder bag pouch. Potawatomi, ca. 1880 (10/6149)
National Museum of the American Indian

NEESH (TWO): THE DESHKAN ZIBI

> *We are from sinew, Deshkan Ziibiing n'dizhnikaz*[83]*, from primed unpainted canvases, bolts of fabric, beads, and ribbon.*
>
> *We are from longing for our grandparent's home, freshly cut grass, snow piled driveways, and the comforting smell of closet fresh linen.*
>
> *We are from semaa*[84]*, gizhik*[85]*, willow. We are from weengushk*[86]*, wild leeks, Keewaydin*[87]*.*
>
> *We are from late night visits around the kitchen table and curly brown hair, from Frank, Jean, Nancy, Grant, and Vera and Bobby. From a constellation of Indigenous love, brilliance, desire, and futurity.*
>
> *We are from many paths created before us, guiding us as we make our own. From praying and singing our way between Muncey and Santa Fe.*
>
> *We are from quiet strength and tough love. From survival camps at Cape. Screen-printing t-shirts, carving smudge bowls for powwow season, and sewing last minute powwow gear.*
>
> *From "get the hell out of here" and "don't eat so fast."*
> *We are from yellow tobacco ties and slow burning fires.*
>
> *We are from Anishinaabe Aki, fried pickerel, mashed potatoes, and gravy. Jean's potato salad. Microwaved Crusty subs and pink cream soda from Frank's Gas Bar.*
>
> *From our grandfather's persistence and watchful eye, seeing our fathers on occasional weekend visits, and our mother's carefully crafted vision.*
>
> *We are from large wooden cabinets filled with sticky photo albums that are no more. We are from making life, love, ceremony, and beautiful creations filled with memory and knowledge for generations to come.*[88]

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[83] *Deshkan Ziibiing n'dizhnikaz means I am from Deshkan Ziibiing*
[84] Semaa is tobacco
[85] Gizhik is cedar
[86] Weengushk is sweetgrass
[87] Keewaydin is North
[88] Poem by Mary Deleary. Adopted from *I Am From* writing exercise located in *Spiral to the Stars: Mvskoke Tools of Futurity* by Laura Harjo.

How the Anishinaabe came to this world is a beautiful story of creation. It is a story that takes time and more than one gathering to tell. It is also a story that I have not been fortunate to witness in its entirety in person. The Anishinaabe have many creation stories and variations of those stories. The world we know today was part of second creation. Zhaashkoonh[89] gave its life as it was diving deep down toward the earth after the world was flooded with water. Nanabush, in honoring zhaashkoonh's life and saving those who remained, used his own breath to recreate aki[90] on turtle's back.[91] With the help of his friends, the animals, they recreated the world we know today. That wouldn't be the only time we witnessed a world-changing and life-altering event. After the complete destruction of our physical world, it was recreated through the kindness, love, hard work, and, at times the sacrifice, of Nanabush and our more-than-human relatives. In *Dancing on Our Turtles Back,* author Leanne Simpson describes how she was encouraged to relate to the story of zhaashkoonh. Simpson's elder, Edna Manitowabi, "emphasizes the idea that we each have to dive down to the bottom of the vast expanse of water and search for our own handful of earth." Simpson adds,

> Each of us having to struggle and sacrifice to achieve re-creation is not an easy process. We each need to bring that earth to the surface, to our community, with the intent of transformation.[92]

Devastation and destruction would visit us again. What we experienced, wasn't of our own doing. Colonization and settler colonialism brought it here to us. Sometimes that's the only part we hear, the part about how colonialism separated us from each other and Gete-anishinaabeg, our

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[89] Zhaashkoonh is muskrat

[90] Aki is earth

[91] For more information about the Anishinaabe creation story see *The Mishomis Book: The Voice of the Ojibway* by Edward Benton-Benai and *The Trail of Nenaboozhoo and Other Creation Stories* by Isaac Murdoch.

[92] Leanne Simpson, *Dancing on Our Turtles Back: Stories of Nishnaabeg Re-Creation, Resurgence and a New Emergence* (Winnipeg: Arbeiter Ring Publishing, 2011), 69.

ancestors, and relatives. Colonization is part of our story, and it must be told. It was world changing and life-changing and it's something we don't like to talk about often. Our transformation continues as we re-create, re-assert, re-right, re-write, and re-build our Nations. We are going back and picking up the pieces our ancestors left behind. Simpson asserts that "resurgence is our original instruction."[93] Our ancestors knew how to survive and because of their gikendaasowin[94] and zaagidiwin,[95] we are continually becoming Anishinaabe.

As a people who have fought, loved, thrived, struggled, and maintained Mino Bimaadiziwin[96] in the Great Lakes for millennia, and more specifically in southwestern Ontario, a comprehensive history detailing significant events and contributions have yet to be told and made an accessible in our own community and families. Knowing who the Anishinaabeg of Deshkan Ziibiing are, is only one aspect of this story. It's a story that I have longed to learn and understand. Another important component includes their transformation and the ways in which the Anishinaabeg of Deshkan Ziibiing have continued to be Anishinaabe and create Anishinaabe aadziwin[97] amongst and within so much change and devastation that was brought about during the height of colonialism, residential schools, 60s scoop, and the continued occupation of their lands. I hope that my initial research and discussions here will add to the ongoing narratives and histories that are authored by the Anishinaabeg of Deshkan Ziibiing and the importance of Anishinaabe to Anishinaabe aki. In this chapter, I begin constructing a narrative of who the Anishinaabeg of Deshkan Ziibiing are and how we have arrived to Deshkan Zibi, the place we call home.

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[93] Ibid 66.
[94] Gikendasowin is knowledge.
[95] Zaagidiwin is love.
[96] Mino Bimaadiziwin means living a good life.
[97] Anishinaabe'aadziwin means Anishinaabe life or lifeways.

The Deshkan Zibi emerges northeast of present-day London, Ontario and flows in a south westerly direction toward Lake St. Clair. For approximately 270 kilometers, the Deshkan Zibi runs through traditional territories and Indigenous homelands. Early French explorers, settlers, and fur traders knew it as *La Tranchée* which translates to the Trench. Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe renamed it in 1793 to the Thames River, paying homage to the River Thames in England.[98] While Indigenous and settler naming practices have shifted throughout early colonial Canada, the Zibi has maintained its course and continues to sustain and generate new life along the way.

In Anishinaabemowin, Deshkan Zibi translates to Antler River and refers to the antler like formation of the river as it carves it way to Lake St. Clair. The name also references the antler like horns of the underwater spirit, mishibizhiw, that resides, navigates, and protects the river waters. Mishibizhiw, often referred to in English as an underwater panther or great lynx is part of a pantheon of manitous[99] that animate the Anishinaabe world. Mishibizhiw can be identified by its serpent like tail, giant cat like appearance, and horns. It presides over the water, earth, and all the cave formations. An acknowledgement of this being is made every time we speak the name Deshkan Ziibiing.

Where mishibizhiw resides, animikii can also be found. Animkii, or thunderbird, governs the skies. The thunder marks their arrival in the spring and is the sound of their magnificent cries and wings flapping as they cross the sky.[100] Animkii are messengers of knowledge, and they hold

[98] Thames River Clear Water Revival. 2019. The Thames River (Deshkan Ziibi) Shared Waters Approach to Water Quality and Quantity. Final Draft. https://www.thamesrevival.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/SharedWatersApproach-Dec2019finaldraft.pdf
[99] Manitou is spirit.
[100] Alan Cobiere and Crystal Migwans. "Animikii miinwaa Mishibizhiw: Narrative Images of the Thunderbird and Underwater Panther." In in *Before and After the Horizon: Anishinaabe Artists*

a special relationship with the Anishinaabeg. Teresa Smith writes about this special relationship in her book *The Island of the Anishinaabeg: Thunderers and Water Monsters in the Traditional Ojibwe Life-World*. Smith writes,

> Since the Animkii are hunters, in search of underground or underwater manitouk, Thunder tells humans, who are not the objects of the hunt, to head for cover lest they be struck by stray shots. These stray shots are normally the misdirected work of young thunderers.[101]

Mishibizhiw and animikiig are forever at odds, feeding on one another, keeping a watchful eye on each other, while maintaining a cosmological balance in our world and theirs.

Visual depictions of mishibizhiw and animikii can be found in the vast visual landscape of the Anishinaabeg and many Algonquin speaking peoples who have migrated across Turtle Island. Stories of these important beings have been silenced by rapidly changing lifeways. However, reminders of these great manitous are engrained in the language and visual representations created by many Anishinaabeg artisans today. Nancy Deleary, artist and citizen of Chippewas of the Thames First Nation designed a seal for COTTFN which included an image of animkii (see Figure 4). A stylized version of the imaged she created is used by the Nation today. I have heard a few community members express their curiosity as to why the thunderbird was used either because they wanted to know the artistic intent or because there was little to no knowledge about who animkii is and its importance in Anishinaabe epistemology. During a discussion we had in September 2022, Nancy shared with me how she created what is often referred to as the Chippewa Thunderbird. In 1990, Nancy created the Chippewa Thunderbird as she was researching and designing images for Three Sisters Design, a local business that

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of the Great Lakes, eds. David Penney and Gerald McMaster (Washington D.C: National Museum of the American Indian, 2014), 37.

[101] Teresa Smith, *The Island of the Anishinaabeg: Thunderers and Water Monsters in the Traditional Ojibwe Life-World* (Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1995), 70.

emerged out of a pilot project aimed at engaging local women in sewing projects. In our discussion, Nancy shared the following story of how she designed the Chippewa Thunderbird,

> It was in [Three Sisters Design] that we came up and we made the Chippewa Thunderbird. That was from my research in finding out about our Anishinaabe Chippewa ancestors and the art that they used to make. By studying and learning about our ancestor's art I saw that the Thunderbird was really prominent. Seeing all these ancient petroglyphs and old works on objects… that's when I came up with, through sketching, my design of the Chippewa Thunderbird. And so I made the Thunderbird turquoise because I had learned that our people value turquoise as a precious stone and if a person had turquoise in their outfit it was a sign of wealth because you would have acquired it. So that's why it made the Thunderbird turquoise with silver in its heart and red.[102]

Nancy further explained that while turquoise has long been regarded as a trade item for many Indigenous people, particularly in the American southwest, it was a prominent item and color to wear as she was coming of age. Nancy mentioned in our interview, which I discuss further in chapter *Niiwin (four): Making Anishinaabe'Aadziwin: Conversations About Memory, History, and Making on Deshkan Ziibiing*, that access to Anishinaabe imagery, designs, and art was very limited when she was growing up. However, even though the images weren't there, the stories remain. Animkii and mishibizhiw remain. The Anishinaabeg of Deshkan Ziibiing reside at a place where animikii and mishibizhiw are storied on the land and can be found referenced in the designs created by many Anishinaabeg communities.

The Anishinaabe, their relatives, and confederacy partners are located across Turtle Island. Originating from the eastern seaboard, the Anishinaabe undertook a migration that lasted many generations. Deshkan Ziibiing Anishinaabe kwe, Eva Jewell writes about the migration in her dissertation titled *Gimaadaasamin, We are Accounting for the People: Support for Customary Governance in Deshkan Ziibiing.* Jewell writes,

> Oral history tells us that epic migration, called Chibimoodaywin occurred round 1100 years ago when the Anishinaabeg were advised by spiritual prophecy and vision to move

[102] Nancy Deleary. Interview with author. September 24, 2022.

> westward toward the manoomin, "food growing on the water" (Wild Rice as far west as Minnesota) or be destroyed.[103]

The prophecy sparked a migration that would last well over 1000 years. In fact, when Simpson asked Elder Shirley Williams what Chibimoodaywin meant, Williams stated, "Not mobilization or migration. It sounds like a long, slow, painful crawl!"[104] As Anishinaabe made their way west, there were seven stopping places along the migration trail. Edward Benton-Banai-baa writes about the stopping places in the *Mishomis Book.* In describing the third stopping place, he writes,

> The third stopping place was very likely the shores of the Detroit River that connects Lake St. Clair and Lake Huron in the North to Lake Erie in the south. It is said that again the Sacred Megis appeared to the people out of the water.[105]

Deshkan Ziibiing (Chippewas of the Thames First Nation), Aamjiwnaang (Chippewas of Sarnia), Bkejwanong (Walpole Island), Wiiwkwedong/Aazhoodena (Kettle & Stony Point), and Caldwell First Nation descend from the Anishinaabeg who remained at the third stopping place during Chibimoodaywin.[106] This place, also known as Wawayatanong (Round Lake) refers to Lake St. Clair, the heart of the Great Lakes. In 1861, Rev. Peter Jones, and Ojibway missionary also describes Lake St. Clair in his book *History of the Ojebway Indians*. Jones writes,

> This small lake, called by the Ojebways *Wahweyahtahnoong*, (*the Round Lake*), so named from its shape. It is about thirty miles in diameter. The rivers which flow into this lake are the Thames, called by the Indians *Ashkahnesebe*, (*the Horn River*,) from its resemblance in shape to deer's horns. Bear Creek also empties into this lake.[107]

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[103] Eva Jewell, *Gimaadaasamin, We are Accounting for the People: Support for Customary Governance in Deshkan Ziibiing*. Ph.D. dissertation, (Victoria: Royal Roads University, 2018), 21.

[104] Leanne Simpson, *Dancing on Our Turtles Back: Stories of Nishnaabeg Re-Creation, Resurgence and a New Emergence* (Winnipeg: Arbeiter Ring Publishing, 2011), 67.

[105] Edward Benton-Banai. *The Mishomis Book* (The Voice of the Ojibway (Hayward: Indian Country Communications, 1988), 98.

[106] Eva Jewell, *Gimaadaasamin, We are Accounting for the People: Support for Customary Governance in Deshkan Ziibiing*. Ph.D. dissertation, (Victoria: Royal Roads University, 2018), 21.

[107] Peter Jones, *History of the Ojebway Indians: with Especial Reference to Their Conversion to Christianity* (London: A.W. Bennett 1861) 47.

Deshkan Ziibiing or Chippewas of The Thames First Nation, was not always known or referred to by these names. Early records document and display many variations of the word Ojibwa and such spellings as Ojebway, Otchipwas, Ochipué, Chippaway, Chippawa, or Chippewa. Various spellings, combinations, and interpretations of the words Ojibwa, Chippewa, or Anishinaabe can be seen throughout the historical record. The term Anishinaabe often refers to present day Ojibwa, Odawa, Potawatomi, Mississauga, and Algonquin peoples. Each Nation is distinct from one another and govern themselves separately. However, in addition to the distinctiveness of each Nation, they carry many similarities in language, culture, customs, and histories.

Around 1795, two surveyors, identified as McNiff and Jones surveyed the length of the Deshkan Ziibiing for the British Crown. The surveyors created several maps of the Deshkan Ziibiing which identified natural resources, Native villages, places to portage, and potential sites for future cities like London, Ontario. By 1795, a "Village of Moravian Indians" had been established on the north shore of the Deshkan Ziibiing (see Figure 5). The Moravian Indians, known today as Delaware Nation at Moraviantown is a Lunaapeew community. Another village of "Chippewa's" is identified up the river (see Figures 6 and 7) in close proximity to where the reserve is located today.

Early place names for Chippewas of the Thames Band include River Thames band or Thames River Ojibwa, Caradoc Reserve, Colbourne Indians, and Muncey or Munceytown. These names are a small example of the various spellings and names that I have seen, and I am sure there are more out there. It is often mistaken that only the Munsee-Delaware resided at Muncey or Munceytown. However, with a long history of intermarriage between the Ojibwa, Munsee-Delaware, and Oneida since the late 1700s, names of families converge and are represented on the band lists of each community today. Chippewas of the Thames First Nation is

a community historically made up of families with Ojibwa and Potawatomi roots. Today, familial lineages extend across many other Indigenous Nations both nationally and internationally.

Prior to the establishment of reserve lands, the Anishinaabe of southwestern Ontario practiced seasonal migrations and were most often referred to as the Chippewa Nation, which consisted of many distinct Ojibwe bands in southwestern Ontario. In speaking with Brandon Graham, Treaty Research Coordinator for the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation Treaties, Lands, and Environment Department, he described governance and seasonal practices of Deshkan Ziibiing Anishinaabeg. Graham stated, "Chippewa leaders were doing their seasonal rounds. They were on the American side, in 1819 or 1820, the British had to wait until they came back to the sugar camps where they made maple syrup to negotiate."[108] A critical component to the subsistence of the Anishinaabe Ojibwa was mobility. The Chippewa, in practicing their inherent right and seasonal governance, created, sustained, and renewed critical relationships with the land, more than humans, and various kinds of kin on a seasonal basis. However, mobility and seasonal practices would change with the creation of the reserve system, and as many of the persons I interviewed from Deshkan Ziibiing today, didn't have access to or knowledge about other tribes while growing up.

The reserve known today as Chippewas of the Thames First Nation wasn't created until the Longwoods Treaty of 1822. Prior to that, however, ancestral Chiefs of present-day Chippewas of the Thames First Nation were involved in the signing of numerous treaties and subsequent agreements made between the First Nation and the Crown. Treaties include the McKee Treaty of 1790, the London Township Treaty of 1796, and Sombra Treaty of 1796. The

[108] Brandon Graham, interview with author, October 12, 2022.

Longwoods Treaty, which was negotiated over several years before it was confirmed in 1822, was an agreement made directly between the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation and the Crown. Additional agreements made by Chippewas of the Thames Chiefs paved the way for railroad lines and access to timber resources in the area.

At a council meeting in Amherstburg, Ontario on Oct 16th, 1818, the Chippewa Chiefs of southern Ontario met with John Asken, Superintendent of Indian Affairs. Leaders from the Chippewa Nation included Chiefs from "Chenail Excarte, River St. Clair, Sable, Thames and Bear Creek."[109] The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the purchase of all the lands belonging to the Chippewas that were located north of the Thames River. In the minutes from Oct 16th, 1818, it states the following,

> Father, The Chippewas have always been obedient Children and never refused anything our Great father has required of us. We are therefore willing to sell our Lands, but wish to make the following reserves -
>
> 1st four miles square at some distance below the rapids of the River St. Clair.
> 2nd One mile in front of four deep bordering on said River and adjoining to the Reserve.
> 3rd Two miles at Kettle Point Lake Huron
> 4th Two miles square at the River au Sable
> 5th Two Miles square at Bears Creek, also a Reserve for Tomago and his Band up at the Thames which he will point out when he arrives.
>
> And we trust that the reserves now made by us will be augmented at the time the purchase is finally concluded. Should our great Father's Representative see that they are insufficient for the whole of our Nation now living on this side of the Waters to plant Corn and hunt so that we may not be poor and miserable like our Brethren on the American side, who have sold all their Lands and have not made sufficient Reserves for their men, Women and Children to plant corn.
>
> Father-- You will inform our Great Father's Representatives that at our wish he himself set the valuation on the Tract required, but that the payment is to be made annually for 50 years, half in money and half in clothing -

[109] Library and Archives Canada, MG19 F1, Vol 11, Claus Papers, Minutes of Council, October 16, 1818. Pp. 95-96, Reel # C-1480.

> The Payment for our Lands is to be separate and distinct from the Presents our Great Father the King gives us yearly for our loyalty and past services, but out of our yearly payments our Nation is to be furnished with a blacksmith and Husbandman to be stationed near the reserves, the former to mend our Axes and Traps and repair our Guns, the latter to instruct us in the art of husbandry.[110]

The land reserved for Tomago would develop into Chippewas of the Thames First Nation (see Figure 8). The reserve land allocated for Bear Creek would not be honored and would be disputed as part of the Big Bear Creek Land Claim that was settled in 2013. Neal Ferris, author of *The Archaeology of Native-Lived Colonialism: Challenging History in the Great Lakes* discusses the Bear Creek Ojibwa who resided along the Sydenham River. Ferris writes that in the 19th century, "the Bear Creek Ojibwa had been a subgroup of the Thames River Ojibwa, large enough to maintain for itself a separate identity on the lower Thames."[111] The families of Bear Creek were eventually forced to resettle at Chippewas of the Thames in 1832.[112] Following the War of 1812, land loss through treaty agreements led to the mass settlement of Chippewa lands, further prohibiting mobility and subsistence. After the Longwoods Treaty was confirmed in 1822 and the reserve system established, what came next led to the total disruption of Deshkan Ziibiing families and community livelihood.

The Mount Elgin Indian Industrial School operated from 1851-1862 and 1867-1946. Mount Elgin was one of the first Residential Schools built in Canada and one of the longest running institutions. Prior to its opening, Rev. Peter Jones, also known as Kahkewaquonaby, travelled extensively to raise funds to support the development of manual labor schools for Indigenous children in Canada. Jones was born January 1, 1802. His mother, Tuhbenahneequay

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[110] Ibid.
[111] Neal Ferris. *The Archaeology of Native-lived Colonialism: Challenging History in the Great Lakes* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2009), 39.
[112] Ibid, 39.

was Mississauga Ojibwa and the daughter of Chief Wapinose. His father, Augustus Jones, was a Welsh surveyor who worked with Chief Wapinose.[113] After an upbringing rooted in his mother's culture, Jones went to live with his father after which time he converted to Christianity and became a Methodist missionary in 1824. Some years later he would travel extensively to Munceytown, which he wrote about in his journals, and would become the superintendent of the Muncey Mission between 1841-1843 and 1848-1849.[114]

On March 13, 1828, four years into his missionary work, Jones visited Lower Muncey "in hopes of talking to some of the Indians about religion."[115] He added, "We found, alas! Many of them drunk, and as it was no use to talk to drunken people, we returned to Brother Carey's."[116] Jones continued his journey and stopped at Munsee and Ojibwa camps along the Deshkan Zibi over the next few days to share stories of religion and how to convert to Christianity. However, his visits were often met with disagreement and resistance. A great number of Ojibwa listened to the stories Jones had to tell. However, several of Ojibwa including their leaders resisted Jones' rhetoric and offered their own points of view and observations. Seven days later, on Thursday, March 20, 1828, Jones paid a visit to Bear Creek. He describes his encounter below:

> Hearing of some Chippeways living at Bear River, north of the River Thames, I accompanied Bro. F. to that place. On our arrival we saw some Indian boys, and from them learned that several of the Indians were encamped across the river. We accordingly went, and, after the usual salutations, I introduced myself to the head Chief of the tribe, whose name is Kanootong, and told him the object of my visit to my native brethren in this part of the country, and requested him to call his people together, as I was anxious to inform them about the Christian religion.[117]

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[113] Greg Curnoe, *Deeds / Nations* (London: Ontario Archaeological Society, 1996), 45.
[114] Ibid, 45.
[115] Rev. Peter Jones, *Life and Journals. Of Kah-ke-wa-quo-na-by* (Toronto: Anson Green at the Wesleyan Printing Establishment, 1860), 120.
[116] Ibid, 120.
[117] Ibid, 122.

After his introduction, a runner was sent to gather an audience of Bear Creek Ojibwa for Jones. Within a few moments, more than a dozen people had been gathered. Peter continued to tell them the following,

> I then related to them the conversion of the Indians at the Credit, Belleville, Rice Lake, and Lake Simcoe. I told them how they had forsaken their destroyer, the *fire-waters*, so that now, instead of getting drunk, quarrelling, and fighting; they loved the Great Spirit, and one another, and prospered in many things. I also informed them that our father, the Governor, had built us a village at the Credit, where our people and their children could live comfortably.[118]

Kanootung, the Chief of Bear Creek, relayed the following words in objection to Peter Jones' message above. I include the speech in its entirety below. According to Peter Jones, Chief Kanootung stated the following:

> Brother — I am glad to see you and hear from your people, but with respect to Indians becoming Christians, I cannot think it right; for when the Great Spirit made the white man and the Indian, he did not make them of one colour, and therefore did not design them to worship in the same way; for he placed the white man across the great waters, and there gave him his religion written in a book; he also made the white man to cultivate the earth, and raise cattle, &c. ; but when the Great Spirit made the Indian, he placed him in this country, and gave him his way of worship written in his heart, which has been handed down from one generation to another; for his subsistence, he gave him the wild beasts of the forest, the fowls that fly in the air, the fish that swim in the waters, and the corn for his bread; and, before the white man came to this country the Indian did not know the use of iron, but for an axe he used a stone sharpened at one end, tied to a split stick; with this he cut his wood; and for his hoe he split the limb of a tree; he had also stone pots to cook with; these things answered his purpose, and he was contented and happy. Now I suppose if the Great Spirit had intended the Indian to worship like the white man he would have made him white instead of red, &c. Our forefathers have told us that when an Indian dies, his spirit goes to a place prepared for him towards the sun-setting, where Indians dwell for ever in dancing and feasting; and should I become a Christian and throw away the religion of my fathers, I am not sure that the Great Spirit would receive me into heaven. And how should I look after worshipping like the white man? Perhaps when I come to die my soul might go up to heaven, and the Great Spirit would ask me, "What have you come up here for, you Indian? This is not your place; you must go where your forefathers have gone; this place is only made for white people, not for Indians, therefore begone." How foolish then should I look to be driven from heaven; therefore I think I cannot become a Christian, and throw away my old ways; and, more

[118] Ibid, 123.

> than this, I do not see that the white men who are christians are any better than the red men, for they make *fire-waters*, get drunk, quarrel, fight, murder, steal, lie, and cheat. Now when the Indian gets drunk he sometimes quarrels and fights, but never when he is sober; but I have seen white men fight when they are sober, and go from their meeting-house straight to the tavern; so that I do not desire the white man's religion, neither do I think that I should be able to forsake the sins which I have already committed.[119]

Kanootong, also spelled Canotung or Kanotung, was born in 1790 and was a veteran of the War of 1812. Rita Sands from Walpole Island described the name Kanootong as "someone who hears and repeats, a translator or recorder."[120] In the Ojibwe People's Dictionary, aanikanootaage is defined as "s/he translates, interprets (for) the people."[121] Aanikootan, a closer variation to Kanootung, is simply defined as "translate, interpret it."[122] I am no expert at Anishinaabemowin, but I am a lifelong learner. Seeing Anishinaabe names in the historical record can be confusing and sometimes frustratingly hard to grasp because of the way the names were understood to be said and heard by those who were documenting them. Learning to recognize the names of Deshkan Ziibiing leaders, their potential meanings, and how Anishinaabemowin speakers would have spoken those names brings them closer to us and becomes an important part of understanding who they were.

Kanootong, was present at the signing of the Longwoods Treaty and signed his name with an antler dodem (see Figure 9). Kanootong's response to Jones aligned with a few other Chiefs from the area who also rejected the invitation to convert to Christianity. On Tuesday, April 8th, 1828, a few weeks after meeting with Kanootong, Jones visited a council meeting with Chief Tommago, or Old Otomekoo as written in Jones's journal. Jones wrote that Old Otomekoo

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[119] Ibid, 123-124.
[120] Greg Curnoe, *Deeds / Nations* (London: Ontario Archaeological Society, 1996), 19.
[121] "Aaniikanootaage," Ojibwe People's Dictionary, accessed June 23, 2023: https://ojibwe.lib.umn.edu/main-entry/aanikanootaage-vai
[122] "Aanikanootan," Ojibwe People's Dictionary, accessed June 23, 2023: https://ojibwe.lib.umn.edu/main-entry/aanikanootan-vti

gathered a few of the Chiefs and members of the community to listen to a letter from Mr. Ironside, an Indian Agent posted at Amherstburgh. After the business was concluded, Jones requested to speak about the Christian religion. He was allowed to do so and after about 30 minutes into his presentation, Jones documented the following responses from the Chiefs in attendance. Jones writes, "old Snake (a Muncey Chief) rose up and said he did not feel disposed to alter his way of worship but to continue in the way the Good Spirit had appointed."[123] Jones added that Old Otomekoo responded by saying, "I am not inclined to change my way of worship."[124] Jones added, "We then asked them whether they were opposed to having their children taught to read and write? They replied there not; but on the contrary should like them taught as the white people."[125] Jones made it his life's work to advocate and raise funds to build schools so "that the children may be properly trained and educated to habits of industry."[126]

Nearly 16 years later, Peter Jones would travel overseas raising funds for the development of residential schools in Canada. Donald B. Smith has researched and written extensively about Peter Jones, his wife Eliza, their family, and travels in his book *Sacred Feathers: The Reverend Peter Jones (Kahkewaquonaby) & the Mississauga Indians*. Smith asserts that Rev. Peter Jones was no stranger at putting on a good show for crowds who were curious about the Indians of North America. In 1844, Jones embarked on a year-long journey to Great Britain to raise money for residential schools. Jones, who had extensive experience in public speaking and engaging audiences coordinated his talks for the curious European onlooker.

[123] Rev. Peter Jones, *Life and Journals. Of Kah-ke-wa-quo-na-by* (Toronto: Anson Green at the Wesleyan Printing Establishment, 1860), 130.
[124] Ibid, 130.
[125] Ibid, 130.
[126] Elizabeth Graham, *The Mush Hole: Life at Two Indian Residential Schools* (Waterloo: Heffle Publishing, 1997), 5.

Smith writes, "the Indian talk, the Indian costume, the specimens of "heathen gods" and the Indian Curios"[127] was the right combination to gather large crowds. After returning to Canada, Peter, Eliza, and their children moved to the mission station at Munceytown in the fall of 1847. At Muncey, Jones was going to lead the development of the Mount Elgin Indian Industrial School. In 1845, four First Nations communities, "Chippewas of the Thames, the Chippewas of Sarnia, the Moravian of the Thames and the Mississaugas of the New Credit set aside one fourth of their annuities in support of industrial schools."[128] Under Jones's superintendency, Smith writes, "By May 1848 the school's two-hundred acres had been surveyed, by July 1849 the cornerstone was laid, and the buildings were all completed by December."[129] However, due to his declining health, Jones had to resign from his position leaving Mount Elgin in the hands of missionary workers who had ill views of the people the school would serve. It was Jones's intention that once Mount Elgin was established, it would be governed by Christian Indians. However, that was never the case and throughout its tumultuous history, Mount Elgin would have many ill and lasting effects beyond its 100-year operation. Mount Elgin has been investigated on numerous occasions which had been initiated by parents voicing concerns, at the request of Chief and Council, and through the Department of Indian Affairs. In 1857, three commissioners were tasked with investigating the school. Smith adds that the commissioners "deemed Mount Elgin a failure and recommended that it become an Indian orphan asylum. Peter Jones himself thought very little of the institution he had worked so hard to establish. Not one of

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[127] Donald B. Smith. *Sacred Feathers: The Reverend Peter Jones (Kahkewaquonaby) & the Mississauga Indians* 2nd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), 204.
[128] "Mount Elgin Residential School Timeline," The Children Remembered. Accessed January 26, 2023, https://thechildrenremembered.ca/timelines/mount-elgin-industrial-institute-timeline/.
[129] Donald B. Smith. *Sacred Feathers: The Reverend Peter Jones (Kahkewaquonaby) & the Mississauga Indians.* 2nd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), 213.

his sons attended."[130] The commissioner's recommendations were not acted upon and by 1885 the school started admitting students from "all other Bands of Indians in Ontario" and by 1897 the school enrollment was increased to 100 students.[131]

Generations of families from Chippewas of the Thames First Nation would attend Mount Elgin and children from at least 18 other First Nations were sent there as well. Today, Mount Elgin is most often referred to as a labor camp, not a school. It did not prepare students to succeed in academics. It prepared them for a life of hard labor and servitude. In 1909, principal Rev. S. R. McVitty wrote the following,

> It is my conviction that the aim of the school should be to fit boys and girls for farm and domestic works (not by any means for office work or even teachers unless in very few cases) and just as soon as they are well fitted to earn their own living let them go out to good homes and do so… they would early take their place in the nation's life and be a real to help to those who so much need farm and domestic help.[132]

Mount Elgin widened the cultural knowledge and language gap between generations of Deshkan Ziibiing families. In chapter *Niiwin (four)*, I discuss interviews I conducted with members of the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation. In an interview with Donna Young, she shared stories about her father, Donald Young-baa who attended Mount Elgin and the impact it had on him and his family. As a young boy, Donald worked in the barn and the fields. In another interview, Maxine Hendrick, an elder from Chippewas of the Thames First Nation described how as a child she was hidden when unknown parties would approach her family home. She stated,

> I can remember the cops coming or any cars that came. It was Leona's job to make sure that I was safe. She would put her hand over my mouth and run to the bush or to the pine trees. We had pine trees that hung down and you couldn't see. And that's where she hid

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[130] Ibid, 214.
[131] "Mount Elgin Residential School Timeline," The Children Remembered. Accessed January 26, 2023, https://thechildrenremembered.ca/timelines/mount-elgin-industrial-institute-timeline/.
[132] Elizabeth Graham, *The Mush Hole: Life at Two Indian Residential Schools* (Waterloo: Heffle Publishing, 1997), 11.

> me. And I was always trying to bite her or hit her because I didn't think that was a very funny game to play.[133]

School officials, Indian agents, and local police were known to cart kids away to residential schools and would be the front-line responders when a child ran away from Mount Elgin. As one can imagine, truancy would become a problem and eventually local children were sent further away to schools like the Mohawk Institute in Brantford or Shingwauk in Sault Ste. Marie, ON.

My great-grandmothers Gladys Madison, from Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, and Eva Shilling from Chippewas of Rama First Nation, attended Mount Elgin Indian Industrial School. My great-great grandmother Winnifred (Winnie) Fisher, mother-in-law to Gladys Madison, who was from Chippewas of the Thames First Nation attended Mount Elgin as well. There are a few family stories about their time spent at Mount Elgin. One such story is that of Winnie Fisher, one of four teenage girls who attempted set fire to the kitchen.

On July 13th, 1908, Gordon Smith an Indian Agent from Brantford, Ontario headed for Mount Elgin to investigate complaints made about the school regarding the health and working conditions of the students. There were complaints about scabies and tuberculosis and the overall cleanliness and welfare of the students. Smith's first stop included visits to local doctors who treated students at the school. The doctors advised Smith that the conditions at the school were healthy. Smith then visited Jacob Fisher, father of Winnifred Fisher. Jacob disagreed with the management of the school and Smith documented six of his complaints which are included here,

> (1) Pupils are punished by being put to work during school hours when they should be at school…(2) Pupils do not get enough to eat, and the same food is placed on the table day after day… (3) Pupils are made to nurse the sick and some times tubercular patients. Said his daughter had to nurse a child who died of tuberculosis and she afterwards contracted the disease. (4) Parents are not notified if children get sick. (5) Has seen body lice in heads of pupils when at Church. Thinks pupils are left to wash themselves, without

[133] Maxine Hendrick and Syb Young. Interview with author. September 29, 2022.

sufficient supervision.[134]

Mr. Smith then quotes Jacob Fisher saying, "There is no body lice in our people at their own homes." The following day, Smith made his way to Muncey to visit the Mount Elgin Institute. Smith was there to investigate claims from parents and to look into a fire that was set in the kitchen. In *Nii Ndahlohke: Boys' and Girls' Work at Mount Elgin Industrial School, 1890-1915,* author Mary Jane Logan McCallum discusses arson as a form of resistance at residential schools. McCallum writes,

> From time to time, exhaustion form overwork, bitter resentment towards school staff, harsh discipline, and hunger put students over the edge—and they resisted…While Mount Elgin was never completely destroyed by fire, there were five fires between 1890 and 1915. Three occurred in student workplaces: two in the barns, one in the kitchen.[135]

According to Smith's report, four teenage girls, Lottie Beaver, Annie Comego, Lottie Nicholas, and Winnie Fisher, went to the kitchen after supper at around 7pm. Annie, Winnie, and Lottie N. kept watch while Lottie B. started a fire. All the girls stated that Winnie asked them to start the fire. Smith described Winnie as being a "small nervous child strong willed and aggressive, and sharp."[136] The inspectors report suggested that Winnie and Lottie be punished for their actions. However, in a subsequent report dated Aug 6, 1908, it was recommended that the punishment be left to the principal to manage as a prison sentence would do more harm than good. It is unclear how the situation concluded for the girls. It was thought that Winnie's father, Jacob Fisher, instigated the attempted arson to get his daughter away from the school. If that were the case, Jacob wasn't the only parent bringing issues forward and making grievances known about the

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[134] Gordon Smith. Mount Elgin Inspection Report. July 16, 1908. Library and Archives Canada. Indian Affairs. (RG, Volume 6205, file 468-1, part 1).

[135] Mary Jane Logan McCallum, In *Nii Ndahlohke: Boys' and Girls' Work at Mount Elgin Industrial School, 1890-1915* (Altona: Friesen Press, 2022), 48.

[136] Gordon Smith. Mount Elgin Inspection Report. July 16, 1908. Library and Archives Canada. Indian Affairs. (RG 10, Volume 6205, file 468-1, part 1).

lack of proper care, health, and safety conditions at the school. Since attendance at residential schools was mandatory, many parents sought support from Chief and Council pleading for their children to be sent to school closer to home. Many of those requests were denied by the school and Indian Affairs. Although the reports show that life at Mount Elgin was decent, testimonies from residential school survivors and their families say otherwise.

Until the research project I didn't know who Winnie Fisher was. I had heard the story about Winnie setting fire to the kitchen but was unaware of any documentation that existed. It wasn't until the United Church of Canada released their archival records to the public and made them available online that such stories were backed up with documentation. During my visits to Deshkan Ziibiing in 2022, my Aunt Sherry shared several old family photos with me and one was an image of Winnie (see Figure 10). After residential school, Winnie met Phillip Deleary (see Figure 11) and together they had Vernon Deleary. Vernon would then meet and marry Gladys Madison. Together they would have 16 children, one of whom was my grandfather Frank Deleary. Frank was one of the oldest children born to Vernon and Gladys. Frank met my grandmother Jean Shilling who was from Chippewas of Rama First Nation, in Detroit, MI as they both left their homes in search of work.

Since Frank and Jean were among the oldest of their siblings. Frank and Jean didn't attend residential school, but many of their younger siblings did. In the 1950s, when they were in their late teens and early twenties, Frank and Jean left their homes and made their way to Detroit. Frank left his home on Chippewa to find work and Jean left Rama to help her older sister Betty who was married and raising a family of her own in Garden City, Michigan. The driving agenda of settler-colonialism, racism, social issues stemming from inter-generational residential school

trauma, low economic opportunity, and high poverty rates on reserve made it difficult to stay at home.

Many First Nations families went to Detroit to find work in the factories. They would spend their week in the city and go back home to the reserve on the weekends. While in Detroit, families from the reserve most often chose to live close to one another to support and maintain a sense of community. Roberta Miskokomon-baa from Chippewas of the Thames First Nation provided insight into the circumstances of travelling to the US for work. It was easier to integrate into the bigger city for school and work which was harder to do in local rural towns in Ontario in the mid-1900s. In the 1980s, Roberta participated in an interview for *Keepers of the Ways*, a documentary on the cultural arts of First Nations women in southwestern Ontario. The interviewer asked Roberta what gave her a sense of who she was and if there was a point in time that heightened her awareness of having a distinct culture. Roberta responded with the following statement:

> My going to a big city [Detroit and Chicago] in the States. We sought out people that came from Canada, the Indian people there, and then gradually I noticed there were more Indians I had never heard of before in my life. And it's because of my working there. Even when I had worked in Detroit we didn't really mix in, we always came home because we couldn't stand the city. And coming from a country life and working in a city all week where it was hot and humid, we would come home Friday evening and go back Sunday night and spend our weekends at home because it's only about 100 miles away from home.[137]

When asked, "What took you there?" She further responded, "we couldn't find work here. We faced some discrimination that you go someplace where there are other people almost the same color. So, you go where the jobs are."[138] Roberta's experience was commonplace for many First

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[137] Roberta Miskokomon. *Keepers of the Ways*, 1987, Western University Libraries, Archives and Special Collections.
[138] Ibid.

Nations people in southwestern Ontario. Going to the city offered more than just work, it connected Indigenous people from other areas, creating an awareness of other tribes and shared experiences, thus revealing a network of Indigenous relations across Turtle Island. It was under these circumstances that Frank and Jean met and eventually got married. Like Roberta, Frank and Jean commuted back and forth as well, oftentimes staying at Gladys' house at Chippewas of the Thames. In the 1970s, they permanently moved to Chippewas of the Thames reserve where they built a home and business with their five children Nancy, Kevin, Paula, Frankie, and Jennifer. Nancy is my mother and we come from a long line of Anishinaabeg who have maintained Anishinaabe gikendaasowin and dibaajmowin in Wawayatanong for centuries. Our grandmothers and grandfathers cared deeply for us as they witnessed, engaged, and resisted a multitude of changes that influenced the trajectory of our stories. This same care flows to our children.

Today, Chippewas of the Thames First Nation is comprised of many families whose stories and histories are similar to the one I outlined in this chapter. This of course, is not a complete telling of our history, but it's a start. This story emerges out of a desire to understand and share how our experiences have been shaped by generations of Anishinaabeg who continually generated Anishinaabe'aadziwin.

FIGURES

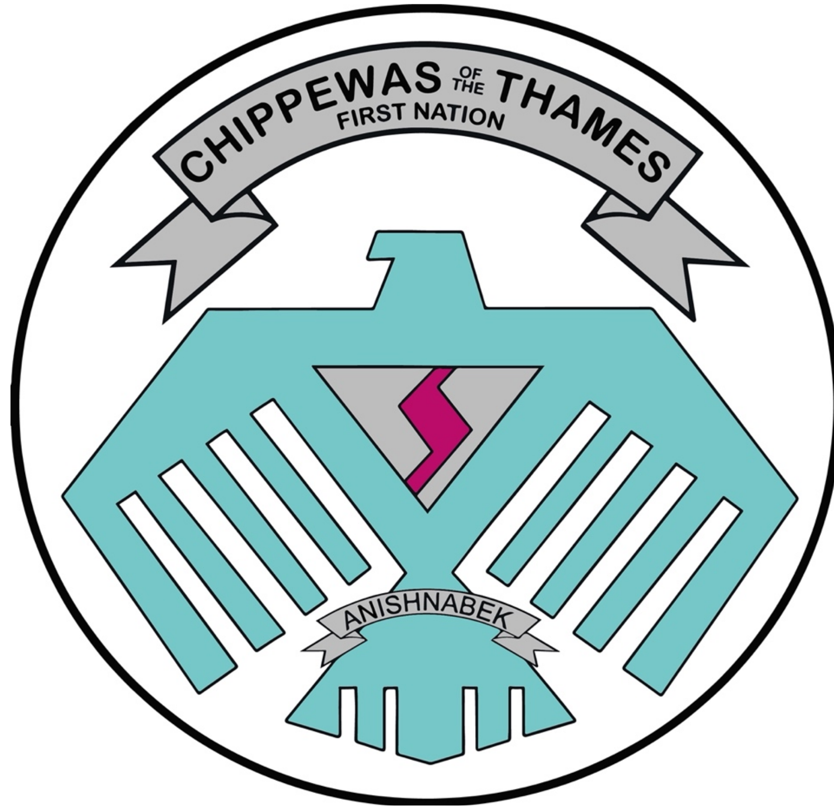

Figure 4, Chippewa Thunderbird, ca. 1990
Nancy Deleary
Chippewas of the Thames First Nation

Figure 5: Village of Moravian Indians on the Thames River (Detail), ca. 1795.
Survey of the River La Tranche or Thames from its entrance or confluence with Lake St. Clair, to the Upper Forks: delineated by a scale of forty Gunter's chains to one inch, collected from plans by Mr. McNill and Mr. Jones.
Library and Archives Canada Item ID number: 4138662
https://recherche-collection-search.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/home/record?app=fonandcol&IdNumber=4138662

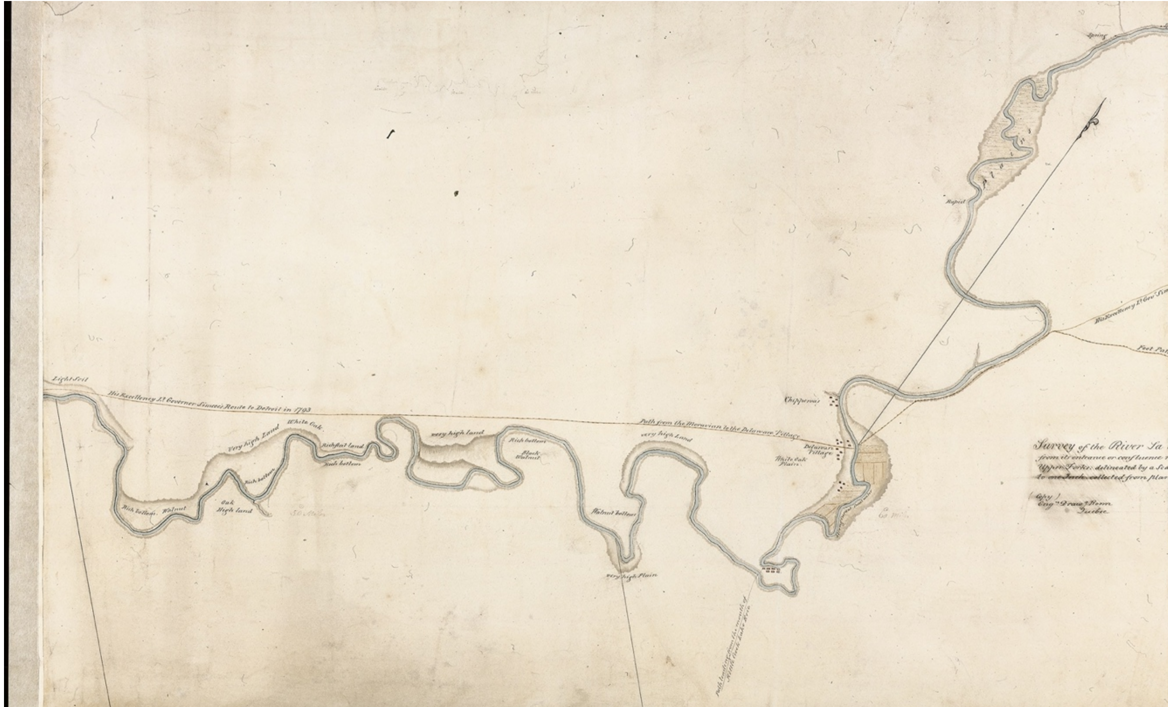

Figure 6, Survey of the River La Tranche or Thames from its entrance or confluence with Lake St. Clair, to the Upper Forks: delineated by a scale of forty Gunter's chains to one inch, collected from plans by Mr. McNill and Mr. Jones. ca. 1795.
Library and Archives Canada, 4138662.
https://recherche-collection-search.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/home/record?app=fonandcol&IdNumber=4138662

Figure 7, Detail of Survey of the River La Tranche or Thames from its entrance or confluence with Lake St. Clair, to the Upper Forks: delineated by a scale of forty Gunter's chains to one inch, collected from plans by Mr. McNill and Mr. Jones. ca. 1795.
Library and Archives Canada, 4138662
https://recherche-collection-search.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/home/record?app=fonandcol&IdNumber=4138662

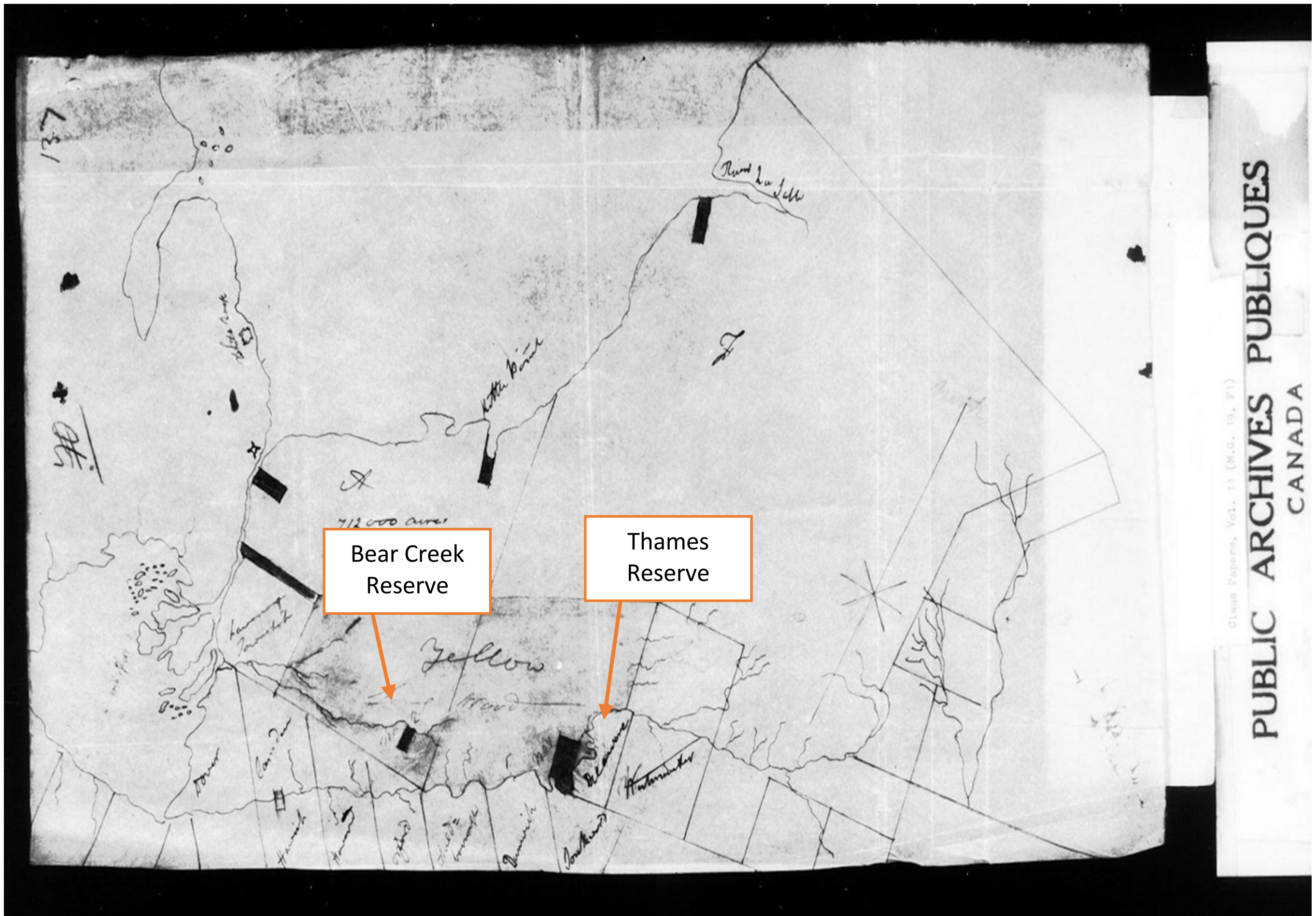

Figure 8, Plan of the Province sketch (Approximate location of Bear Creek Reserve and Thames River Reserve)

Library and Archives Canada. Claus Papers, Vol. 11 (MG19 F1), Reel #1480, p. 137

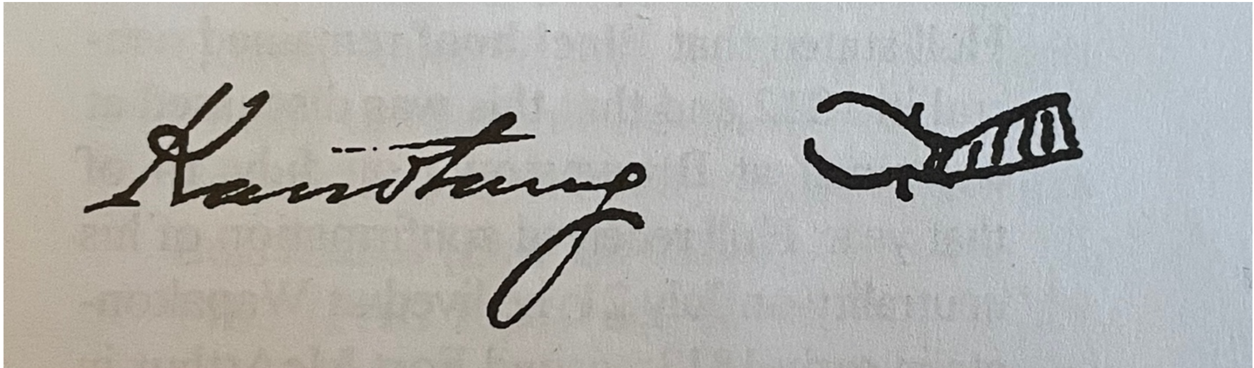

Figure 9, Image of Kanotung's name with Antler Dodem.
From a letter by Chippewa Chiefs of Caradoc, June 12, 1830.
Printed in Greg Curnoe, *Deeds / Nations* (London: Ontario Archaeological Society, 1996), 19.

Figure 10, Winnie Fisher with husband Alfred Riley, n.d.
Collection of Sherry Waddilove

Figure 11, Phillip Deleary, n.d.
Collection of Sherry Waddilove

N'SWI (THREE): LOCATING DESHKAN ZIIBIING GETE-ANISHINAABEG

A noble race! But they are gone,
With their old forests wide and deep,
And we have built our homes upon
Fields where their generations sleep.
Their fountains slake out thirst at noon,
Upon their fields our harvest waves,
Our lovers woo beneath their moon –
Then let us spare at least their graves![139]

On Dec 14, 1797, a proclamation was issued by Peter Russell, Administrator of Upper Canada and Indian Affairs at the time, addressing the destruction of Mississauga fishing and burial grounds. The proclamation stated, "Whereas many heavy and grievous complaints have of late been made by the Mississaga Indians [sic], of depredations committed by some of his Majesty's subjects and others upon their fisheries and burial places, and of other annoyances suffered by them by uncivil treatment…"[140] The proclamation proceeds to describe that any person found guilty of desecrating the Mississauga fisheries and burial grounds "shall be proceeded against with the utmost severity, and proper example made by any herein offending."[141] Early interventions to address the dispossession and desecration of Indigenous sites in Upper Canada, which includes present-day southwestern Ontario, were temporary

[139] Poem cited by Anglican Minister Henry Scadding in *The Canadian Journal of Science, Literature and History*, 1872. Reprinted in *Collections and Objections: Aboriginal Material Culture in Southern Ontario* by Michelle A. Hamilton.
[140] Rev. Henry Scadding, "Canadian Local History. Toronto of Old: Series of Collections and Recollections," in The Canadian Journal of Science, Literature, and History (New ser. V. 14, no, 3 Feb 1872), 268.
[141] Ibid, 268.

solutions to a much bigger problem. Some of the earliest interactions between European settlers and Indigenous people led to many Indigenous sacred sites and burial sites "looted and destroyed out of curiosity and for entertainment".[142] In *Collections and Objections: Aboriginal Material Culture in Southern Ontario,* author Michelle A. Hamilton writes,

> People created private curio collections to display in their homes or adapted artifacts for personal use. They planted flowers in human skulls, boiled cattle feed in copper trade kettles, or, as in the case of the York grave, turned the sand covering burials and even the human remains themselves into construction materials.[143]

York was later named Toronto. As European settlers and colonists entered southwestern Ontario for settlement, they began turning up the land to build their homes and towns. Early Canadian infrastructure then, was created not only through the dispossession of land, but with the ancestral bones of Gete-Anishinaabeg.[144] It was thought that burial sites and other sites of significance were abandoned. Due to the seasonal migration of many Indigenous groups in southwestern Ontario, however, those sites weren't abandoned, they were resting, and would be revisited as Indigenous families moved with the seasons.

Amy Lonetree, Ho-Chunk scholar and author of *Decolonizing Museums: Representing Native America in National and Tribal Museums* writes, "one of the most important goals, I believe, is to assist communities in their efforts to address the legacies of historical unresolved grief by speaking the hard truths of colonialism and thereby creating spaces for healing and

[142] Michelle A. Hamilton, *Collections and Objections: Aboriginal Material Culture in Southern Ontario* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press. 2010), 6.
[143] Ibid, 6.
[144] Gete-anishinaabe refers to the old ones, the elders, or an Indian of long ago. I use this term to refer to Anishinaabe ancestors and the things they created and left behind that are now in museums and collections. Referring to Anishinaabe items in this way acknowledges the personhood, sprit, and knowledges they carry.

understanding."[145] Lonetree explores tribal museums as sites that confront the hard truths of colonialism and support the social healing and welfare of Indigenous nations. The history and treatment of Indigenous people, their remains and belongings in Ontario, and for many Indigenous communities more broadly, spurs the question: what happened to the things our ancestors made and where did they go?

The research and discussions presented in this chapter explores the process of searching for Deshkan Ziibiing Gete-Anishinaabeg. Between July 2022 and January 2023, with the support of the Social Sciences Research Council International Dissertation Completion Fellowship (SSRC-IDRF) and the University of Oklahoma Nancy L. Mergler Dissertation Completion Fellowship, I embarked on a six-month journey to begin looking for Deshkan Ziibiing Gete-Anishinaabeg and the things they left behind. This journey led me to the Field Museum and Newberry Library in Chicago, Ill.; the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) in New York City; the Museum of Ontario Archaeology (MOA) and Western University Libraries, Archives, and Special Collections in London, ON; Chippewas of the Thames First Nation at Muncey, ON, the Canadian Museum of History in Gatineau, QC; Library and Archives Canada in Ottawa, ON; and the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) in Toronto, ON. During this time, I also conducted oral history interviews at Chippewas of the Thames First Nation which will be discussed further in *Naanan (four): Making Anishinaabe Aadiziwin: Conversations about Memory, History, and Making on Deshkan Ziibiing.* In this chapter, I discuss my work at the Chicago Field Museum, the American Museum of Natural, Western University Libraries, Archives, and Special Collections, and the Canadian Museum of History.

[145] Amy Lonetree, *Decolonizing Museums: Representing Native American in National and Tribal Museum* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 5.

Determining which museum and archive to visit was not an easy task. I would like to say that I had a formula for this process, but I don’t think that was the case for this iteration of research. A large part of this journey was learning how to contact each museum or archive and becoming acquainted with their respective collections and databases; a process that was cumbersome and time-consuming. After making initial contact with museums and archives, they would often respond with object lists full of potential items they thought fit my scope of interest and research. Another hurdle was figuring out that what is often presented in a museums online database does not reflect the entirety of their collections making it so much more important to establish contact and arrange a site visit. A couple of the museums and archives I contacted were not prepared to compile a list of things in their collections because they were not cataloged in a way that made them searchable or accessible. Searching for Indigenous related items in the collection was not possible because that wasn’t the way their system was set up or those items were never prioritized for cataloging. Learning this made my process and inquiries much more difficult but demonstrated the need for this kind of work. However, my inquiries, and I am sure others have had similar questions, have encouraged some museums and archives to consider how accessible their Indigenous collections are and within the last year, at least one collection has been made available to our community. Many, if not all the museums I visited were welcoming and I am very grateful for the people who helped me along this journey.

I have had many generative experiences and conversations about the making practices of Deshkan Ziibiing Anishinaabeg and where the things our ancestors created might have ended up. In the pages that follow, I share summaries and outcomes of my museum and archive visits and stories that emerged that enriched my understanding of gete-anishinaabeg and stories that have encouraged to me to keep looking. Layered throughout this narrative is a reflection of my own

experience and those of my relatives who joined me on this journey. Their encouragement, understanding, and participation was transformative. Their presence was crucial for brainstorming, digging deeper, and making sense of the things we looked at and the things we experienced, all of which becomes critical components of Biskaabiiyang and the development of Anishinaabe centered research in collections and archives.

To my knowledge, an initial survey of museum and archive collections in search of gete-anishinaabeg from Deshkan Ziibiing has not been conducted. As I began asking where our ancestral belongings were, there were many leads to follow up on and it quickly became a fascinating journey to not only find where gete-anishinaabeg are in the world, but to locate and reconnect their stories, knowledge, experience, and genealogy back into the history of our First Nation. This journey has also uncovered many gete-anishinaabeg who are my direct ancestors—something that I knew was possible, but very unexpected. Through the stories and things that my relatives have shared with me, I have learned so much about my own grandmothers and grandfathers. This journey also encourages the reconnection with my kin, their belongings, memories, and stories they left behind. My approach to this research was an inclusive one that was grounded in Anishinaabe gikendaasowin[146] and Anishinaabe forms of learning, gathering, and coming together. It also reflects my own learning as an Anishinaabe kwe[147], mother, sister, and daughter. One of the main goals in this research process was to be a good relative as I visited with gete-anishinaabeg and my relatives at Deshkan Ziibiing.

The presence of ancestral objects in museums and their absence in Indigenous communities quickly becomes a contentious story and one immediately wonders, "how did those

[146] Gikendaasowin is knowledge.
[147] Kwe is woman.

objects get there?" Answering such a question is not an easy task and immediately brings forward questions about lineage, land use and migration, colonization, settler colonialism, early collecting practices and the resulting harm that such practices have inflicted. It also raises the questions about the record keeping practices of museums. The presence and absence of ancestral art forms provides a unique entry point into the inquiry about the histories and lived experiences of the Anishinaabeg of Deshkan Ziibiing. Additionally, the salvage paradigm, the systematic and mass collecting of things from what was perceived to be dead or dying cultures, affected many, if not all Indigenous cultures of the Americas from the mid-1800s to the mid-1900s. It was not until recently, as I actively searched for gete-anishinaabeg, that I began to understand just how close to home the salvage paradigm reached.

The absence of gete-anishinaabeg in our families is a result of colonialism and the ongoing agenda of settler-colonialism. In referring to Australian First Peoples' ancestral belongings located in museums, Kimberly Moulton writes,

> Many of these objects are no longer made by First Peoples, who have not had access to such items to begin the process of revival. As long as these objects remain dislocated from their peoples, there will be no end to the trauma suffered by First Peoples communities in relation to this displacement and history of stolen goods or traded goods under exploitative social structures.[148]

Moutlton's words remind me that our gete-anishinabeg are needed in our communities. Gete-anishinaabeg, along with Anishinaabe gikendaasowin, inaadiziwin, and izhitwaawin[149] were targeted for extraction and erasure by the overwhelming influence of Christianity,

[148] Kimberly Moulton, "I Can Still Hear Them Calling" in *Sovereign Words: Indigenous Art, Curation and Criticism*, Katya Garcia-Antón, ed. (Valiz: Office for Contemporary Art Norway, 2018), 200.
[149] I rely on Wendy Makoons Genisuz definitions in "Our Knowledge is not Primitive" to inform my understanding of Anishinaabe-gikendaasowin (knowledge, information, and the synthesis of our personal teachings), Anishinaabe-inaadiziwin (Anishinaabe psychology, way of being), and Anishinaabe-izhitwaawin (Anishinaabe culture, teachings, customs, history).

residential school indoctrination, and salvage anthropology. It is important to mention here that while this was happening, Anishinaabe gikendaasowin was safeguarded by ceremonial families so that one day their relatives may return to the lodge when they are ready. While we may have been under the impression that Anishinaabe inaadiziwin has been absent from our lives, it has been around us even in the hardest and most challenging of times.

Wendy Makoons Genisuz discusses the colonization of Anishinaabe knowledge and that in order for colonizers to assert and maintain dominance, Indigenous knowledges were made inferior. Genisuz writes,

> one multifaceted mechanism, which continues to maintain this power structure, is the colonization of knowledge. Those charged with carrying out various assimilation tactics were taught to view native knowledge as "primitive" or "evil," and, as a result, they often prevented its continued dispersal within native communities. Native people were also made to view their knowledge as "wrong" or "inferior" and non-native knowledge as "right" and "superior," and having such views, many naturally chose what was made to look like better knowledge.[150]

She further writes,

> once native people came to view their knowledge as inferior, some were willing to part with it, for a price reflecting its primitive, inferior nature. Others, seeing the devastating effects of assimilation efforts, chose to entrust this knowledge to researchers as a means of preserving it. In the end, the colonization process both destroyed and preserved native knowledge….[151]

Geniusz conveys that the Anishinaabe gikendaasowin that was preserved was not useable and argues that in order to use Anishnaabe gikendaasowin in culture revitalization, it must be "reworked and reinterpreted into a format that is appropriate and useable to anshinaabe-izhitwaawin."[152] This underscores the importance and inclusion of Indigenous and community-

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[150] Wendy Makoons Geniusz, *Our Knowledge is Not Primitive: Decolonizing Botanical Anishinaabe Teachings*. (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2009), 3.
[151] Ibid, page 3.
[152] Ibid, page 4.

based research and research methods. If gete-anishinaabeg are containers of knowledge, which I agree that they are, then we must bring our relatives with us as we engage in memory sharing and knowledge making with ancestral belongings. Supporting Indigenous communities and families in reconnecting with gete-anishinaabeg is a decolonial praxis.

As I began my research journey, I was looking for any trace of gete-anishinabeg from the southwestern Ontario region across a variety of mediums including, but not limited to, works on paper, film, audio, visual, and physical things. My initial request to the museums and archives I intended to visit were specific to the Anishinaabe Ojibwa and Potawatomi of southwestern Ontario, Canada. However, depending on how the collections were received and cataloged, locating gete-anishinaabeg from a specific place requires additional research and oftentimes a visit to the museums respective archive. All the places I visited, except the Field Museum, housed gete-Anishinaabeg from Deshkan Ziibiing. That is not to say that gete-Anishinaabeg from Deshkan Ziibiing, or other communities for that matter, are not there but rather the information indicating the place and maker of origin was not accessible at the time I made my request. Additional research is often required across many different institutions to locate the genealogy of the ancestral belongings and how they got there.

For far too long, it was common practice for the names of makers to be excluded from the record as Indigenous items were acquired. Whether it was intended or not, this oversight aided in the erasure of Indigenous people, placing them in a forgotten past. Most often, it was the labor, artistry, and knowledge of women that was undocumented. As a result, this further supported the disconnection of gete-anishinaabeg relationality. Removing them from the families, knowledge holders, and makers of origin perpetuated narratives of brokenness, inauthenticity, and furthering colonization.

Museums and their collections areas are very difficult and emotionally charged spaces to be in for most, if not all, Indigenous people. Based on my own experience and witnessing younger and older generations make sense of how and why so many of our gete-anishinaabeg were removed from the care of our families and communities is an important thread to untangle and address when working in museums and archives. It was difficult to be in a space where we couldn't talk or visit freely as we were being watched and monitored as well.

As mentioned previously, when envisioning this research project, it became important to include my relatives in the process of visiting and reconnecting with gete-anishinaabeg. I wanted to engage in generative conversations and witness the curiosity of my relatives who also desire to recover, reconnect, and make sense of gete-anishinaabeg and Anishinaabe gikendaasowin. I also didn't want to do this work alone because it is not easy work to confront the harsh and violent realities that our ancestors lived through and the difficult decisions they had to make. As I visited gete-anishinaabeg with my relatives, it was important to take care, check in frequently, and be kind to one another with our knowledge and sharing.

Field Museum

On July 7, 2022, before the museum opened, Debra Yepa-Pappan (Jemez and Korean), Community Engagement Coordinator for the Field Museum, greeted my son Aiden and me at the employee entrance. After signing in at the security podium, Debra treated us to breakfast in the museum café. We were there before the museum doors opened to the public and crowds began to fill the halls. It was a special treat to be there as the halls were quiet. Soon after finishing breakfast, Michelle Brownlee (Turtle Mountain Band of Ojibwe), the Field Museums newly appointed Collections Manager, joined us and escorted us down into the collection area. The

journey into a museum's collection vault never gets old. I was nervous, excited, and I wasn't quite sure how my process would unfold as we settled in.

At the time of this trip, Aiden was 17 years old. I wanted him to come with me because I kept thinking what a special opportunity this was. It had taken such a long time for me to visit the Field Museum and I needed to share this experience. Aiden has been on this journey with me since I was an undergrad at the Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA) in Santa Fe, NM. My first semester at IAIA was in the fall of 2005 and Aiden was 10 months old. He's grown up around this work and has been a part of my educational and professional journey. Perhaps this visit would inspire him as well. My mother was also scheduled to join me in Chicago a few days later. She would stop in Chicago and visit with me as she made her way to Oklahoma to help take care of my family in my absence. The entirety of this research journey has been a family endeavor.

This was my first time leading a collections visit in a major museum. I quickly learned just how fast I had to work if I was going to visit with all the gete-anishinaabeg I had requested to see. In preparation for this visit, I gathered all the tools I thought I would need. I packed studio lights, magnifying glass, measuring tape, pencils, paper, drawing paper, my semaa[153] and mshkodewashk.[154] I was prepared to document as much as I could, visit with gete-anishinaabeg and my relatives, draw where time permitted, and explore what listening closely meant as we visited gete-anishinaabeg. As we settled into a routine, Aiden and I talked about the importance of our research visit and what our ancestors went through to not only create and make Anishinaabe'aadziwin, but to ensure that they left reminders of who they were, and who we are

[153] Semaa is tobacco.
[154] Mshkodewashk is sage.

as Anishinaabe. These reminders are in the details, materials, designs, and colors of things created by brilliant and intelligent Anishinaabeg minds. With Aiden's help, we visited 62 gete-anishinaabeg in the collection over a two-day period. This was a big undertaking. We photographed, made notes, took long pauses, measured dimensions, and held and carried many of the gete-anishinaabeg and discussed the things we noticed and had questions about (see Figure 12). I think my favorite part of this journey was being there with him. One of Aiden's favorite items was a pouch made from the bottom portion of a pelican bill and was identified as being Ojibwa from Manitoba (see Figure 13). When I asked him how he felt about this trip, he shared how amazing and inspiring it was to see and interact with pieces of our history. The ancestral items at the Field Museum did not originate from Deshkan Ziibiing Anishinaabeg makers through the museum's records. However, all the items we visited were connected to Anishinaabe gikendaasowin through their materials and being and they brought us together.

During our visit, we were informed of a records room where additional collection acquisition files filled with provenance information could be located. I spent a few hours in the records room, but the process of locating and finding a file associated to an item in the collection was a time intensive endeavor. To locate the file on three items in the collection took well over an hour. This was time that I had not factored into our visit as I had flagged over 100 items to visit with in the collections area. I hope to return to the Field Museum in the future to continue my research into the origins of the Anishinaabe collections.

In response to my initial research request, I received an excel spreadsheet of database entries associated with Ojibwa, Potawatomi, and Ottawa (Odawa) tribes mainly from Ontario or Michigan. In some cases, the region was listed only as North America. In total, there were 23 database entries identified as being from Ontario, Canada and the items were acquired in 1906,

1903, and 1893. Of the 23 entries, 9 were acquired in 1906 and included items such as a wooden bowl (16349), woven rabbit fur mittens (16358.1 and .2; see Figure 14), woven rabbit fur coat (16356), woven rabbit skin hood (163567; see Figure 14), and knife sheath (16354; Figure 15). Most of these items were identified as being Ojibwa from the Lake Nipigon area, which is north of Lake Superior in northern Ontario. One bag (18664) was acquired in 1903 and is listed as being Chippewa from an uncertain location in Canada or the USA. In the year 1893, the year of the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, 13 items were accessioned and listed as being Ojibwa from Manitoulin Island or Ottawa (Odawa) from Queen Sound, Ontario. A few of the items from the 1893 accession year, include a pair of leather split–toe moccasins (15188.1 and .2), a birch bark basket (15392), and club (15371; Figure 16). The club, which looked more like a paddle, was inscribed with geometric patterns. It was made from thick wood and looked well used given by the wear and tear of the paddle (see Figures 16 and 17).

Aiden returned home on July 9th and my mother joined me a few days later on July 12th. It was a very special moment because I hadn't seen her in person for nearly three years due to Covid-19 pandemic and international travel restrictions. We had a joyous reunion. The day after my mother arrived, we headed to the Field Museum for another visit to the collections and archives. We were greeted by Debra and spent the morning browsing the woodland collections and selecting items that we wanted to spend more time with that afternoon. After a quick visit to the archives and lunch, we headed back to the collections area to sit, visit, and draw. In Figure 18, Nancy chose a pair of Ho-Chunk beaded arm bands. As we were browsing the collection shelves, she was drawn to the blue thunderbirds on the arm bands because they were similar to the Chippewa Thunderbird design she created for Chippewas of the Thames First Nation. She chose to create two drawings of the arm bands (see Figures 19 and 20).

Debra joined us in the collections as we were drawing and while we were talking, my mother made a quick drawing of us (see Figure 21). For about two hours we experimented with drawing as a method of closer looking and engagement and a way of adding to the journey and biography of the object. The drawings ultimately became our takeaways and added to the narrative of our visit. They are visual reminders and something for us to share in addition to photographs and notes we took. A single afternoon wasn't enough. It never is.

Before I continue my discussion of the drawings we created, I must mention here, if I have not made it clear elsewhere in this dissertation, my mother is a master artist. She is an expert in portraiture and design and pretty much all mediums. I am her one of biggest fans and I aspire to make beautiful things like she does. I fear I did not do that during this drawing session, but the experience of being there in the moment with her and Debra, visiting, drawing, and being surrounded by many ancestral items in the collections was an experience I cherish. Our visit was also filled with humor as you will see when you look at Figure 22 which was my response to my mother's drawing of me and Debra. We shared a good laugh after that. Humor and laughter became essential components of this visit. The time spent in the collection with my mother would inspire a group research trip with the support of the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation Anishinaabe'aadziwin Dept in January 2023. I discuss this trip further in this chapter.

We were invited back to the Field Museum archives the next day on July 14th where Armand Esai, Archivist would help guide our work in the collections. Since the archives are not digitized or available online, he was very helpful in tracking down additional information on the gete-anishnaabeg we visited in the collection. The Field Museum has additional records that I couldn't visit during this trip and I hope to make it back in the future to continue my research. As mentioned previously, I was not able to locate documentation that connected the

Ojibwa/Chippewa items in the Field Museum collections to specific makers. When I made my initial request to the museum, I was informed that the items were not searchable or identifiable to a specific place/region in Canada. However, most items that were accessioned shortly after 1893 would have originated from the World's Columbian Exposition. I have lingering questions about the items we visited, and I am curious to know if any Anishinaabe from Ontario were part of the World's Fair. These questions will have to be addressed at a later time.

During our entire visit at the Field Museum, we were greeted and taken care of by Debra Yepa-Pappan. Her role at the Field Museum is one of great importance and I am so very grateful for her friendship and guidance. She filled a role that was sorely missed at many of the other institutions we visited. She provided us with a very warm welcome, ensured that we were fed, and became the friend we needed as we embarked on this journey.

American Museum of Natural History

Following the visit to Chicago, I travelled straight to New York City. I spent one week visiting museum exhibitions and the following week working in the collections at the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH). The AMNH houses a collection acquired by American Anthropologist Mark Raymond (M.R) Harrington. Visiting the collection at AMNH was not only fulfilling a mission of mine to find the things our ancestors made, but to further my experience and understanding of Indigenous informed methodological approaches to collections-based research. It was also the first collection I located and visited with that had documented lineage to Deshkan Ziibiing makers. When setting up my visit, I was offered five days. Three days in collections, and two days in the archives. On the day of my arrival, like the Field Museum, I was escorted to a table in the collections area. This is the place I would work for three days

reconnecting, reflecting, and documenting the things that were removed from my home community over 100 years ago.

I first became aware of Harrington's anthropological work in the summer of 2019 while searching for any mention of Muncey or Munceytown in published papers or museum collections. In my search, I found mention of Muncey in a paper Harrington published in 1908, titled "Vestiges of Material Culture among the Canadian Delaware."[155] This paper was published a year after he visited the Munsee-Delaware Nation in 1907. I was hopeful that if he visited the Munsee-Delaware Nation, maybe he met with other First Nations who resided in the area as well. After reading Harrington's paper I began searching for additional information and museum collections associated with his 1907 expedition to Muncey.

By November 2019, after more digging and online sleuthing, I located Harrington's ledger notebook[156] and associated photographs in the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) Archives. By December 2019, I had his ledger notebook which recorded the provenance of the things he purchased from his expedition to Ontario. In the ledger notebook Harrington documented the items he purchased along with the name of the person he purchased items from, the price be paid, and in most cases included the name for the item in the associated Indigenous language. For example, Figure 23 is an image of page 42 from Harrington's ledger notebook. On this page, entry number 103 documents several items Harrington purchased from Betsy Hough who is listed as being Chippewa. In entry 103 B, Harrington lists "4 mukisanun" that he acquired for an indecipherable amount of money. However, the word "mukisanun" that he spelled out

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[155] See M.R. Harrington. Vestiges of Material Culture among the Canadian Delawares. American Anthropologist, New Series, Vol. 10, No. 3 (Jul. - Sep., 1908), pp. 408-418.
[156] Mark Raymond Harrington Notebook. National Museum of the American Indian, NMAI.AC.001_182_02.

phonetically references the Ojibwa word makizin which describes a single moccasin and makizinan describes many or plural moccasins.[157]

After reading through Harrington's ledger notebook, I was delighted to see familiar surnames from Munsee-Delaware Nation, Oneida Nation of the Thames, and Chippewas of the Thames First Nation. I was even more excited to see the names of my direct ancestors. At this point I did not know where these items were. However, requesting access to Harrington's photographs was a logical next step and would lead me to my next clue. I received 68 photographs in total, and they included images of gete-anishinaabeg, their families, landscapes, and homes from the Muncey area. Only a handful of names were included in the photograph descriptions and not a lot of identifying information accompanied them.

In May 2018, before I had knowledge of Harrington and his expedition, I had just learned about my acceptance into the Native Art History Ph.D. program at OU. My sister Eva sent an email with links to garments at AMNH. She included mention of a researcher who had been asking our First Nation's Band Membership Clerk about regalia items in a collection that was donated to the AMNH by Erastus Tefft. I would later find this correspondence in the AMNH archives. The regalia items my sister shared with me were familiar to her as she had seen them before. As a student at the Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA) in Santa Fe, she was also searching for things that originated from our First Nation. After observing classmates at IAIA looking to their ancestral and communal art forms for inspiration, she too was curious about the things our ancestors made. After I had visited the collection at AMNH in July 2022, Eva shared in our family group chat that she first saw the regalia in a photograph published in *Native*

[157] The Ojibwe People's Dictionary. "Makizin." Accessed June 23, 2023. https://ojibwe.lib.umn.edu/main-entry/makizin-ni

Universe: Voices of Indian America when she was as student at IAIA. The published photograph was a colorized version of the original image Harrington produced. However, this summer, after visiting the regalia that the woman is wearing in the photograph, we realized that the image (see Figure 24) published in *Native Universe* didn't represent the actual color of the garments in the AMNH Collection. This slight change in the representation of the garments prohibited me from making the connection between the garments in the photograph and the items at the AMNH. The original black and white photograph was taken by Harrington during his expedition to Muncey in 1907 (see Figure 25). Since 2018, Harrington's work, and the work of Deshkan Ziibiing gete-anishinaabeg had been so close and familiar but I didn't realize it until I began this research.

After requesting access to Harrington's 1907 photograph collection, I was able to see NMAI Image Number N03009, the negative of the image that was published in *Native Universe.* In NMAI Image Number N03009 the woman standing in the doorway is not identified and the image is untitled. The description accompanying the photograph from NMAI states the following:

> Woman in elaborately beaded traditional clothing "of Missisauga" [sic] (Clothing now in the American Museum of Natural History, NYC). She wears an [sic] beaded bandolier bag, and is standing in front of a wooden cabin.[158]

The caption provided the lead I needed, and I began looking through the AMNH online database. As I looked through what seemed like a thousand images, because I didn't know how to search the database effectively, I finally arrived at items with lineage to Muncey. There were over 50 items that I initially tagged and there were some that I missed because the database spelled Muncey more than one way. Some items I grasped to make sense of through small images and

[158] Image description. National Museum of the American Indian Archives. Image Number N03009.

incomplete descriptions. Many of the gete-anishinaabeg I flagged for further study would be the same pieces I visited during my trip to the AMNH in July 2022. However, at this point, the AMNH database did not provide any information, other than location, connecting the gete-anishinaabeg in their collections to the numbered list in Harrington's ledger notebook. Fortunately, I would find this information from the AMNH Archives during my site visit.

Before I discuss the gete-anishinaabeg at AMNH, I want to share a little more about Harrington's ledger notebook. There are 173 handwritten pages and within these pages are 434 entries documenting the things he purchased and who he purchased them from, ceremonies he observed, and languages he recorded. This ledger notebook does not act as a journal for his thoughts and observations during his expedition. I hope that a diary or journal will emerge as I continue my research. Most entries in the ledger notebook contained one item from one individual, but in many cases, he purchased multiple items from the same person. For example, Mrs. Mary French, listed as being Ojib [sic], sold Harrington a pack strap, wooden bowl, paddle, 2 war clubs and a skimmer for maple sugar for $3.25.[159] Others sold more. All of the items in the notebook offer a glimpse into ancestral and familial practices of making. There were, however, a handful of entries that caught my immediate attention in addition to the Betsy Hough maskisnan and the woman in image N03009.

The first entry that caught my attention was number 66. In this entry Harrington wrote: "Julia Delary [sic], Ojibwe. Pipe Tomahawk-wagakdoos pwagin. 2.00"[160] which can be seen in Figure 26. Harrington's handwriting can be difficult to decipher. It looks like he wrote Delary, which I am interpreting as Deleary, since there are other Deleary names documented in his notebook.

[159] Mark Raymond Harrington Notebook. National Museum of the American Indian, NMAI.AC.001_182_02, page 29.
[160] Ibid, page 66.

Deleary has also been spelled many ways depending on the family. The second entry of interest is number 91. Harrington writes, "91. Liza Delairy, Ojibwa. mish kimut. Panther figure. 2.00"[161] and can be seen in Figure 27. In this entry, the word "mish kimut" refers to a bag. In looking to the Ojibwa People's dictionary, mashkimod translates to "a bag, a sack."[162] The following entry, number 92 was also of interest because Harrington bought 2 brooches from Amos Deleary for 1.25 at Muncey, Ontario. These three entries provided a point of reference for me, and I knew I was looking for a pipe, a bag, and brooches. I had many lingering questions, but as I prepared for my visit at the AMNH I knew I needed to figure out how to match up the gete-anishinaabeg listed in Harrington's ledger notebook to the items in the AMNH collection.

The things that Harrington acquired during his expedition in 1907 originated from many First Nations in Ontario such as Oneida Nation of the Thames, Six Nations of the Grand River, St. Regis, Cattaraugus, Moraviantown, Munsee-Delaware Nation, and Chippewas of that Thames First Nation. Many of the ancestral belongings are housed at the AMNH and many others held at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History. Harrington's collecting expedition resulted in the acquisition of numerous household items such as spoons and bowls, garments made by his request, 2 complete beaded outfits, moccasins, masks, drumsticks, pipes, war clubs, and many other items that could have been used in ceremony or gatherings.

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[161] Ibid, 38.

[162] Ojibwa People's Dictionary. "Mashkimod." Accesssed June 25, 2023. https://ojibwe.lib.umn.edu/search?utf8=✓&q=bag&commit=Search&type=english

Locating gete-anishinaabeg at the AMNH

In the collections area, I was allowed to work at my own pace, however I felt unsure and insecure being in a space where things are organized to be examined and observed. Prayers and songs that I sing privately or amongst kin were on display in this space as I reconciled what it meant for me to reconnect and visit with the things my ancestors created. I offered my semaa and prayer discreetly and often before I entered the museum. As I began to work, I would hum and sing quietly and intimately while looking closely at the stories and knowledge expertly crafted by and into the gete-anishinaabeg I visited with. During my time in the collections, others were researching in the area as well and I was surrounded by ancestral items from other parts of the world. Other scholars in the vicinity played classical music which permeated the rooms, and I couldn't help but feel reminded of the harm and violence colonialism and scholarly fields such as anthropology and archaeology have enacted upon Indigenous lands, bodies, and relations.

Most of the items in the collection acquired by Harrington, to my knowledge, have never been visited by our home community until now. After a visit to the AMNH archives, I located an incomplete listing of the original numbering system which linked many, but not all of the Deshkan Ziibiing gete-anishinaabeg at AMNH to those that were listed in Harringtons notes. In the following sections I highlight three Deshkan Ziibiing Anishinaabeg whose belongings were purchased by Harrington and now reside at the AMNH: Betsy Hough (Huff), Mrs. John Henry, and Julia Deleary.

Betsy Hough (Huff)[163]

Some of the very first items I spent time with were the makizinan. The smallest, made for a toddler, was a single leather makizin (50.1/1485 A; see Figure 28). A slightly larger, but still made for a young child, single makizin with a beaded black velvet vamp (50.1/1485 B; see Figure 29). The only pair of the bunch was a split toe makizinan (50.1/1484 A and B; see Figure 30). However, upon closer inspection of the split toe makizinan, handwriting on the inner sole of the makizin reads, "596, Onondaga." There was another pair of makizinan (50.1/1497 A and B; see Figure 31) in this collection, that also had a primary numbering system written on the outer right side of the makizin which read, "813 – Ojibwe" (see Figure 32). The style and technique of makizinan 50.1/1497 A and B as seen in Figure 31 resembles the careful and uniform stitches of the puckers that are sewn along the vamp of the single toddler makizin, 50.1/1485 A in Figure 28. I think that the "812 – Ojibwe" pair of makizin (50.1/1497 A and B) is one of the original 4 makizinan that Harrington documented in his notebook as being from Betsy Hough. A description from an archived AMNH catalogue states the following:

> 50.1/1484-5ab (813) Four child's moccasins MUK I SUN UN Ojibway
> One pair and two odd, all used by the same child in three different stages of growth. Typical eastern Ojibway pattern. From Betsey Hough [sic], Muncey Reserve, Ontario, Canada. Collected by M. R. Harrington.[164]

Mrs. John Henry

In NMAI Image Number N03009 which can be seen in Figure 25, a woman dressed in elaborately decorated garments stands on a step in front of a clapboard house. She wears a claw necklace and carries a bag with a snakeskin strap. In NMAI's photographic record, she is not

[163] The name Hough can be found in the community today but is spelled Huff.
[164] 1910-41. Division of Anthropology Archives. American Museum of Natural History.

identified. However, a chain of letters written in 1989 track the research of Michelle Hamilton, a legal secretary from Boston, Massachusetts, who sought to recreate the garments and locate the identity of the woman in the photograph. In a letter dated March 31, 1989, Hamilton wrote to Beulah Kechego at Chippewas of the Thames First Nation and provided details about Peter Jones (Kahkewaquonaby), the Mississauga Methodist missionary, and his half-brother George Henry (Maungwudaus). Hamilton wrote,

> I am not quite finished researching this, but based on what I know so far, I think I will sew the costume I saw at the American Museum. I'm almost certain that it was a theatrical costume belonging to Hannah (Mrs. George) Henry for her tour of Europe. I believe the dress must have been passed down to John Henry's wife. Since Mrs. John Henry was alive in 1910, and the tour was 1844-1851, I think John Henry must have married a younger woman sometime after he came back. I would like to confirm that if possible, although even among white settlements at that time, many records simply don't exist any more, if they ever did, and it may be impossible. Perhaps your land records person will turn that up eventually.[165]

It is unclear whether Hamilton received a response. However, she proceeded to create a replica of the garments in doll form (see Figure 33). Looking back to Harrington's notebook, a Mrs. John Henry sold the garments that the woman in NMAI Image Number N03009 is wearing. One can only assume that the women is Mrs. John Henry. However, I think it is important to keep in mind that the photographs Harrington created reveal that the items he purchased from one person were used as props for other sitters in his photographs. The items that Mrs. John Henry sold Harrington can be seen in Figures 34 and 35. However, in looking closely at Figure 34, the words "pictured" appear to be written above Mrs. John Henry's name. The items sold to Harrington are transcribed from his notebook and located below without the accompanying Ojibwe words and prices:

69. Mrs John Henry, Muncey, Ojibwe, R.O

[165] Michelle Hamilton letter to Beulah Kechego. March 31, 1989. AMNH Division of Anthropology Archives. 1910-41.

A. Wooden bowl
B. Spoon
C. Spoon
D. Bowl
E. necklace
F. Moccasin strips
G. Gaiters
H. Arm Bands
I. Shoulder Bag
J. Collar
K. Waist
L. Over skirt
M. Skirt
N. Brooch[166]

I visited the garments in the AMNH collection and they are beyond beautiful. The over skirt (50.1/1451) can be seen in Figure 36. The under skirt (50.1/1450) can be seen in Figure 37 and a detail image of the ribbon work and beadwork can be seen in Figure 38. The shoulder bag (50.1/1458) can be seen in Figure 39. I wasn't able to locate any additional information in the archives pertaining to the outfit. To add a final note, Hannah Henry who is mentioned in Michelle Hamilton's letter has a headdress and snakeskin bag at the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM). During our group visit to the ROM in January 2023, it was mentioned by persons in our group that John Henry's wife was Nancy.

Julia Deleary

The item I was most excited to connect with and learn about was the "wagakdoos pwagin-tomahawk pipe" that Harrington acquired from Julia Deleary. The pipe (50.1/1487) can be seen in Figure 40. A catalogue record from the AMNH archives provided a short description of the pipe.

50.1/1487 (778) Tomahawk Pipe WA GAK DOS PWAGUN Ojibway

[166] Entry number 69 from Mark Raymond Harrington Notebook. National Museum of the American Indian, NMAI.AC.001_182_02, page 26 and 27.

> Made of lead, serviceable only as a pipe, the hatch blade being ornamented only. Old. Typical carving on stem. From Julia De Leary, Muncey Reserve, Ontario, Canada. Collection by M. R. Harrington.[167]

After visiting the pipe, I had to find out if the Julia Deleary that sold this pipe was my maternal great-great-grandmother. After visiting the AMNH, I travelled to Deshkan Ziibiing and met with family who shared photographs and stories about the Julia Deleary in our line (see Figure 41). When I arrived, I reached out to my Aunt Sherry Waddilove (neé Deleary) to see if she would participate in an interview. After a few missed connections she agreed to an interview, and we met in January 2023. Sherry is one of my Grandfather Frank's younger sisters. Their mother, Gladys, was, to my knowledge, the oldest daughter of Julia Deleary and Joshua Madison, both from Deshkan Ziibiing. Julia was born on April 8, 1893, and died August 29, 1969.
In 1907, at the time Harrington visited Deshkan Ziibiing, Julia would have been 14 years old. I'm not sure what circumstances would prompt a 14-year-old to sell a tomahawk pipe, but there could have been a number of reasons given the location and time period. I once heard a family story about Julia being a pipe carrier and when I asked Aunt Sherry, she told me that my grandfather mentioned that Julia had and smoked pipes, which was probably common in those days. Julia kept them on a table and they weren't allowed to touch them. Later in life, Julia would marry George Nicholas from Munsee-Delaware Nation and they would have one daughter named Faye and two sons, Lloyd and Linwood (Boney). Aunt Sherry also shared that Julia was a basket maker and recalled the following memory,

> Grandma Julia... would always be coming around. I can remember we'd be playing and she would be sitting where daddy cut wood. We called it the chip yard. She would be sitting on the ground and daddy would go get her these trees. They were soft. Was it ash? I forget. Daddy would be helping her and she would be sitting there weaving baskets.

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[167] 1910-41. Division of Anthropology Archives. American Museum of Natural History.

> Making baskets to get ready to go to London to the market and sell them. That's why I think I love baskets. That's my connection to her.[168]\

Months later, as I was conducting genealogical research, I found another Julia Deleary (neé Henry). Julia Henry was a daughter to John Henry and possibly the woman in NMAI Image Number N03009. Julia Henry married a Mr. William Deleary and it is possible that she sold the pipe to Harrington. As my research continues, I hope to uncover additional information about either Julia and the connections they may have to this pipe. This process brough me closer to learning more about and ancestors and the gete-anishinaabeg from Deshkan Ziibiing.

Visiting the Deshkan Ziibiing gete-anishinaabeg at the AMNH was an emotional and transformative experience and the collection represents many other family lineages that I hope to untangle. I hope to organize a visit to the American Museum of Natural History with my relatives from Deshkan Ziibiing in the near future.

Western University Archives

I had been in contact with Leslie Thomas, Archivist at Western University Library and Archives in London since the summer of 2022. She has been very helpful with my research request. In our initial conversation she told me that the archives are very colonial and that it is difficult to locate any materials related to a specific First Nation. Over the last few months, as she is working to correct this gap in the archive, she uncovered a box of photographs associated to Muncey and digitized audio tapes from a film produced in the 1980s titled *Keeper of the Ways*, a film focusing on Indigenous art and art making practices of Deshkan Ziibiing makers. A handful of women from Chippewas of the Thames First Nation were featured in this film and

[168] Sherry Waddilove. Interview with the author. January 13, 2023.

there are audio tapes from their initial interviews. Leslie Thomas had those tapes prioritized and recently sent me the digitized audio files for COTTFN members: Maxine Hendrick, Denise Beeswax, Rosemary Albert, Audrey Wilson-baa, and Roberta Miskokomon-baa. I have listened to one tape and will begin assessing possible usage. The box of photographs Leslie located have been digitized and are now available online.[169]

Deshkan Ziibiing Anishinaabeg in Collections

In January 2023, before the close of my research journey, I was accompanied by five women from Chippewas of the Thames First Nation. Gina McGahey, Anishinaabe'aadziwin Director; Nancy Deleary Anishinaabe'aadziwin Culture Coordinator; Sarah Riley, Anishinaabe'aadziwin Administrative Assistant; Maxine Hendrick, elder and community knowledge holder, and Betsy Kechego, Anishinaabemowin Adult Language Instructor and Chippewas of the Thames First Nation council member joined me on a two-week research journey to locate Deshkan Ziibiing gete-anishinaabeg. Inspired by the research I am conducting, they wanted to learn about my methodological approach. The time I spent with them as we visited the Canadian Museum of History, Library and Archives Canada, United Church of Canada Archives, and the Royal Ontario Museum was invaluable. They encouraged generative conversations, shared many stories and lots of laughs, and were instrumental in the production of knowledge as we navigated through museums and archives. Their participation in this research

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[169] Muncey Photograph Collection. Western Libraries Digitized Collection: https://verne.lib.uwo.ca/s/wl-digitized-collections/item-set/5799?fbclid=IwAR1HSjE0luaM59U6LQeg5EtxxaOOsCi_64s5haqyY8XTAX3Z7w4H837bLpU

process encouraged a unique approach to community-based research. In this section, I highlight our visit at the Canadian Museum of History (CMH) in Gatineau, Quebec.

Before our visit to CMH, I made contact with Salina Kemp (Mi'kmaw) and John Moses (Six Nations of the Grand River), Director of Repatriation and Indigenous Relations. Salina compiled a list of gete-anishinaabeg for us to visit and both Salina and John treated our group to a tour of the museum and collections. Salina selected items from the collection and had them ready for us when we arrived. Some of the items she selected for us were quite unexpected like a Pepsi can shaker (III-G-1543; see Figure 42) and a Homeland Security t-shirt (III-G-1808).

Gina chose two items to draw: the Homeland Security t-shirt and a large wooden bowl (III-G-40). In Figure 43, Gina sketched out the t-shirt and added the following statement.

> My Thoughts
> Our ancestors fought for our survival in a most difficult time. Today we continue the fight but through a different way. We use education as a gun to learn the white man ways to use against him by lobbying, protest to protect the land, our water and fire. My life lead me down this road to fight for an equal education as the rest of society have. Also to relearn what we lost and get it back. I respect the journey I have taken in this life to advance and to help others in relearning [the] ways [of] our ancestors have done.

In her second drawing which can be seen in Figure 44, Gina connected the following words to the bowl: wash corn, gathering food, making bread, washing. She also added the following statement,

> [Versatility] for one bowl. Symbolize our own life. To be able to pass down our knowledges of gathering food, making of traditional [material] to make the bowl. To share and nourish our family and people. To carry the water to help healing process. Everything has a role and responsibilities. We still do it today. We are versatile people and will use all the things we learned and will [survive] for many years to come.

Nancy also created a few drawings, but one that stood out was of a quillbox with a maple leaf on the lid (III-G-1783 a-b; Figure 45). It reminded her of summers spent with her grandmother Eva at the Chippewas of Rama First Nation. Eva was a maker, she could sew and made quill boxes

and she fostered and encouraged a family of artists. Quill boxes served as practical containers, souvenir items, and highly sought after collector pieces created and sold by Anishinaabeg across the Great Lakes Region. Making a quillbox involves layering porcupine quills over birch bark to create delicate and intricate designs and patterns. Nancy's drawing can be seen in Figure 46, and includes the following statement,

> Birchbark Quill Basket – III-G-1783 a-b box. Anishinaabe.
> Very much like the basket my grandmother Eva Jane Shilling made from Rama First Nation in 1970s with Aunt Hannah Joe, Aunt Pearl Shilling. Basket making bees were held at each others home to make these baskets for tourists.

As a young girl, Nancy remembers attending quilling bees with her grandmother Eva. Quilling bees brought groups of women together to share the responsibility of creating a quill box to sell at markets. One person would construct the box, another would add designs, and so on. The work was shared as they visited alongside each other, sharing stories, and getting caught up on the latest news and happenings in the community. Gathering at quilling bees became an important process of maintaining kinship networks and inspiring little minds in attendance with creativity and curiosity. At the end of our visit at the CMH, Betsy shared a song with us. Using the Pepsi can shaker, she sang the Mino-Bimaadiziwn song, inspiring us to live mino-bimaadiziwin, living a good life. It was a great way to end our day at the CMH collections.

The visits I outlined in this chapter represent a small portion of our experiences with the gete-anishinaabeg we spent time with. This journey provided me, and my relatives, with an opportunity to explore what collections-based research methods looked like for us as Anishinaabeg. I look forward to the next steps in this research as I explore what accessibility looks and feels like. The gete-anishinaabeg we encountered reminds us of our gikendaasowin and dibaajmowin and the beautiful things our ancestors made.

FIGURES

Figure 12, Aiden Deleary in the Field Museum Anthropology Collections assessing and measuring beaded strap (2007.4243 341623)
Photo taken July 2, 2020 in the Field Museum Collections area
Photograph by Mary Deleary

Figure 13, Pelican Bill Pouch (15369), n.d.
Possibly Ojibwa from Manitoba.
Field Museum Collections
Photograph by Mary Deleary

Figure 14, Rabbit fur hood and mittens, ca. 1900
At top: Rabbit fur hood (16356)
At bottom: Rabbit Fur mittens (16358.1 and .2)
Field Museum Collections
Photograph by Mary Deleary

Figure 15, Beaded Knife Sheath (16354), ca. 1900
Field Museum Collections
Photograph by Mary Deleary

Figure 16, Club (15371), ca. 1893
Field Museum Collections
Photograph by Mary Deleary

Figure 17, Detail image of Club (15371), ca. 1893
Field Museum Collections
Photograph by Mary Deleary

Figure 18, Nancy Deleary (left) and Mary Deleary (right) drawing in the Field Museum Collections, July 13, 2022
Photograph by Debra Yepa-Pappan

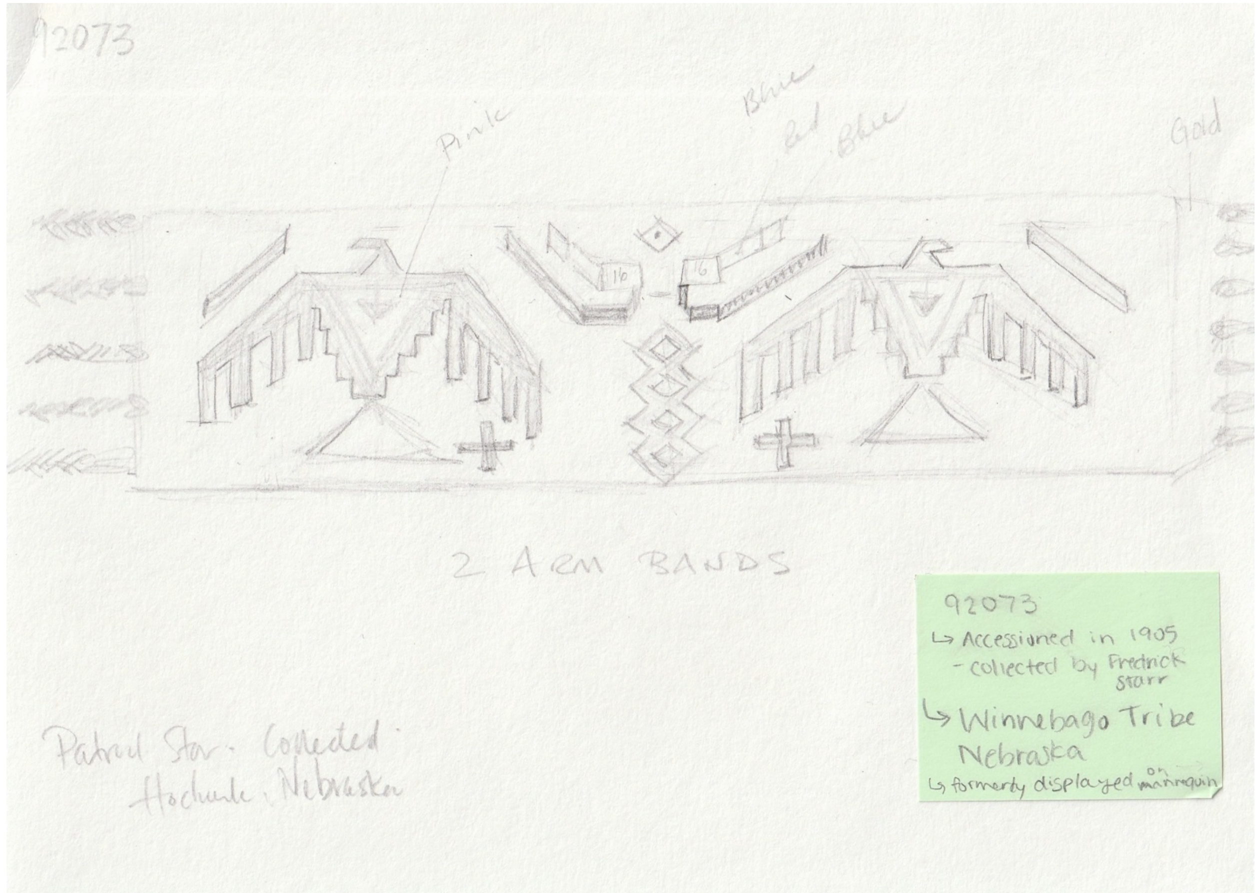

Figure 19, Sketch #1 of Ho-Chunk arm bands (92073), 2022
Nancy Deleary
Collection of Mary Deleary

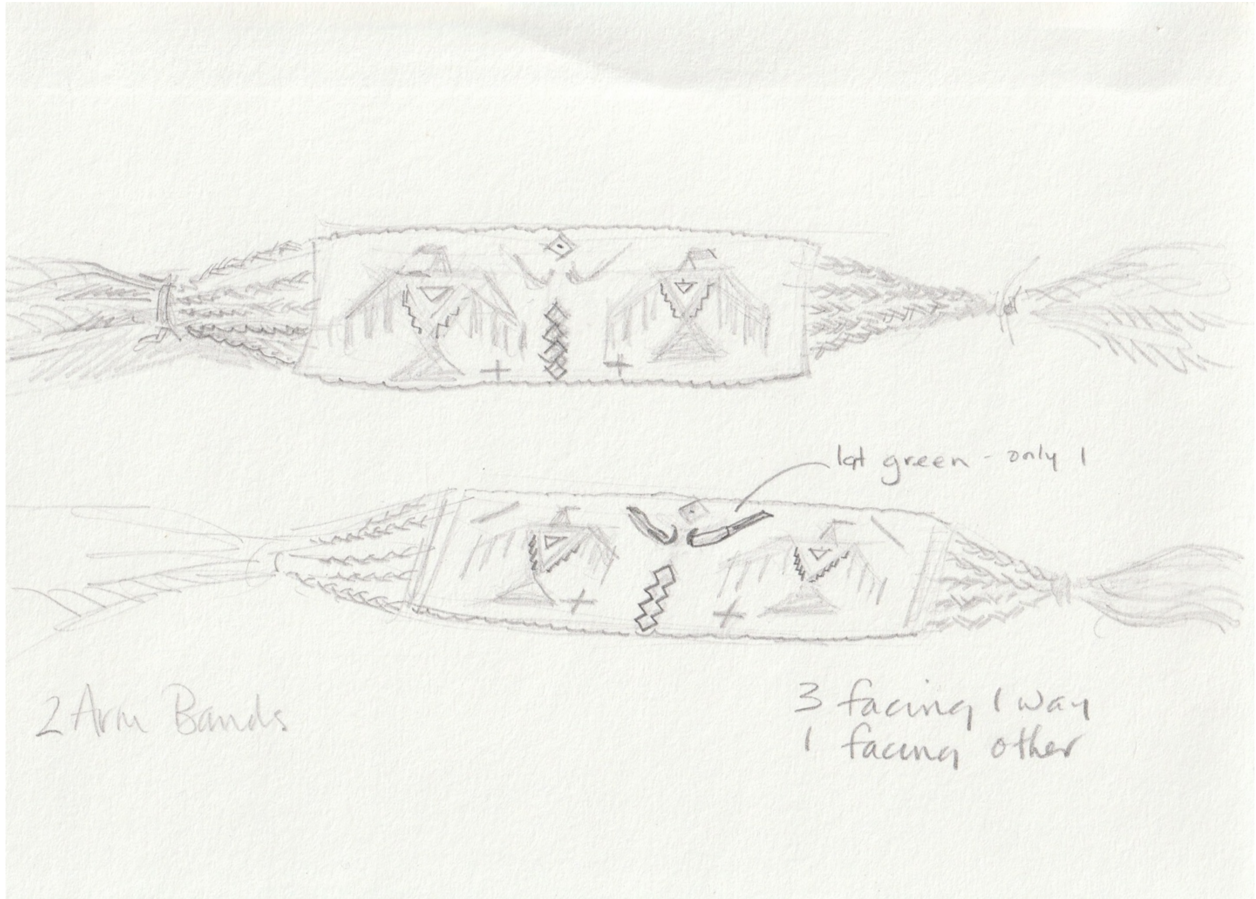

Figure 20, Sketch #2 of Ho-Chunk arm bands (92073), 2022
Nancy Deleary
Collection of Mary Deleary

Figure 21, Drawing of Mary and Debra, July 13, 2022
Nancy Deleary
Collection of Mary Deleary

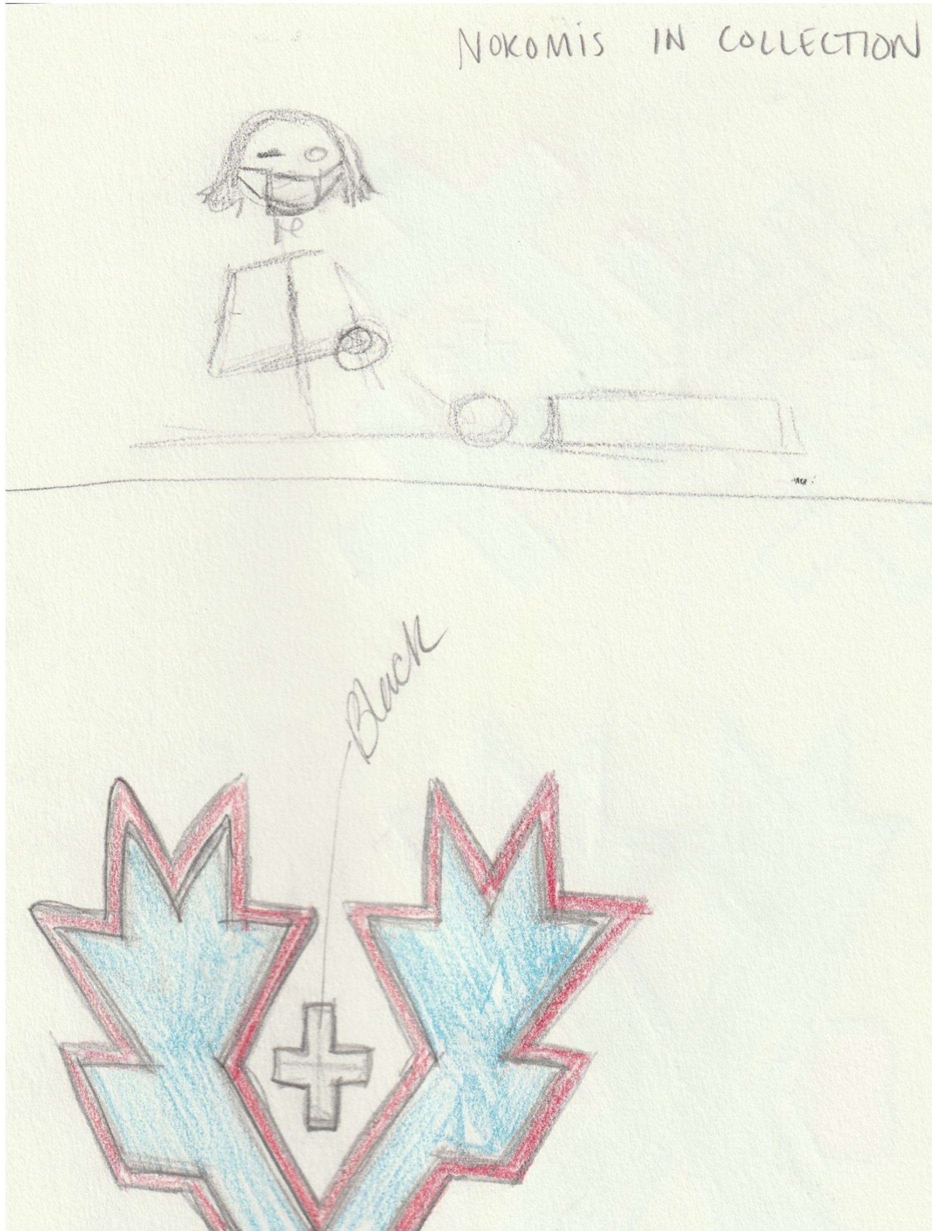

Figure 22, Nokomis in Collection, July 13, 2022
Mary Deleary
Collection of Mary Deleary

102 William Tomigo, Muncey
club, puhá wēs 50

103. Betsy Hough Chippewa
A sāg ga ban mūt 1.00
B 4 mukisunun .40
C { jīn gwi gwēsh gūn, deer jaw scraper .50
D { tī san quē gun, husk splitter .10
2.00

Mrs Mary Ann [illegible]
104 Sho ne o's [illegible]-
Chippewa go win
large brooch 2.00

105 Mary Brigham
A husk cutter } .50
Chippewa B spoon }

Figure 23, Page 42 from Mark Raymond Harrington Notebook
National Museum of the American Indian, Smithson Institution (NMAI.AC.001_182_02). Photo by NMAI Photo Services.

Figure 24, “Tinted Lantern Slide, Eastern Ojibwe Woman “Of Missisauga,” 1907
Munceytown, Ontario. Photo by Mark R. Harrington. L00243.”
in *Native Universe: Voices of Indian America* by Clifford E. Trafzer

Figure 25, Photograph description:"Woman in elaborately beaded traditional clothing "of Missisauga" [sic] (Clothing now in the American Museum of Natural History, NYC). She wears an [sic] beaded bandolier bag, and is standing in front of a wooden cabin," 1907.
National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution (N03009)

same 3.00

1 nekek nagon for ... .20

1 splint cutter, na wish e, gun 30

K worked knife wau ko mon .40

3.90

66. Julia Delay

Ojibwe

Pipe tomahawk –

wagakdoos pwagin

2.00

67. Mrs. Jake Fisher

A pskitth Ojibwe

or nekek nagon .50

B wik wae (box) 50

for dried green corn or maple sugar 1.00

68. Sarah Seneca

Ojibwe

A ligwa emkwon 25

B ksebe ne gun .15

40

Figure 26, Page 25 from Mark Raymond Harrington Notebook

National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution (NMAI.AC.001_182_02).
Photo by NMAI Photo Services.

B little bowl 50

C husk cutter 25
pis kwē gún
1.00

91, Liza Delaney Ogtown
mush kimut 2,00
panther figure

92. Amos DeLeary
Muncey Ont.
2 brooches 1,25

93. Samuel John, Muncey
1 needle for deer skin, 25
nam bi la mē guan

Figure 27, Page 38 from Mark Raymond Harrington Notebook.
National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution (NMAI.AC.001_182_02).
Photo by NMAI Photo Services.

Figure 28, Single puckered maksin (50.1/1485) ca. 1900s
American Museum of Natural History, Division of Anthropology
Photograph by Mary Deleary

Figure 29, Single maksin with a beaded black velvet vamp (50.1/1485 B), ca. 1900s
American Museum of Natural History, Division of Anthropology
Photograph by Mary Deleary

Figure 30, Pair of split toe moccasins (50.1/1484 A and B), ca. 1900s
American Museum of Natural History, Division of Anthropology
Photograph by Mary Deleary

Figure 31, Pair of makizinan (50.1 1497 A and B), ca. 1900s
American Museum of Natural History, Division of Anthropology
Photograph by Mary Deleary

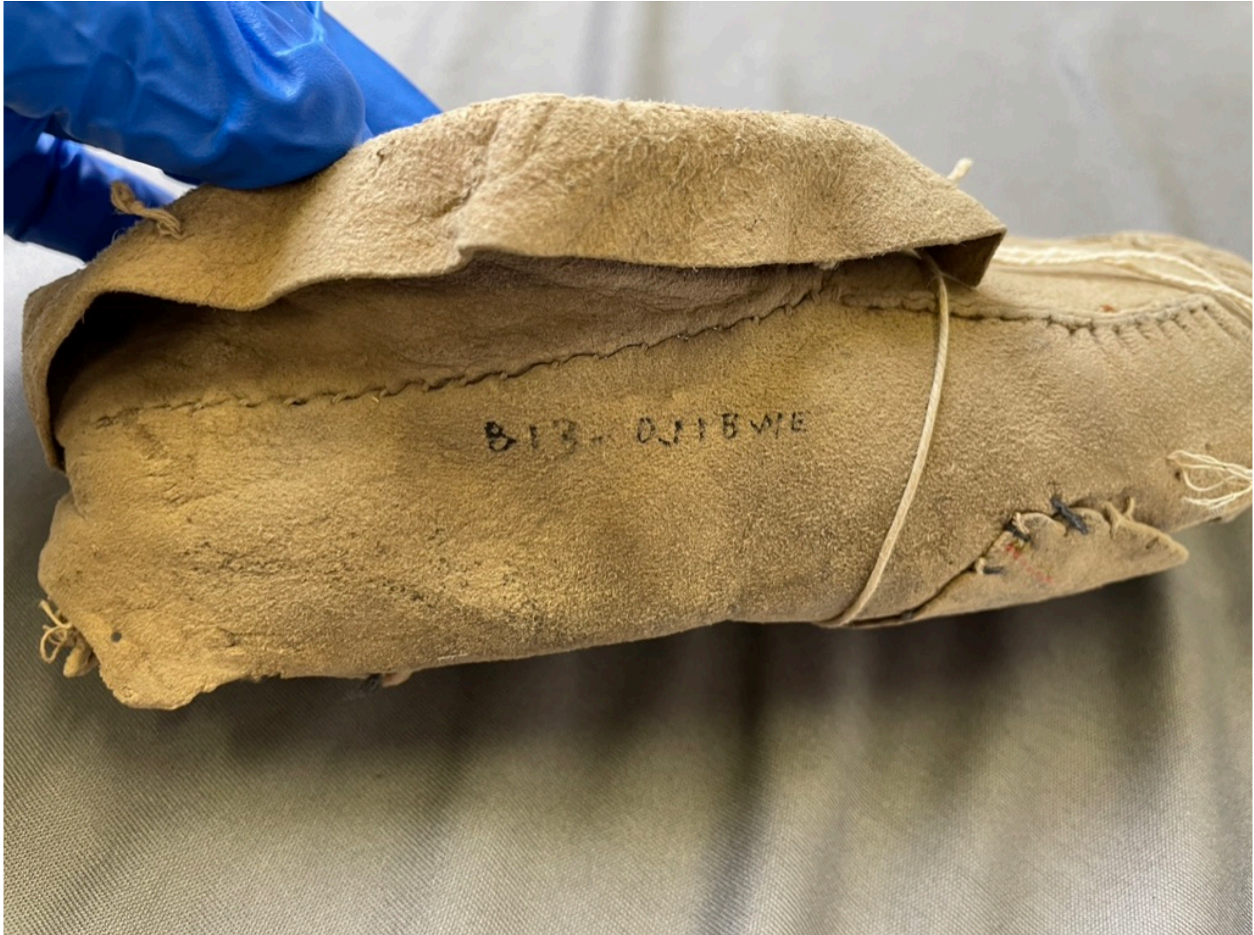

Figure 32, "813 – Ojibwe" written on the side of a pair of makizinan (50.1 1497 A and B), ca. 1900s
American Museum of Natural History, Division of Anthropology
Photograph by Mary Deleary

Figure 33, "Doll Costume made by Michelle Hamilton, 1990. Copied from Ojibwa (E. Canada) costume of: Mrs. Chief John Henry, 50.1 / 1448 -1554. See accession file 1910-41, E. Tefft"
Photograph collection of the American Museum of Natural History,
Division of Anthropology Archives, 1910-41

69 Mrs John Henry Ojibwe Muncey R.O.

A wooden Bowl 75

ligwa nagon

B " Spoon 10

" em quon

C " Spoon 10

" em quon

D " Bowl 25

" nagon

E necklace 75

nip kwa a gun

F moccasins strips 10

G. Gaiters 50

Dah sun

H Arm bands 25

Figure 34, Page 26 from Mark Raymond Harrington Notebook
National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution (NMAI.AC.001_182_02).
Photo by NMAI Photo Services.

2.80

I Shoulder bag 1.00

shkíbitaugun

J Collar 2.50

nabkóagun

K Waist 3.50

pis kóagun

L Over Skirt 75

kis kitchi wai á un

M Skirt 5.00

kó tás

N Broach {1.25 / 1.10

shó ni a'ns

16.00

17.00

Figure 35, Page 26 from Mark Raymond Harrington Notebook
National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution (NMAI.AC.001_182_02).
Photo by NMAI Photo Services.

Figure 36, Over skirt (50.1/1451), ca. 1900s
American Museum of Natural History, Division of Anthropology
Photograph by Mary Deleary

Figure 37, Under skirt (50.1/1450), ca. 1900s
American Museum of Natural History, Division of Anthropology
Photograph by Mary Deleary

Figure 38, Detail image of under skirt (50.1/1450), ca 1900s
American Museum of Natural History, Division of Anthropology
Photograph by Mary Deleary

Figure 39, Beaded bag with snakeskin strap (50.1/1458), ca. 1900s
American Museum of Natural History, Division of Anthropology
Photograph by Mary Deleary

Figure 40, Tomahawk Pipe, front and back (50.1/1487), ca. 1900s
American Museum of Natural History, Division of Anthropology
Photograph by Mary Deleary

Figure 41, Photograph of Julia Nicholas (Deleary), n.d.
Collection of Sherry Waddilove

Figure 42, Pepsi Can Shaker (III-G-1543), n.d.
Canadian Museum of History
Photograph by Mary Deleary

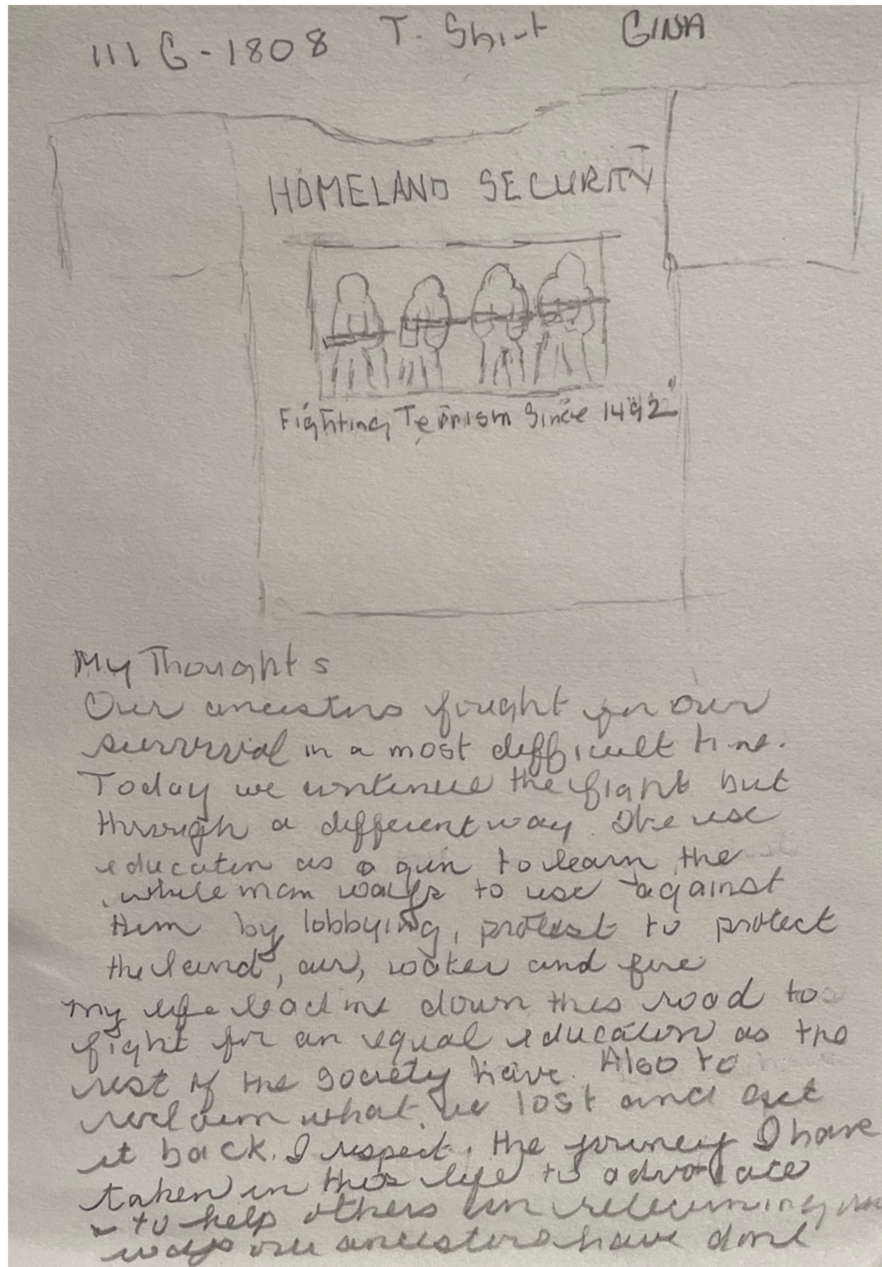

Figure 43, Drawing of Homeland Security t-shirt (III-G-1808) at the Canadian Museum of History, 2023
Gina McGahey
Collection of Mary Deleary

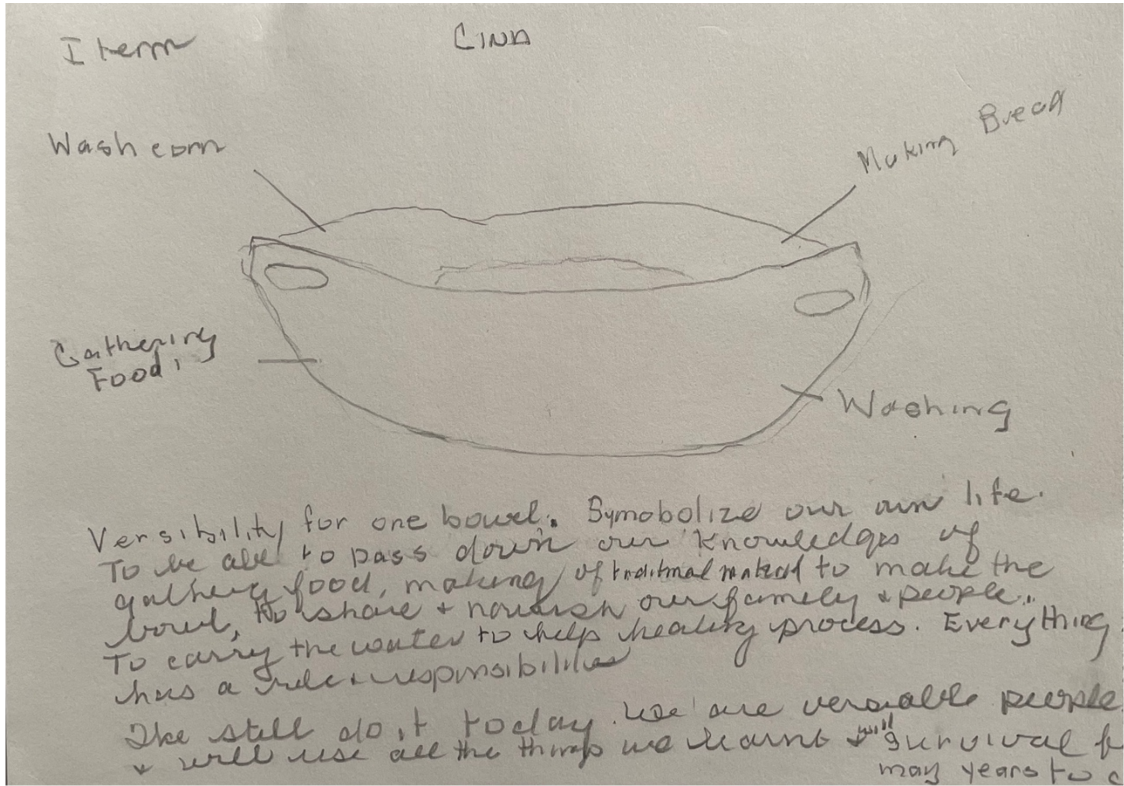

Figure 44, Drawing of wooden bowl (III-G-40) at the Canadian Museum of History, 2023
Gina McGahey
Collection of Mary Deleary

Figure 45, Porcupine and quill box (III-G-1783 a-b), n.d.
Canadian Museum of History
Photograph by Mary Deleary

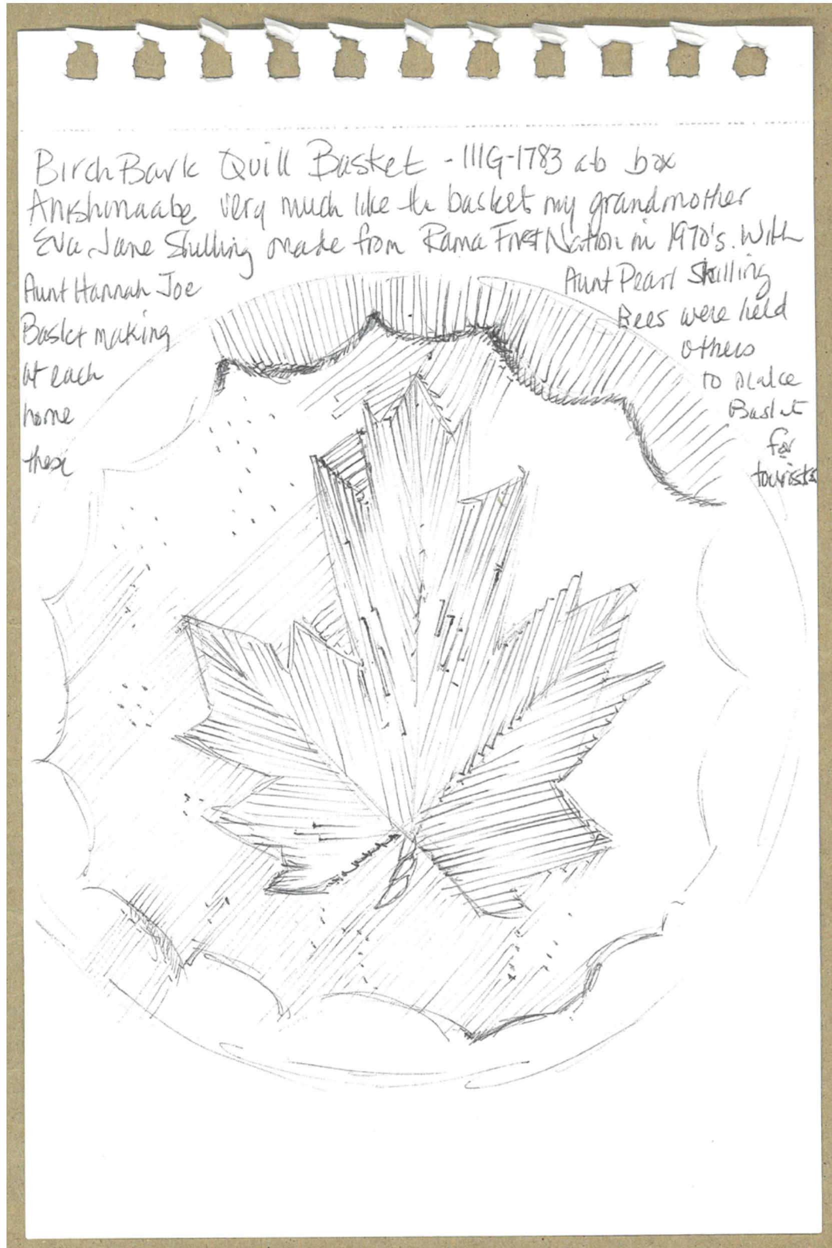

Figure 46, Drawing of Birchbark Quill Basket – III-G-1783 a-b at the Canadian Museum of History, 2023
Nancy Deleary
Collection of Mary Deleary

NIIWIN (FOUR): MAKING ANISHINAABE'AADZIWIN: CONVERSATIONS ABOUT MEMORY, HISTORY, AND MAKING ON DESHKAN ZIIBIING

As I was learning about the gete-anishinaabeg in museums and archives, it became necessary to foster relationships and conversations with family and community at Deshkan Ziibiing to learn about the histories, stories, and practices of making and (re)making that are taking place in our First Nation. I also wanted to become better acquainted with personal and family stories; stories that have the potential to highlight making as being Anishinaabe and stories that embody rematriation. This chapter is dedicated to the Anishinaabe kwe of Deshkan Ziibiing who welcomed me into their homes, visited with me at the kitchen table, and recalled stories and memories of their families and communities. I weave their experiences and memories with my own as I embarked on a journey to learn stories of Deshkan Ziibiing.

Recovering gete-anishinaabeg and the stories they carry has been a process of not just locating materials, but a process of recovering and reconnecting to our ancestors. As I visited gete-anishinaabeg in museum collections I learned that many have not been visited in over 100 years[170] and it became increasingly evident that the stories and abundance of relationships they represent were systematically removed and disconnected, but not entirely erased. The silencing and absence of our histories, is one that removes all instances of memory of the maker, place

[170] During my visit to the AMNH in 2022 I asked the Collections Research Assistant if there was anywhere in the database that could tell us whether anyone, researchers or community members, have visit the collection. To her knowledge, one representative from the Munsee Delaware Nation had visited some of the items in the Harrington and Tefft Collections.

origin, and the outcomes of such harm. A process that not only coincides with the residual effects of colonization and settler colonialism, but also a process of colonial unknowing. Colonial unknowing is described as rendering "unintelligible the entanglements of racialization and colonization, occluding the mutable historicity of colonial structures and attributing finality to events of conquest and dispossession."[171] It describes a process of obstructing Indigenous life, and memories, while erasing and ignoring colonial impact and responsibility. Colonial unknowing dismisses the harm that has been done and it has become the work of this dissertation to unravel the harm that museums, their agents, and their collecting and exhibiting practices have done and continue to perpetuate.

Once gete-anishinaabeg were removed from Anishinaabe families, new interpretations and labels were applied over time usually without input from the people or place of origin. Such interpretations were often non-specific and gete-anishinaabeg were consumed and placed under over-generalized categories and narratives of a disconnected past. When I visited the American of Museum of Natural History (AMNH) in 2022, I was elated to find names from the Deshkan Ziibiing area in their archival records. Names that were no longer connected to the items on exhibit or in the museums database. The names of Deshkan Ziibiing gete-anishinaabeg, ancestors of present-day descendants, and their stories and belongings were stripped of any connection to place, home, and family. The museum's archive is where I uncovered the information I needed to connect the names listed in Harrington's ledger notebook to the items in the AMNH collection. Once I located this information, I wanted to immediately begin untangling the massive amounts of relationships, biographies, genealogies, and family connections that were reflected in this

[171] Manu Vimalassery, Juliana Hu Pegues, and Alyosha Goldstien. "Introduction of Colonial Unknowing," *Theory and Event*. 19, no. 4 (2016). https://muse-jhu-edu.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/issue/35136

collection. While it is not something I have been able to accomplish in this iteration of research, it is an undertaking that I plan to continue in the future. I did, however, carry the information I acquired from the museums and collections I visited into the discussions I had with interview participants at Deshkan Ziibiing. Hoping to spark memory and recognition of names listed in the Deshkan Ziibiing Collection at the AMNH I carried the information I gathered about gete-anishinaabeg back to Deshkan Ziibiing and foregrounded them in the interviews I hosted.

As I determined my interview participants for this project, I wanted to speak with Anishinaabe kwe who are artists, makers, cultural knowledge holders, storytellers, creative writers, and researchers. They work for and with the community and their zaagidiwin[172] for Deshkan Ziibiing is apparent in their presence, dedication, and ways in which they give back. In the Deshkan Ziibiing Anishinaabemowin Pocket Book, Mndimoyewi translates to "S/he is an elderly woman."[173] Elder refers to someone of greater age and in Indigenous communities it is often associated with wisdom and knowledge and denotes teaching responsibilities. Mindimooyenh, pronounced min-di-moo-yeh, a term closely related to Mndimoyewi, is defined in the Ojibwe People's Dictionary as "an old woman, an old lady" and is a "term of respect."[174] However, in the English language, both translations are without action, a key component of Anishinaabemowin. Anishinaabe kwe scholar Brenda J. Child (Red Lake Band of Chippewa), offers additional layers of meaning to enhance the complexity and understanding of Mindimooyenh. Child writes,

> Mindimooyenh, the Ojibwe term for a female elder, best embodies how Ojibwe society has traditionally perceived women's power. In the Ojibwe language, it literally refers to

[172] Zaagidiwin is love.
[173] Chippewas of the Thames First Nation. *Deshkan Ziibiing Anishinaabemowin Pocket Book*. 2020.
[174] The Ojibwe People's Dictionary. "Mindimooyenh." Accessed June 30, 2023. https://ojibwe.lib.umn.edu/main-entry/mindimooyenh-na

> "*one who holds things together"* [original emphasis] and is a category of distinction that honors the pivotal role occupied by fully mature women in social order.[175]

Child further adds, "through their labor and control over certain resources, women continually renewed relationships to their relatives in the human and spirit world."[176] This, as Child explains, emphasizes the power of women in Anishinaabe society and how they were revered by their families and communities. The most beautiful creations came to us through the stories, love, kindness, thoughtfulness, innovation, and strength of Mindimooyah in our families, the ones who hold our world together. With this in mind and based on their knowledge and work in the community, I had the greatest opportunity to visit with Donna Young, Maxine Hendrick, Sybil Young, Felicia Huff, Gina McGahey, Beverly Deleary, Candace Doxtator, Sherry Waddilove, and my mother Nancy Deleary. The knowledge they shared with me was integral for expanding and refining certain areas of my research focus. Visiting with these ladies was also good for my heart.

In preparation for the interviews, I received IRB approval to offer each interview participant an honorarium—a gift of gratitude for their time and knowledge. Offering honorariums to Indigenous knowledge and language holders for their participation in research is becoming a common practice and one that I advocate for when working with Indigenous communities. Not only does it offer monetary support for those who are already dealing with low economic opportunity in First Nations communities but honors the importance of trade and exchange for their stories. A common practice amongst Indigenous peoples. The history of extractive research practices has negatively impacted Indigenous communities and

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[175] Brenda J. Child. *Holding Our World Together: Ojibwe Women and the Survival of Community*. (New York: Penguin Group, 2012), 63-64.
[176] Ibid, 63-64.

disproportionally supports the researcher. The scholar then benefits and makes a living on the stories of Indigenous people. Margaret Kovach, Cree scholar and author of *Indigenous Methodologies: Characteristics, Conversations, and Contexts* writes, "For story to surface, there must be trust. Given the egregious past research practices in Indigenous communities, earning trust is critical and may take time, upsetting the efficiency variable of research timelines."[177] It became important for me to be dedicated and present during the interview phase of my research. It was also necessary to share with the interview participants, without taking too much of our interview time, my research as well as information and photos of gete-anishinaabeg I visited in my travels. Building trust also meant sharing about myself and the family I come from. Kovach refers to this process as self-location. Kovach writes,

> For many active in Indigenous research, this comes naturally, as a part of community protocol. The researcher's self-location provides an opportunity for the research participant to situate and assess the researcher's motivations for the research, thus beginning the relationship that is elemental to story-based methodology.[178]

Self-location became an important building block in relationship development and building upon stories that were shared. It was also critical for understanding and affirming my own positionality in this research process. A process that also embodies Biskaabiiyang methodology. I did not want to follow extractive research practices. I wanted to be respectful in my approach and honor the time and experiences that were shared with me. My respectful approach included offering an honorarium, agreeing to a place and time that was convenient and comfortable for the interview participants, offering food and drink when appropriate, and giving a handmade thank you card. In addition, I am preparing and editing the interview transcripts so that they are

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[177] Kovach, Margaret. *Indigenous Methodologies: Characters, Conversations, and Contexts*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 98.
[178] Ibid, 98.

accessible and easy to read. My goal is to give all the interview participants a bound copy of their interview. I also had to be flexible when it came to determining a meeting time. In one instance, a cousin invited me over at about 9 pm. It was late for my mother, but she agreed to join. We wandered over in our pajamas and had good visit that evening as we sipped on cedar tea.

I love to hear my family tell stories. They are animated and funny and are usually followed by lots of laughter and teasing. My Uncle Jody-baa told the best stories and he could really make my Grandma Jean laugh. I don't recall many stories being shared about Nanabush (also referred to as Waynaboozho or Nanabozho) or stories about our emergence and becoming Anishinaabe. We weren't explicitly taught what it meant to be Anishinaabe, but that doesn't mean it wasn't there. Occasionally, I would hear my Grandma Jean speak "Indian" to her sister Betty and I loved the way they would laugh as they visited. It was a rare opportunity to see, but I hold onto the memory fondly. What I heard were stories about life and growing up around Deshkan Ziibiing. Stories that are referred to as dibaajmowin,[179] which include narratives about history and life experiences. I remember hearing such stories while sitting up late with my grandparents at the kitchen table into the early hours of the morning. My presence gave them a reason to share stories and a set of legs to grab another beer from the fridge. By this time, however, their heavy partying days were coming to an end. I was witness to a calmer moment in time. I would also hear dibaajmowin when aunts and uncles would make early morning visits on the weekends. These visits were often unannounced, and when the doorbell rang we would scramble to look presentable. Storytelling traditions are not frozen in time. They are active and

[179] I rely on Wendy Makoons Genuisz and LeAnn Simpson's discussion of Dibaajmowin to inform my understanding. See "Our knowledge is not Primitive" and "The Gift is in the Making" for further discussion.

living and very much influenced by space, time, and people. The storytelling traditions that I witnessed did not follow a prescribed format or cultural protocol in the instances they were shared. Dibaajmowin emerged out of our relationships with one another. Hearing the dibaajmowin of our relatives opens an abundance of opportunities to learn and make meaning of our collective experiences. It also allows us to recall and remember the histories that have been misplaced or ignored. Storytelling practices have been silenced by colonization, systemic racism, and residential schools. I seek to acknowledge, reconcile, and understand the ways in which the dibaajmowin of my grandparents were shared with me, because perhaps it was the only way they knew how.

The dibaajmowin that were shared with me through the interviews I conducted at Deshkan Ziibiing between September 2022 and January 2023 are presented in this chapter to further illustrate what the practices of making looked like and felt like on Deshkan Ziibiing, how practices of making have been impacted by colonialism and settler colonialism, and to embrace the self-determination, resistance, survivance, and creativity of Deshkan Ziibiing Anishinaabeg. Throughout his narrative, I weave their stories with my own experience and process of making the journey to visit, learn, and hear the dibaajmowin of my relatives.

Beginning the Journey

I arrived at the Detroit Airport on September 13, 2022. After picking up my rental car, I made the 2.5-hour journey to my mother's house at Deshkan Ziibiing, Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, which is located at Muncey, Ontario. I would spend the next 5 months staying at her home, sharing research ideas with her, spending our evenings working on beadwork, and

travelling across southwestern Ontario visiting family and renewing relationships along the way. In my journal entry from Sept 13th, I wrote:

> Arriving home is always an exciting moment. From the time we turn onto Muncey Road, the anticipation of being home is heightened. As a child, if we ever went any other way onto the reserve, it was disappointing because it felt like it took longer. I yearned to drive past the farms and fields along the windy Muncey Road to Deshkan Ziibiing. It is a path that I always yearn to be on—making my way home. Now, as an adult, I have the same feeling every time I visit home and I can also sense it in my children. The same path we travelled as children is the one my children will embark on. Maybe they will appreciate the landscape and journey as much as I have. Immediately after arriving to Chippewa we [my mother and I] went to Port Stanley and enjoyed dinner on the beach by Lake Erie.[180]

Throughout my teenage years and young adulthood, I longed to be at home, on the land, and with family. We moved around a lot in my childhood. There were many sad goodbyes and happy reunions—way more than I can count. My life has been a series of migrations, searching for belonging when all I ever wanted was to be home. But there was tension at home. Something that I couldn't comprehend at the time, but there was enough of it where I couldn't stay as a young adult. Longing is such a strong emotion to carry and is something I have managed to somehow make peace with over time and through my studies.

Shortly after arriving to Deshkan Ziibiing, my mother agreed to a series of interviews, and gave me permission to record stories as they emerged out of our conversations. One of our first conversations took place as we drove to Thunderbird Crafts Trading Post on the Chippewas of Kettle & Stoney Point First Nation, an Anishinaabe community located about an hour away from Deshkan Ziibiing. We were on our way to pick up supplies to make orange shirt beading kits for the Every Child Matters (ECM) gathering in London, Ontario on September 30, 2022. The ECM event, hosted on National Truth and Reconciliation Day, was created to heighten awareness on the impacts of Residential Schools in Canada. I offered to help design and make

[180] Mary Deleary. Journal Entry. September 13, 2022.

the beading kits as give away items at the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation Anishinaabe'aadziwin booth as they displayed information about the Mount Elgin Indian Residential School. As we drove along the backroads, she shared some of her earliest memories inspiring her artistic career.

Nancy Deleary

Nancy Deleary is an Anishinaabe kwe and Nokomis from Deshkan Ziibiing. She is the Culture Coordinator for Chippewas of the Thames First Nation Anishinaabe'aadziwin Department where her work focuses on supporting Anishinaabemowin revitalization, developing and promoting art skills by hosting classes in the community, and creating opportunities to learn and share about Deshkan Ziibiing history and the Mount Elgin Residential School. She is also an established artist and muralist. She received her BFA from the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico and MFA from the Vermont College of Fine Arts. In 2022, she completed a community project which culminated in a mural placed on the Chippewas of the Thames Administration Office honoring the community process of re-learning and re-making of ziiyaagmide[181] (See Figure 1). Her work also led to the development of the Gawii Wiikaa Ga-Nendimisii (Never, Ever Forget Me) Music and Artisan Festival held November 18-20, 2022. Jennie Blackbird, member of Walpole Island First Nation and a residential school survivor, provided the name for the event.

At an early age Nancy was recognized as having artistic talent. Being asked to draw special projects in school were some of her earliest memories of demonstrating artistic interest. She recalls a time when her family would travel from their home in Detroit, Michigan to visit

[181] Ziiyaagmide is maple syrup.

relatives at Muncey and Rama.[182] Her father, Frank Deleary, was trained as a tool and dye maker and found work in the factories in Windsor and Detroit. Like many other First Nation families, they would travel home from the city on weekends and holidays. Muncey and Rama, four hours apart from each other, offered very different but influential experiences for Nancy. She recalls the following about visiting her Grandmother Eva's house in Rama:

> going to Rama was different because Uncle Art, who was an artist and a painter, he lived with Grandma and so did Uncle Paul. Their bedrooms were upstairs and Grandma's bedroom was downstairs. So when we would go visit we would go in like what used to be like a guest room which used to be my Aunt's bedroom. They would host us to sleep there and it was always me and my siblings sleeping up there. I think it was that atmosphere and place that really made me gravitate towards art because Uncle Art had art all over the place. He had drawings on the walls in the bedroom that we stayed in because he would go in there and he would draw my aunt's picture on the wall…And I would sneak upstairs to see and look through his sketchbooks and I was so amazed. It was like he was Michelangelo. His penmanship, his sketches, he was a master…Grandma's house was always filled with the smell of oil paint and turpentine. And so now whenever I smell turpentine it takes me back to Grandma Eva's house.[183]

Nancy's mother, Jean Shilling, is the daughter of Richard and Eva Shilling. Eva was a maker and Jean's brother, Arthur Shilling, is a renowned artist from Rama. Their brother Paul Shilling is an artist as well. Artistry was fostered in this family. Inspired by her uncles and grandmother Eva, Nancy wanted to be a great artist too. She stated, "I always wanted to make things. I wanted to be a great artist too just because I seen the beautiful things he [Arthur Shilling] made. So going back home to Detroit, I just wanted to try. Just wanted to draw. And I guess I must have been good at it."[184]

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[182] The Chippewas of Rama First Nation is located on the north shore of Lake Simcoe in Ontario. Here is the link to their website: https://www.ramafirstnation.ca.
[183] Nancy Deleary. Interview with author. September 24, 2022.
[184] Ibid.

In 1971, at the age of 10, her family moved back to Muncey and it was there she became further acquainted with Indigenous art forms, something she wasn't exposed to in Detroit. She stated,

> I had this one teacher, her last name was Mrs. Antone. She asked me to draw these images on burlap. So I used magic marker because the images that she wanted me to draw were West Coast Indian style images and so I guess it was there that I started to learn that there were traditional ways of making art which I never knew or saw at all in Detroit. So, I started to learn about that.[185]

Nancy also conveyed that life after moving to the reserve was difficult for her family. At the time, her father was away from the home due to some trouble he got in to and her mother, a housewife, took care of the family as best she could on limited income. Learning to sew became an essential part of beautifying and creating a comfortable space for her mother and siblings. She added the following,

> We were poor and so we had poor furniture. I knew that and I wanted to help. and so I would take old clothes and I would cut them up and make patches for the furniture because I remember we had a couch and the arms of the coach were bare. Like I mean bare because there was no upholstery or upholstery filling on it that the ends were bare wood. It wore out or whatever, you know. And so I would always be wanting to fix up the house and that's what I would do. I took a pair of jeans and I cut a patch. I stuffed that corner with whatever it is I could find and then I took the needle and thread and I sewed it. So I tried to teach myself how to make things to help, you know, because we were so poor. To help make the house nice for mom because mom worked so hard taking care of us, but our house looked so poor. That's where I learned how to make things. I didn't know anything about beadwork. I didn't know anything about sewing clothes.[186]

At around the age of 16 and throughout her time in high school, Nancy was becoming known in the community for her artwork and was often asked to create portraits by family and community members. By the late 1970s, her family was operating the Muncey General Store which also

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[185] Ibid.
[186] Ibid.

housed Frank’s Gas Bar and Jean’s Laundry Mat next to their family home on Jubilee Road. This business offered another outlet to share her artwork.

In the 1980s Nancy was approached by Joyce Albert, former Employment Director for Chippewas of the Thames who sought to hire women in the community to teach them how to sew. With two young daughters, Nancy joined the program alongside Diane French, Donna Grosbeck-baa, JoAnn Riley, and Carol Morrison (see Figure 47). After the year-long program ended, the same group of women started Three Sisters Design (see Figure 48) which operated out of Nancy’s basement. With Nancy being the lead designer, the group created quilts, wall hangings, and one of their most popular items hockey stadium seat cushions. It was through this work that Nancy began researching Anishinaabe art forms for inspiration. As a result, the group created many quilts and wall hangings for a diverse audience as seen in Figures 49 and 50. Nancy nourished her interest in Anishinaabe designs and patterns. Three Sisters Design also sought community support by placing an ad in the July 1989 Mazinigan, the local on-reserve newsletter, for part-time help and to announce an open house after moving to their new location in one of the buildings of the former Mount Elgin Residential School (see Figure 51). In 1990, because of her research for Three Sisters Design, Nancy developed the thunderbird logo that is currently being used as the seal for the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation today. The Chippewa Thunderbird is turquoise with a red heart and is a symbol of renewal.

As our drive to Kettle Point came to end, we ended our conversation and decided to revisit it again at a later date. We gathered the materials needed to create Orange T-shirt medallion kits for the upcoming Every Child Matters event held on September 30, 2022, National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. Announced in 2021 as a statutory holiday, the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation honors the survivors and remembers the children who

didn't make it home, and creates awareness on the impact residential schools had on the lives of Indigenous people in Canada. In 2022, an Every Child Matters event was held in London and Chippewas of the Thames First Nation Anishinaabe'aadziwin department was part of the planning committee. In preparation for the event, I sat down with Anishinaabe'aadziwin crew and we created 100 orange shirt day medallion kits to give away at their booth. The Department also distributed information on their campaign to Save the Barn which is the last remaining structure of the Mount Elgin Indian Industrial School. The barn, which was used as and is referred to as the Horse Barn, archives the names of the many young children who attended the school. While working in the barns and caring for the livestock, many young boys wrote their names on the bricks and beams of the Horse Barn. George Beeswax-baa, Stanley Summers and Allan Smith were a few of those young men. They signed their name on a brick on June 3, 1895 (see Figure 52).[187]

While in attendance, many students at Mount Elgin Indian Industrial School and Deshkan Ziibiing Anishinaabe inscribed their names on the bricks and beams of the Horse Barn. Many were young boys who worked tirelessly taking care of the school's livestock. Donald Young-baa was one of those young men. His daughter, Donna Young recently compiled a brief history on Mount Elgin for the Chippewas of the Thames Anishinaabe'aadziwin Department. I had the opportunity to visit with Donna and learn more about her family and research. She also helped me to think more broadly about the practices of making on Deshkan Ziibiing, how practices of making supported the livelihood of her family, and how such practices were influenced by colonialism and the Mount Elgin Indian Industrial School.

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[187] More information on Chippewas of the Thames First Nation Orange Shirt Day can be found here: https://chippewaorangeshirtday.com/gallery/

Donna Young

Donna is semi-retired and spends part of her time working in education and conducting historical research focusing primarily on the period after the 1760s. She is also interested in researching her family lineages. Donna's father, Donald Young was from Chippewas of the Thames First Nation and her mother, Grace John from Oneida Nation of the Thames, a First Nations community located directly across the Deshkan Zibi from Chippewa. Donna grew up and now lives in the home her parents built in Mount Brydges, a small town located about 10 kilometers away from Chippewa. While growing up her family maintained strong ties to both First Nation communities. She recalls her mother coming from a very traditional family in Oneida which was in contrast to that of her father's family. Donna recalls the following about her mother's family in Oneida:

> my mother's family was quite traditional. They were all fluent Oneida speakers. She came from a family of basket makers, self-sufficient farmers. They grew, harvested, and preserved all of their own food. They were also medicine people. I have a lot of memories of picking medicines with my mother and drying and putting those medicines away and using those medicines. My mother's family, because they were self-sufficient, I believe, were not taken away to residential school. They attended day schools in Oneida.[188]

As Donna points out, maintaining the family unit became an important factor in retaining Oneida language and customary practices. Donna shared that multiple generations on her father's side attended Mount Elgin. The last to attend in her family was her father. Throughout its 100-year operation, 18 First Nations sent their children to attend Mount Elgin and Oneida Nation of the Thames was one of those communities. As Donna mentioned, some families managed to keep their children away from the residential schools because they were self-sufficient. It was also common for many families to hide their children when the RCMP came looking for kids to scoop

[188] Donna Young. Interview with author. October 5, 2022.

up and take away. Unfortunately, some families had no choice but to rely on the minimal supports that residential schools offered as this was during a time before the development of public or social welfare programs. Donna refers to Mount Elgin as a labor camp, “they weren't schools” she stated, “they were labor camps.” She further described the type of labor her father and Aunt Ester experienced at Mount Elgin,

> my father would have been farming. [He] did farming all the time, working in the barn with the horses, growing the crops. They worked long hours and they were unpaid labor. Child labor. The girls were doing the cooking like my Aunt Ester that I mentioned. She was working in the kitchen and had to serve the staff of the residential school and was always surprised at the quality of the food they got compared to what the children got. And they taught her things like how to serve the food as if in a restaurant or things like that. And then sometimes they’d rotate and do laundry or sew clothes and things like that. So it was really hard times. They worked very, very hard, the children. But when they finished and they left the school they didn't have the academic knowledge or skills, they had labor skills.

Equipped with the knowledge to work in the farming and service industry many students, as they got older, worked on local farms or travelled to nearby cities to find employment. In the booklet Donna created, a picture of her father is included. He attended Mount Elgin from 1934 to 1941. A few quotes from Donald were shared including the following, “They didn’t feed us what they should have…I don’t ever remember eating meat or eggs. They must have sold a lot of that stuff. The cereal was made out of field corn…”[189] The cereal, a low-cost bland porridge, was commonly referred to as “mush” by residential school survivors. The name is as unappetizing as it sounds. Both Mount Elgin and the Mohawk Institute in Brantford, Ontario earned the name, The Mush Hole. As we continued our conversation, Donna shared that Mount Elgin had a more negative intergenerational impact on her father’s side of the family after many generations attended the school. Her mother’s family, while some may have attended residential school,

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[189] Chippewas of the Thames First Nation Anishinaabe’aadziwin Department. *A Brief History: Mount Elgin Indian Residential School*. 2022.

managed to keep their children at home. Part of the reason for the strength in culture and language in her Oneida family and the connections they maintained were "preserved…because they didn't have that cultural gap in terms of the residential school. [The children] didn't go, they stayed with the family."[190] She further added, "My father's side from here, from Chippewas the Thames was a little different because they had a huge gap in that transmission of knowledge as more than one generation attended the Mount Elgin Residential School."[191] The transmission of knowledge, a fundamental part of culture and language survival was disrupted. She recalls that her father's mother, Elizabeth Young, and all her family were fluent Anishinaabemowin speakers and that was taken away. In addition to the disruption of Anishinaabemowin, Donna shared that discrimination, racism and the treatment of the children at Mount Elgin were stacked against them and their families. Donna added,

> I've seen in the research where the head of the school would tell the children as they were leaving that they were just dirty Indians and to come back clean when they returned. A lot of negativity pounded into their head. So some of them actually started to believe that and wanted to reject their First Nation identities…and understandably because they were children and they were told this over and over and over again.[192]

Many children who attended residential school acquired skills to survive in such turbulent places. Donna recalled hearing her father's stories about waking up before everyone else to run to the fields to find food. Hunger was a daily experience. The experiences of residential schools are situational, but there are many stories of the horrific trauma that many of the survivor's endured. Donna shared that her father's experiences matched with her mother's strong Oneida upbringing led them to lead a very positive life together. Donna has also raised a very successful family with

[190] Donna Young. Interview with author. October 5, 2022.
[191] Ibid.
[192] Ibid.

her husband. During our visit her husband was hunting up north on his traditional territory with their two grown sons.

The Mount Elgin era, 1850-1946, coupled with the social conditions of the time (creation of reserve system, limited access to resources, depression, world wars, etc), informed the types of making practices that emerged from Deshkan Ziibiing. Donna witnessed making out of necessity and survival. She recalls her mother bleaching flour sacks to remove the writing, sewing them together, and making straw mattresses. “It was better than the floor,”[193] she added. Her Oneida grandfather, Evan John, maintained his own farm and “practiced some of the seasonal plantings going by the sky.”[194] She carries many memories of her grandfather’s farm and recalls her Oneida family as being very traditional and spiritual people as well. She stated,

> It wasn't like, you know, now you're going to learn this, but that it was just there. So you were getting it by osmosis, I guess. Just because you were surrounded by it, right? lots of laughter, lots of family gatherings, but they also worked very hard.

Thinking more broadly about making practices, Donna remembers her mother making use of traditional medicines. However, the early 1900s was also a transitional time both socially and culturally for Anishinaabe and Oneida living in the area. Donna stated that it wasn’t uncommon back then for people to attend church and then go to ceremony or head to “Six Nations to get special medicines in the afternoon.”[195] Gathering also informed seasonal life. Donna remembers gathering witch hazel, sweet flag, plantain, and dandelion with her mother, and gathering hazel nuts and walnuts with her father. Her grandmother, Louisa Day, was a basket maker and Donna mentioned there may be a photograph of her somewhere in the world posing with her baskets. Through our conversation, Donna relayed the importance of making the everyday in Anishinaabe

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[193] Ibid.
[194] Ibid.
[195] Ibid.

life and Oneida life. Her ancestors worked very hard to take care and create family despite the difficulties and hardships they experienced. As our visit came to end, I was reminded of the beauty in making relationships with our relatives and more-than-human relatives. Donna's experience as Anishinaabe and Oneida woman, is also a reminder of the interconnectedness between our First Nations and is common in a place where three distinct First Nation communities reside.

The Mount Elgin Indian Industrial School was a prominent and common thread throughout all the conversations I had at Deshkan Ziibiing. Its one-hundred-year presence can be felt across many generations. A week after my discussion with Donna, I met with Gina McGahey at the Heritage Centre which is a short distance from where the Mount Elgin Residential School operated. After its closing in 1946 it transitioned into a day school. The grounds and buildings were repurposed, and the space remained a central part of community life for quite some time. That is until it was set on fire (again) and finally demolished years later. I remember playing in the old, abandoned buildings not ever really knowing the history that took place there. The old Mount Elgin school grounds is a residential neighborhood now. A monument was constructed and unveiled in 2012 and displays rows and rows of bronze plaques with the names of the children that attended Mount Elgin.

Gina McGahey

Gina is the Director of the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation Anishinaabe'aadziwin Department. She is a maker and has spent her life learning, creating, and reclaiming the history and arts of the Anishinaabe and Lenape. Originally from the Delaware Nation at Moraviantown, she was born to Lawrence Stonefish and Shelby Huff. Gina's father was a carver, hunter, and

fisherman. “He was an artist,”[196] she stated. Her mother was a beadworker as well. Gina was raised in Windsor until she was about 11 years old. She shared, “it was interesting because I knew I was native. I knew I was First Nations but I didn't know nothing about it. I was never taught anything about it.”[197] Gina refers to herself as being part of the lost generation, “It’s between residential school and revitalization,” she stated. It wasn’t until she became a teenager, in the late 1960s, that programs aimed at revitalizing language and culture were created. At the time, Gina stated that she was angry, she said “why didn’t anybody teach me this?”[198] She was referring to the history, culture, language, and arts of the Lenape. But as she got older, she began to seek and learn about the harms that colonization, residential school, and assimilation had on her First Nation and family.

After moving back to the reserve at the age of 11, Gina took part in a summer program that taught many different types of art making skills. During that program she learned finger weaving and how to make dance bustles and roaches. It is also where she learned to bead. That summer, she helped make every boy in the community a dance bustle. The skills she learned in the late 1960s, are carried into the artist skill classes that her department offers today on Deshkan Ziibiing. At the age of 16, after learning about pow wow dancing and making dance regalia, Gina entered into the Miss Moraviantown contest. Her grandfather was very proud of her. She stated, “I had my outfit on and my grandfather came over… he must have been pretty proud of me. And he brought this belt and he said this was made by your grandmother.”[199] The belt, made well before 1950, was created by Gina’s grandmother before she passed away at young age.

[196] Gina McGahey. Interview with author. October 12, 2022.
[197] Ibid.
[198] Ibid.
[199] Ibid.

Receiving the belt made Gina feel proud and more loved and affirmed that she was doing something that strengthened her identity as a Lenape woman.

The beaded belt, pictured in Figures 53 and 54, is made of a dark canvas strip with a raised style of beadwork sewn on top. Single leaf patterns alternate along a vine made of a single line of beads. Two distinct diamond shapes rest on either end. The leaf pattern, with dual color combinations are reminiscent of Haudenosaunee beadwork techniques. This raised technique, however, can also be associated with Anishinaabe clothing and garments. When I first visited the Deshkan Ziibiing collection at the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) in 2022, I shared images of gete-anishinaabeg with Gina. There are quite a few items from the Moraviantown area at the AMNH. One of the items I shared with her was a pair of moccasins pictured in Figure 55. M. R. Harrington purchased them from Olivia Lewis in 1907. Jennie Stonefish, Betsy Pheasant, Rueben Tobias, Clara Jacobs, and William Noah are a few other people from Moraviantown that Harrington purchased things from.[200] Gina treasures and safeguards the belt that her grandfather gifted her over 60 years ago and is a reminder of the love and care of her grandparents.

In 1974, Gina moved to Chippewas of the Thames First Nation with her husband Junior. Their first home was behind the Mount Elgin day school. When she first came to the community, she didn't know anyone outside of her in-laws. Then, there was an opportunity to participate in a craft night at Mount Elgin. She recalls around 10 craft sessions taking place and those in attendance could pick and choose which technique they would like to learn. She associated that

[200] Mark Raymond Harrington's notebook. National Museum of the American Indian, NMAI.AC.001_182_02.

experience with creating wellbeing along with building and strengthening community relationships. Gina said,

> When I first came to this community, I didn't really know anybody. The only one I knew was my sister-in-law. That was it. And then there was an opportunity here where they had a craft night and they had maybe 10 crafts going on at the Mount Elgin school in the white building and the yellow building. I decided I was going to go because I liked doing crafts. And so, I was sitting there thinking it wasn't just about crafts. It wasn't. Because I was sitting with like minds, like other people that wanted to learn something.[201]

The making session was attended by people from not only Chippewas of the Thames, but Munsee-Delaware Nation and Oneida Nation of the Thames as well. These three communities are most often referred to as CMO (Chippewa, Munsee, Oneida). It's a rare occurrence to see events or programming where all three First Nations are invited and in attendance. However, this model of making session is something Gina and her team would like to bring back. Gina added,

> So that really made an impact first coming to the community. So now in this job, and this is where we're trying to head to, we're trying to head to making that model again that was done years ago. Bringing all the like minds together and be able to do something together. To socialize. To enhance your wellbeing. Not having that feeling of being alone. You're part of a community. You're part of life.[202]

When asked about mentors or knowledgeable makers in the community, she referenced Blanche Huff, her aunt from Moraviantown, Barb Antone from Oneida Nation of the Thames, and Doris Fisher, from Deshkan Ziibiing who taught Anishinaabemowin. It was at these community sessions where Gina met Maxine Hendrick, her life-long friend. Gina has spent her career working with Chippewas of the Thames as a teacher's assistant, Director of Education, and counselor. One thing she always believed needed to happen, was to "put something in the schools, to teach the children more about their history and their culture, rather than colonial

[201] Gina McGahey. Interview with author. October 12, 2022.
[202] Ibid.

aspects."[203] She further added, "the education system wasn't built for us… we need to rebuild it differently."[204] Like Gina mentioned, it has been a life-long journey to support and develop an education system that works for Deshkan Ziibiing. Gina's educational and professional journey is also one of recovery as she reconnected to her Lenape and Anishinaabe identity, knowledge, and history. As a Nokomis, a grandmother, she is also concerned with the transfer of knowledge. She talked very fondly of her two children and grandchildren, who between hockey and pow wow, are very busy. However, she finds the time to teach, mentor, and share the art knowledge she carries with her family. She has also spent a great deal of time creating beautiful regalia and beaded pieces. In our interviews, Gina expressed that she never thought of herself as an artist. However, when we met for a second time, she brought many of the items she created over the years. The items, which ranged from beaded medallions to dance regalia, filled the 12 ft long board room table as seen in Figure 56.

In our second meeting, on February 21, 2023, I met Gina to see some of the things she has created over the years. I was surprised at the number of items Gina gathered from her family members to bring to our meeting. Most of the items were lovingly made for her children and grandchildren. At the top of the table rested the beaded belt that her grandfather gave to her so many years ago. At the other end of the table sat the beaded hair ties and leggings created for one of her granddaughters. The beadwork that Gina shared represents at least five generations of makers in her family. It is without a doubt that Gina has been a crucial part of resituating the practices of making in her family and her work embodies rematriation.

[203] Gina McGahey. Interview with author. October 12, 2022.
[204] Ibid.

Maxine Hendrick and Syb Young

Maxine Hendrick (neé Brant) was born and raised on Chippewas of the Thames First Nation. Maxine has been a teacher and life-long learner of Anishinaabe history, language, and the arts. As a young adult I remember Maxine hosting moccasin and leather making workshops in the community. I wanted to meet with her to learn more about her life growing up on Chippewa and how making played a role in her family. Maxine agreed to two interviews with her friend Syb Young. Our first meeting was aimed at getting to know one another and this was my first time meeting Syb. Maxine, born in 1947, has grown up and lived on Chippewas of the Thames First Nation all her life. Syb, born in 1955, has also spent most of her life there as well. Both Maxine and Syb are long time members of St. Andrews Anglican Church.

As we began our first interview, Maxine asked for a paper to write on as she began recalling memories and things she's acquired over the years. She would gather and bring these things to our second meeting. Maxine's mother passed away during childbirth leaving her and her siblings in the care of her grandmother, Mary Anne Riley (neé Dolson), pictured in Figure 57. Surrounded by many aunts, uncles, and cousins, Maxine stated, "we never went without." She further added,

> My Uncle Levi was a hunter so he knew how to skin the animals, gut them, and cut them up. So in exchange for him doing that the farmers they would give him some of the meat. He got them ready for however they stored them. My Aunt Marabel was the housekeeper and she kept all of us in line.[205]

Maxine's family lived in a two-story log house and at one time, there were about seven grandchildren who, under different circumstances, came to live with Mary Anne. Maxine's

[205] Maxine Hendrick and Syb Young. Interview with author. September 29, 2022.

grandfather, John Riley was from a line of hereditary Chiefs. Maxine stated that his father and grandfather were Chiefs at one time. The second floor of the family home was an open room for all the beds and every winter they "wall papered the ceiling and the walls for insulation."[206] Maxine's grandmother also delivered babies in a downstairs bedroom. She recalled hearing the babies cry at night when an expecting mother would come to have her baby. Mary Anne was also employed as a housekeeper. Maxine stated, "My grandma worked at number 2 highway, right across the field from us. [She] use to go there and do housework. At one time it was a Stagecoach place. She cleaned the building and did housework."[207] Number 2 Highway is also known today as Longwoods Road and is one of the main roads into the City of London and surrounding towns.

As a child, Maxine's family maintained a large garden and farm where they raised horses, cattle, and prepared and preserved their own food. Maxine remembers her grandmother also sharing and caring for their neighbors, one of them being my great-grandfather Vernon Deleary and his wife Gladys Madison. Maxine said,

> Your grandfather, Vern, and Gladys lived down the road from us, where Basil and Leona live. Grandma use to make bread and every week she'd have bread for everyone along the road. That road, I think there was Rileys, Delearys, Rileys, then us, and Henrys on the other side… Grandma would make at least a loaf of bread for everybody down that road.

In addition to caring for the farm, family, and community, Mary Anne knew how to prepare and administer traditional medicines for people and animals. Maxine's grandmother truly cared for everyone. Maxine was the youngest grandchild and after her mother passed away, she went wherever her grandmother went. Mary Anne has been a big part of informing who Maxine is today. Maxine said,

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[206] Maxine Hendrick and Syb Young. Interview with author. September 29, 2022.
[207] Ibid.

> I went wherever grandma went. She went to sewing bees and quilting bees and working at the fair. So I learned to thread needles, make tea, make lunch and be under the table, [under] the quilts, make sure there were no yarn, no threads hanging down. That's where my social [skills] came in. I was always with grandma. She did a lot of social things.[208]

Everyone had a job and took part in taking care of one another, but they also had a good time too. Syb and Maxine recalled the Muncey Fair being hosted at the Council Hall, located on Jubilee Road where the Chippewa Ball Park is today. The Council Hall is no longer there, but it is still a central community outdoor space that hosts annual Pow wows, ball games, tournaments, social gatherings, and events. Maxine and Syb recall Jamboree's and dances held there on Saturday nights. They also mentioned that square dancing was quite popular. The Muncey Fair, an annual event, ended when the Council Hall burned down. Maxine shared a newspaper clipping dated Sept 16, 1951, that covered the Muncey annual fall fair. The fair featured a "ladies' hog-calling contest and baby show overshadowing a two-horse harness race and other features."[209] A children's' parade was also hosted and attend by seven local schools such as Mount Elgin, River and Back Settlement schools, Bear Creek, and schools from Oneida. That year, "Mrs. Wilson Huff, of Muncey, was judged the winner."[210] Runners up included Eleanor Brant, Mrs. Phoebe Miskokomon, and Mary Riley. In addition to hog calling, there were car races, horse and cattle shows along with costume and handicraft contests—all the typical fair events.

Around 1977, Maxine worked alongside her good friend Genevieve Miskokomon. They held programs at St. Andrews Anglican Church. Maxine said,

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[208] Ibid.
[209] Newspaper clipping. Collection of Maxine Hendrick. "Muncey Fair featured By Hog-Calling Contest" Sept 26, 1951.
[210] Ibid.

> [Genevieve] knew beadwork and I was a fast learner. She put me to work…while she was teaching, I'd be going around the table showing [students] what she was telling them. So we learned beadwork and we did moccasins.

Maxine shared another newspaper clipping, pictured in Figure 58, which highlights the work her and Genevieve did to revive art and art making in the community. The newspaper article dated October 23, 1978 is titled "Heritage lives on: Caradoc reserve women teach ancestral crafts to young."[211] Maxine and Genevieve are featured in a photograph. Genevieve stands on the left and Maxine is on the right. They are adjusting items on a table that is filled with beaded and leather items. At the time the article was published, the program titled, Project Ooskenegwin, was about a year old and Maxine and Genevieve, the program coordinators, were hosting weekly gatherings in the basement of St. Andrews Anglican Church. In the article it states,

> Products of the year-old program adorn the stark basement walls. Eye-catching works include multi-colored bead and leather belts, sparkling watchbands, magnificent sequin trimmed leather wearing apparel, ornaments and trinkets.[212]

Maxine is also featured, stating that, "the young people here don't really know what they have to be proud of. But there is their past history… We want them to be proud of it, not ashamed."[213] This sentiment carries on today as programs continue to support the wellbeing of the community. Project Ooskenegwin is one of many iterations over the years to support making and remembering Deshkan Ziibiing visual and material histories. In addition to the arts classes featured in the article, there was mention about raising funds to build a cultural centre beside St. Andrews Anglican Church. I am unaware of a cultural centre being placed there, but there have been many attempts over the years to raise funds for the creation of a culture centre to support

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[211] "Heritage lives on: Caradoc reserve women teach ancestral crafts to young." London Free Press. October 23, 1978.
[212] Ibid.
[213] Ibid.

the revitalization of Anishinaabe'aadziwin and Anishinaabemowin. Such efforts have never been adequately funded by the federal government. However, within the last 5-10 years language and culture programming are gaining much more needed support and attention through Chippewas of the Thames administration and departmental funding. Maxine is well aware of this and has continuously supported such programs.

Maxine continues to teach, make, and sell moccasins today. She also maintains a very busy schedule attending and supporting events and taking care of friends and family in the community. Syb is also maker and is most popular for her stuffed animals which fetch a good price a church fundraisers and raffles. At the end of our final interview, we placed all the items Maxine brought with her that day on the kitchen table and took a photograph with Maxine and Syb, see Figure 59. Syb is seated on the left and in front of her rests a stuffed chicken she made. Maxine stands to the right of Syb and her moccasins fill the table. Maxine also brought two large wooden ladles that she inherited from her grandmother. Both ladles resemble the spoons I visited at the AMNH earlier that year. The ladles would have been used for corn soup and other stews. Maxine stated that she gave away two similar ladles to corn soup makers in the community. Every community has their own version of corn soup. In the CMO area, the corn soup is made with Indian corn (white corn), salt pork, and kidney beans. The combination of these ingredients makes the most savory and delicious soup and is a staple at most community events and family gatherings. Corn soup makers are cherished here.

Maxine also brought a complete young woman's outfit which included a dress, cape, leggings, and leather bag which were all made by her dear friend Genevieve Miskokomon (see Figures 60, 61, 62). All of the items are made of black velvet. Black fringe edges the top cape, which is worn over the shoulders. Three flowers, all different colors, are connected with leaves

and vines, and beaded onto the front and back of the black velvet cape. Maxine identified Genevieve and Genevieve's older sisters, Carol Morrison and Roberta Miskokomon, as being mentors along with Gina McGahey and Monica Hendrick. Maxine stated that Monica, "showed me easier ways than I was used to. I'd do everything the hard way."[214] Maxine also shared newspaper clippings and a few calendar pages that she saved. Maxine stated, "Those papers were in the church. I took those and they were art my house and I pass them on to you today."[215] Maxine gave me six calendar pages from 1983 (Jan, Feb, Apr – July). Each month marks an historical date that is relevant to the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation. One date was marked on June 24, 1983 where the "Band Council granted 50 acres of band land to the Chippewa Young People's Association for their Cultural Centre Project."[216] Another significant date was June 15, 1979 when the "Chippewas of the Thames Band membership voted on a referendum and agreed to be governed by the Indian Act."[217] During our time together Maxine and Syb shared an incredible amount of information through stories, photographs, documents, and artwork. Their work, care, and experiences are significant in the history of recovering Anishinaabe'aaziwin in the community.

[214] Maxine Hendrick and Syb Young. Interview with author. September 21, 2022.
[215] Ibid.
[216] Calendar pages from St. Andrews Anglican Church at Chippewas of the Thames First Nation. Collection of Maxine Hendrick.
[217] Ibid.

Felicia Huff

Felicia Huff is a maker, community leader, student, and teacher. Over the years, she has garnered a lot of support and admiration for her ribbon skirts, ribbon shirts, and her canned pickles. I have worked closely with Felicia on the Deshkan Ziibiing Kinoomaagegamig Board of Education for Chippewas of the Thames First Nation since 2017. I too admire and look up to Felicia for her work in supporting community nation building initiatives. I invited Felicia over to my mother's house to visit, bead, and learn how she came to ribbon skirt making, what that experience has been like for her, and how her work impacts community and family.

Felicia Huff is the daughter of Warren Huff and Charlene Kechego. She lived most of her childhood in London, Ontario with her mother until she was a teenager. During that time, however, Felicia would spend most of her weekends at her maternal grandparents' home on reserve. She carries an abundance of memories and experiences that have shaped her life. From witnessing her grandfather's bootlegging business to spending quiet and intimate moments with her grandmother in the garden were some of the stories that emerged from our conversations. Felicia shared the following glimpse of what life was like for her growing up around Chippewa,

> I didn't get to grow up on the reserve but that's important to me that people knew I was here. But a bigger part of that story is I was here on the reserve at my grandparents who were bootleggers… I think my weekend rez life was probably the extreme of rez life, too. I seen a lot of things happen. I was always really hard on the fact that my grandparents were bootleggers. Not to shame them or anything like that but you know that's a big part of our dysfunction, you know, the drug and alcohol…I said something about that, and somebody says "hey your grandparents were amazing people. You know, I came home from being gone away and I came home with nothing. I had no money. I was so hungry, and I was just lost…I went to your grandpa's house. For some reason I knew I would be okay if I went there. He fed me and he took care of me and he sent me off with a little bit of money."[218]

[218] Felicia Huff, Interview with author. October 7, 2022.

Felicia went on to say that she had to remind herself that there was no economy on the reserve and that her grandfather created that little bit of business for himself. “It's definitely bittersweet,” she added. Bootlegging must have been a common thing because I remember my grandparents selling wine out of their home as well. Felicia added, “I grew up in a bootleggers home. Those were the only tools I had to build with.” As a young adult, when she quit drinking, she chose to learn a new set of tools and ones that would help her and many others on their healing journey.

As a teenager, Felicia moved permanently to the reserve and has lived there ever since. She lives on Chippewas of the Thames First Nation with her husband Alfred Henry Jr. and is the mother of two children, Kingson and Patty. Both of her children are grown, and her son is completing his second term as a council member for Chippewas of the Thames First Nation Band Council. Felicia has held many leadership positions within the community over the years ranging from social worker to Band Councilor. Presently, she is working toward a BA in Sociology with a focus in Community Development at Western University.

As we began our conversation about making, Felicia described the time she spent with her maternal grandmother, Betty Fisher in the garden. Felicia stated,

> The time I spent with my grandma was in the garden. That was special for me. She grew food but she had a small amount of flowers that she told me about and where she got those flowers from. So I have flowers in my own garden that I know where they came from… After she passed I took them [flowers] because the house was also being demolished. I took the flowers and we moved to one house and then they came with me to the next house.[219]

The flowers that Felicia is referring to are peonies and irises and when they return every year, Felicia stated,

> all those memories of grandma [return]. I remember us being in the garden. I remember her on her hands and knees and she was plucking things. She ate onions and she ate asparagus. I remember not liking onions but she shared asparagus with me once… we sat

[219] Ibid.

> in the front room just eating asparagus. I remember how the sun was hitting us. It was so vibrant and alive.[220]

The time spent with her grandmother was cherished and she aimed to recreate those experiences for her children by continuing the gardening and canning traditions of her grandmother. While she doesn't recall other kinds of making practices in her family, she remembers her grandmothers garden very fondly. She stated, "that's not a thing that we make but it definitely is life that we have to take care of and nurture and you know it blossoms every year."[221] Felicia maintains a garden today and you can find her selling, raffling, or gifting her canned pickles. In addition to her family experience, Felicia recalled that there wasn't a whole lot of programming in the community that was deeply rooted in culture. She mentioned that there might have been a handful of activities hosted throughout the year. Ceremonies such as sweat lodge were considered taboo. Felicia recalled that around 35 years ago when a sweat lodge ceremony was being held in the community, her grandmother was worried or showed concern which translated to Felicia as the sweat lodge ceremony not being okay. At the time, she stated, "I just knew grandma's not comfortable with it so I probably shouldn't be."[222] It wasn't until she attended Sundance years later when she realized where her grandmothers fear came from. Felicia shared the following story,

> I remember standing in the new Sundance grounds, we were all out there helping… Betsy stood up, she's standing there and I don't know if a helicopter went by or airplane. I think it was a helicopter. It was kind of low…I remember hearing this before, but she said just imagine… 30 years ago we could have all been arrested for standing here doing what we're doing. And I just stood there for the longest time just thinking about that. That our ancestors had to live with that fear. This is why my grandma [is] scared of sweats, right. This is why my grandfather didn't pass on that stuff to his grandchildren… we didn't even

[220] Ibid.
[221] Ibid.
[222] Ibid.

> realize how deep that stuff was for them. So yeah… sharing the canning is pretty big for me.[223]

The time frame that Betsy was referring to in the quote above was when Section 149 was added to the *Indian Act* in 1914. Section 149 gave the Department of Indian Affairs in Canada the legal structure to suppress and outlaw dance and performance making it "illegal for any First Nations individuals to make public appearances and take part in any dance, performance, or stampeded "in aboriginal costume" without the permission of the Indian Agent."[224] Many areas of life for First Nations people were highly surveilled by Indian Agents and local authorities. Indian agents were mandated to implement and enforce the Indian Act of 1876 and subsequent policies aimed at assimilating First Nations people. At Chippewas of the Thames First Nation the Indian Agent's office was located at the entrance of the reserve on a hill overlooking the Deshkan Zibi. An old root cellar is still carved into the hillside and is a reminder of a time when produce and rations were distributed from there. Indian Agents also worked alongside the RCMP and Mount Elgin school officials to locate and bring back children who ran away from the residential school.

As Felicia mentioned in the previous quote, sharing the canning she produced was a big deal. It was one of the few gifts that was passed onto her by her grandmother. The act of making and then sharing with community is a key component in the recovery and resurgence of Anishinaabe'aadziwin and is evident in the things that Felicia makes and shares with those around her. For Felicia, making ribbon skirts became integral to her own healing and a way to support her son as he made his way through Sundance. However, a year before her son's participation in Sundance, a key incident occurred that shaped how Felicia approaches making

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[223] Ibid.

[224] Sherry Farrell Racette. "Looking for Stories and Unbroken Threads", in *Restoring the Balance: First Nations Women, Community, and Culture*. (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2009), 295.

and sharing her ribbon skirts. Felicia and her daughter Patty were invited to a Full Moon Ceremony less than 2 minutes away from her home. Upon arrival, Felicia recounted the following memory,

> somebody there, I don't even remember who it was, but I didn't know her, and she said, “hey, you guys need a skirt on!” Like really harsh, right, and I was like oh okay. And I went home and I was like Patty do you have a skirt? And she had one. I didn't have one and I didn't know what to do. Then I remembered my mom had given me a bag of stuff and I was like oh maybe there’s a skirt in there. And there was. Then I went back and we sat and we went through some beautiful ceremony… so when I started making skirts it kind of dawned on me somebody like me went to a ceremony and couldn't just drive home and maybe they never went back, right. That always stayed with me, you know, the possibility that people are not getting that work or the healing or the culture because of something so material.[225]

Today, ribbon skirts are making a much larger appearance at gatherings, special events, and have become a part of everyday attire. However, in some communities, as Felicia experienced, skirts were required to be worn in ceremonies and if you didn’t have one you could have been turned away. There has been a lot of skirt shaming and policing of how ribbon skirts are constructed as a gendered tradition. According to Drew Hayden Taylor, “skirt shaming is when women who do not meet the so-called dress code are criticized for being disrespectful to tradition, and either asked to leave the circle or are somehow required to change their clothing to adhere to protocol.”[226] Ribbon skirt makers like Felicia are making them accessible which has become an important pathway to healing, reconnecting, and learning about Indigenous identity and matrilineal teachings. This experience motivated Felicia to let go of the first few skirts she made to people who needed them. Then, five years later, at her son’s Sundance giveaway, Felicia made

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[225] Felicia Huff. Interview with author. October 7, 2022.
[226] Hayden Taylor, Drew. 2016. “The Shame of Skirt Shaming.” *Windspeaker Publication*. Aboriginal Multi-Media Society 34 (6). https://ammsa.com/ publications/windspeaker/shame-skirt-shaming-column

and gave away 75 skirts. Felicia shared that the skirts she made in the beginning had imperfections, but they signaled a time of learning. “I didn't know how to do it and lots of mistakes were made. I contribute all of my learning to the mistakes,”[227] she stated. At the time Felicia started making ribbon skirts she had no mentors, so she set out to learn on her own. Part of her learning process included going to local thrift stores and examining how skirts were constructed.

Making a ribbon skirt is not an easy task. There are many steps and decisions to be made from color, fabric, ribbon, thread, design, and style. And more often than not, intentionality and mindset while creating the skirt becomes an integral part of the process. The process of learning how to make skirts was also accompanied by gathering and receiving various teachings. Over time, Felicia has gathered teachings and stories that inform her perspective on the importance of ribbon skirts and she shares those teachings with her clients and students. The following quote is an insightful response about what ribbon skirts mean to her,

> what it means to me might be different than what it can or does mean to you, but here's what's been shared with me… when we walk and we're wearing that skirt…there are things that are in front of us that we have no control over that may be harmful, that may be beautiful or whatever… In that skirt as it flows it moves some of that stuff, as much or as little as it needs, and what's left there for us was meant to be for us. So somebody else’s hurt and pain some of that might have been meant to be in our path. Some of it not, right… and while you're in your skirt, so this is a transition happening, while you're in your skirt that's your space. That's you and that's all your power and that's meant for you and nobody else can intrude on that and you remember that because that's what that skirt is saying. This is my boundary. This is the place where I get to be who I am and practice my teachings and become the person that creator meant for me to be. And then when you walk away and you leave, the skirt again it moves and it does that and it only leaves what it's supposed to and you get to keep what you need to. So that's what I share with people. Especially the youth. They need to hear that stuff. They need to know that first of all there's some ownership in their own roles and their own responsibilities because we're always trying to figure out what my life is about.[228]

[227] Ibid.
[228] Felicia Huff. Interview with author. October 7, 2022.

Felicia also described ribbon skirts as a "tool that people get to take with them while they do their healing or while they share their celebration with others."[229] Felicia is picture with her ribbon skirts and ribbon shirts in Figure 63. Learning to make ribbon skirts has been an important act of love, care, necessity, and rematriation. Felicia estimates that she has made roughly 700 skirts. Many of them have been sold but many others have been given away with the encouragement of re-gifting them to someone else in need. Felicia will often see her skirts out in public and they remind her of the journey she took to make them. Felicia stated, "my new set of tools looks a lot different."

Closing Remarks

On January 12, 2023, I had to opportunity to sit down with my mother for one last interview at the Heritage Centre. We talked more directly about how practices of making were impacted by colonization at Deshkan Ziibiing. Earlier in the chapter, Nancy described the differences between Muncey and Rama. It is not the purpose of this work to compare and contrast communities, but there were a few key differences that impacted artistic production. Being up in cottage country, Rama was in close proximity to a tourism and souvenir market. Muncey was off the beaten path of any kind of tourism industry. Today, Nancy observes "that people are wanting the opportunity to learn. Wanting to learn the language now and wanting to learn how to make things."[230] And in her role as Culture Coordinator, has developed a growing artist skill development program. When the classes first started, students were introduced to the

[229] Ibid.
[230] Nancy Deleary. Interview with author. January 12, 2023.

fundamentals of art and design, drawing, and jewelry. This past winter, students explored regalia making with applique and skirt making with Felicia, weaving with Gina, and leather work with Mitch Riley. There have been many attempts over the years to disconnect Deshkan Ziibiing Anishinaabeg from the land and each other. Nancy stated, "[the] opportunity to make things is very limited because of our lack of social interaction with one another due to, well now it's pandemic, but before that it was just animosities between families and not being able to come together."[231] Creating space and time to visit with relatives and gete-anishinaabeg, as I learned through this project, has been an integral part of my research process. Nancy hopes to create spaces and opportunities to "research our ancestral ways of making on the land." She further stated,

> there's just so many different projects from relearning how we interact with the world around us, all of creation. This could carry on and become a whole project of revitalization not only in the way of making but tying it together with the language, because it was in those ways of making that our ancestors spoke… also learning about our heritage, learning about our ancestors, our ancestral history… all of these revitalizations can all be tied in the process of making.[232]

Hawaiian Studies scholar Noelani Goodyear-Ka'ōpua reminds us that when we engage in the process of research, and I would add that whenever we are engaged in the act of making, we are never alone. Our ancestors are with us, helping us and guiding us. Goodyear-Ka'ōpua writes, "those Kanaka who came before us have been twining stories of intellectual rope for us to use."[233] She further adds that these ropes can be used to pull us together, we can add to them, and when combined can be used as "ropes of resistance."

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[231] Ibid.
[232] Ibid.
[233] Noelani Goodyear-Ka'ōpua. "Reproducing the Ropes of Resistance: Hawaiian Studies Methodologies," in *Kanaka 'Oiwi Methodologies: Moolelo and Metaphor,* ed. Katrina-Ann R Kapa'anaokalaokeola Nakoa Oliviera and Erin Kahunawaika'ala Wright (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2016), 1.

Leanne Simpson, Michi Saagiig Nishinaabe scholar, reminds us that we carry the seeds that our ancestors left us. Our Anishinaabe ancestors "resisted by taking the seeds of our culture and political systems and packing them away, so that one day another generation of Michi Saagiig Nishinaabeg might be able to plant them."[234] These brilliant Indigenous scholars along with the dibaajmowin of Deshkan Ziibiing move me to action. They offer words of encouragement and insight as I embark on a path to grab and extend the rope of resistance to the next generation and plant the seeds of my ancestors. The dibaajmowin shared in this chapter offer a small glimpse into the memory, experiences, and making practices of Deshkan Ziibiing Anishinaabeg. All if the mindimooyenh that I have spoken to in this research project are picking up the seeds left behind by their ancestors. They are planting the seeds left behind by their parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents and are tending to them with future Deshkan Ziibiing Anishinaabeg in mind. This is just the beginning and I look forward to our continued and expanded conversations about life on Deshkan Ziibiing and the memories of our ancestors.

[234] Leanne Simpson. *Dancing on Our Turtles Back.* (Winnipeg: Arbeiter Ring Publishing, 2011), 15.

Figure 47, Carol Morrison enjoying a snack at Three Sister's Design studio, ca 1980s
Image courtesy of Nancy Deleary.

Figure 48, Three Sisters Design logo, ca 1980s
Collection of Nancy Deleary

Figure 49, Quilt by Three Sisters Design, ca 1980s
Photograph collection of Nancy Deleary

Figure 50, Three Sisters Design Wall Hanging with "se:kòli" (hello) written in the Oneida language, ca 1980s
Photograph Collection of Nancy Deleary

We've Moved!

Three Sisters Design cordially invites everyone to their

·open·house·

and

·food·sale·

corn soup · fry bread · refreshments ·

Saturday, July 22, 1989
11:00 am to 8:00pm

Three Sisters Design which is owned and operated by Nancy Deleary, Diane French, Donna Grosbeck, JoAnne Riley have moved their place of business to the white building, at Mt. Elgin School - formally known as Fanshawe College.

For more information, please call

264-9271

Working together towards a common goal

A.R.I.S.E.

ASSOCIATION OF RESERVES FOR IMPROVING SOCIAL ECONOMICS

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BRANCH OFFICE P.O. BOX 574, ST. THOMAS, ONTARIO N5P 3V6 - Telephone 519-633-6060

DATE: June 2, 1989

TO: All Band Offices

FROM: Valerie Hopkins, A.R.I.S.E.

A.R.I.S.E. has the following items for sale:

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1 35' Tandem Trailer converted into a chipwagon
Jewellery making equipment
2 Gas Lawnmowers
1 Gladiator floor cleaner
1980 Chev Impala - available July 1, 1989

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TECUMSEH ROAD, WALPOLE ISLAND.

THE PREACHER OF THE GOSPEL IS
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BUFFALO, NEW YORK.

THE SONG LEADER WILL BE:
PASTOR LENNOX TAYLOR,
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DATE: JULY 13, 14, 15 AND 16th - SERVICE 2 P.M. Evening 6:30 P.M.

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Meals will be served daily. 12 NOON & 5 P.M.

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Figure 51, "We've Moved!" Three Sisters Design announces their move to Mt. Elgin announcement placed in the July 1989 Mazinigan, Chippewas of Thames First Nation Newsletter
Collection of Nancy Deleary

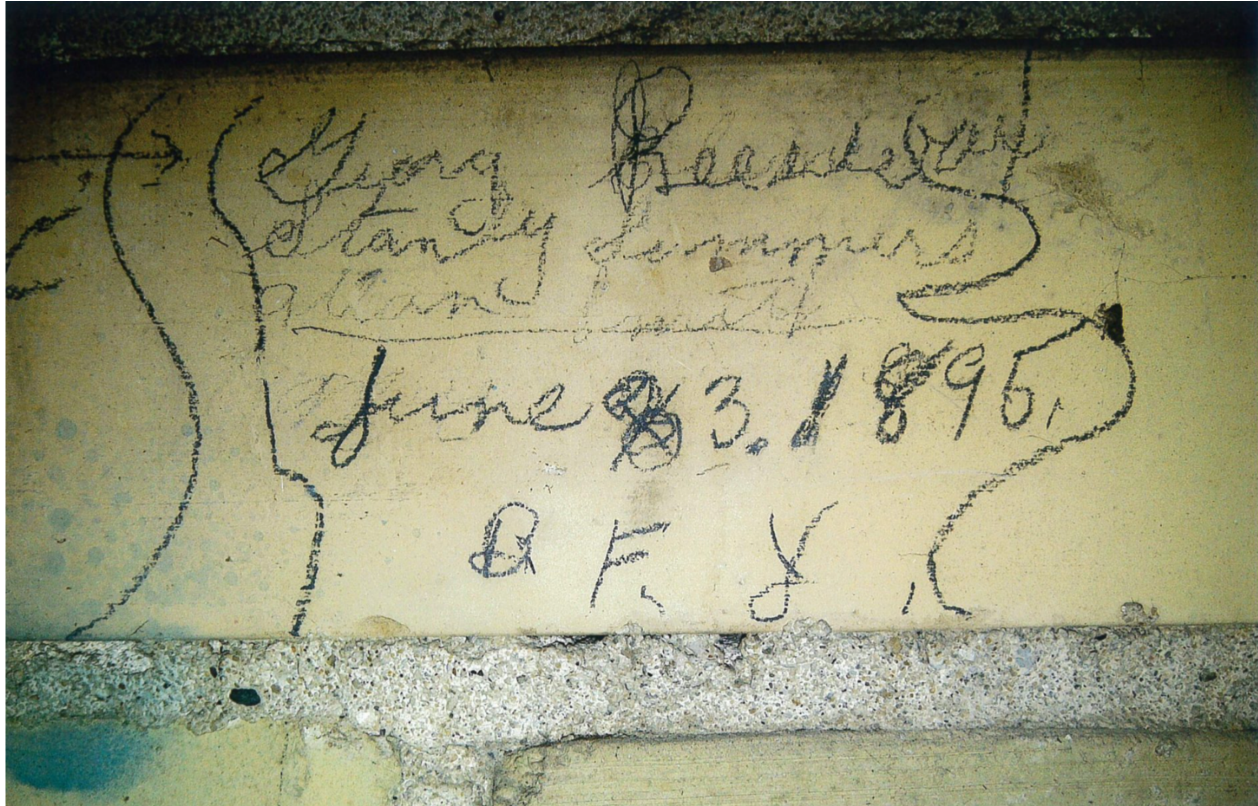

Figure 52, George Beeswax, Stanley Summers and Allan Smith inscribed their names on a brick at the Mount Elgin Horse Barn June 3, 1895.
Image accessed from https://chippewaorangeshirtday.com

Figure 53, Beaded Belt given to Gina McGahey by her grandfather, n.d.
Collection of Gina McGahey
Photo by Mary Deleary

Figure 54, Detail of Beaded Belt, n.d.
Collection of Gina McGahey

Figure 55, Moccasins purchased from Olivia Lewis in 1907 (501./1615 a and b). ca. 1907
American Museum of Natural History, Division of Anthropology

Figure 56, Gina McGahey pictured with her artwork, 2022
Photo taken at the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation Heritage Centre at Muncey, Ontario.
Photograph by Mary Deleary

Figure 57, Mary Ann Riley (neé Dolson) pictured with her nephew Linwood "Boney" Nicholas, n.d.
Photograph collection of Maxine Hendrick

Figure 58, Newspaper clipping. "Heritage lives on: Caradoc reserve women teach ancestral crafts to young," The London Free Press. October 23, 1978.
Collection of Maxine Hendrick

Figure 59, Syb young (seated) and Maxine Hendrick at Syb's home on Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, 2022
Photograph by Mary Deleary

Figure 60, Maxine holding a black velvet dress and cape with floral beadwork made by Genevieve Miskokomon, 2022
Collection of Maxine Hendrick
Photograph by Mary Deleary

Figure 61, Black Velvet leggings made by Genevieve Miskokomon, n.d.
Collection of Maxine Hendrick
Photograph by Mary Deleary

Figure 62, Leather Bag with beadwork made by Genevieve Miskokomon, n.d.
Collection of Maxine Hendrick
Photograph by Mary Deleary

Figure 63, Felicia Huff with her ribbon skirts and shirts, 2023
Image courtesy of Felicia Huff

NAANAN (FIVE): A PLACE FOR US TO SIT

At the start of this dissertation project, I set out to find and reconnect with gete-anishinaabeg. I wanted to learn about the making practices that are specific to Deshkan Ziibiing and explore memories, stories, and making as critical components in the resurgence of Deshkan Ziibiing Anishinaabe'aadiziwin (ways of life). I sought to reclaim and recover gete-anishinaabeg, our gikendaasowin, and begin documenting and making sense of our dibaajmowinan. From research to writing, this dissertation was a gift in the making. Preparing a place for us to sit, visit, and remember became an essential act of Indigenous care and love that was grounded in Indigenous relationality.

The questions I sought to answer in the beginning of this research journey were guideposts that became achievable with the help of my methodological approach. In the beginning I set out to answer the following questions: (1) Where is and what happened to ancestral objects created by Deshkan Ziibiing Anishinaabeg?, (2) How has colonialism and settler colonialism impacted making practices in Deshkan Ziibiing?, (3) What does the community remember about ancestral practices of making?, (4) What does making look like today? Each of the chapters in this dissertation addresses the above questions and sets the foundation for answering the final question. How are practices of making being reclaimed as part of a larger resurgence project to assert nation building, sovereignty, and self-determination? Contained within our stories and the materials in which they are embedded are layers of interpretation and meaning and are reminders of our original instructions. The process of

reconnecting to gete-anishinaabeg brings them back into conversation with Anishinaabeg governance and leadership practices which is an area for further inquiry.

This dissertation was grounded in and informed by scholars working across Indigenous Studies, Native Feminisms, Rematriation, Museum Studies, Ethnography, Anthropology, and Art History. Indigenous research frameworks such as *Biskaabiiyang*, *Storywork*, *Felt Theory*, and *Native Feminist Analysis,* informed my research ethic and encouraged a research framework that is inclusive and respectful of Anishinaabe dibaajimowinan (life experience stories), Anishinaabe'aadiziwin (way of life) and Anishinaabe gikendaasowin (ways of knowing). These frameworks also encouraged reciprocity where I considered the ways in which I can give back to Deshkan Ziibiing. One such desired outcome was to increase accessibility to our shared histories, experiences, and practices of making. However, this was taken further as I explored a community-based approach to collections research. This journey was not only informative and transformative for me, but inspired and engaged relatives who joined me in experiences that were enriching, informative, and inspiring. This research project informed and broadened theoretical and practical understandings of Indigenous methodologies and contributes to developing discourses on emergent Native art histories and experiences that are specific to Indigenous communities. While there may be some similarities, making practices and the impacts of colonialism look, feel, and are experienced differently for Indigenous people and Indigenous Nations.

Preparing a place for us to sit, involved more than just a table and chairs. It became a safe space that I shared in the homes and at the kitchen table with Deshkan Ziibiing Anishinaabeg. Such spaces offered us comfort, food, and drink as we visited and recalled memories and exchanged stories. I also prepared places to sit in spaces where we, living and breathing

Indigenous people, have been excluded from and made unwelcome in. These spaces are not comfortable for Indigenous people and oftentimes do not accommodate the needs of Indigenous groups and elders. Creating safe spaces in museums and archives, sites that continue to harm and perpetuate colonialism, violence, and misinformation against Indigenous people, is a critical next step. We need Indigenous people in museums and archives who are committed to creating safe spaces for us to learn and reconnect to gete-anishinaabeg. To create safe spaces for those of us who are piecing together stories of our past which often includes the dispossession of our lands, ancestral remains, and ancestral belongings. While many Indigenous Nations and researchers have been doing this work for a very long time, many others, like me, are only just beginning. Jo-ann Archibald, author of *Indigenous Storywork: Educating the Heart, Mind, Body, and Sprit,* conveys the following message,

> Patience and trust are essential for preparing to listen to stories. Listening involves more than just using the auditory sense. We must visualize the characters and their actions. We must let our emotions surface. As the Elders say it is important to listen with "three ears: two on the sides on our head and the one that is in our heart.[235]

She further writes, "Indigenous storywork is not easy, but it is essential if First Nations stories are to be used to educate the heart, mind, body, and spirit, which is truly Indigenous education."[236] Education, and more importantly Indigenous education was very relevant in this research process. Anishinaabe ways of doing, sharing, and educating were foregrounded which often included smudging, song, storytelling, prayer, and ceremony.

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[235] Jo-Ann Archibald, *Indigenous Storywork: Educating the Heart, Mind, Body, and Sprit* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2008), 8.
[236] Ibid, xi.

In closing, I would like to share a story that was shared with me by my mother. As we talked about the kinds of making practices she recalled growing up, she shared a story about her Grandmother Eva and Eva's oldest daughter, Betty.

> Aunt Betty lived in Garden City [Michigan]. She had a beautiful home that she had with her family and she always had it decorated so nice. She always had nice curtains. She had nice drapes in her living room, nice kitchen curtains with you know kitchen type patterns and designs, and all the bedrooms had drapes in them too. And so one day Aunt Betty told me a story about how the reason why she buys and likes curtains so much is because when she was growing up they were so poor and that she would go for walks with her mother to different places maybe to the store or to visit and help people who are sick on the reserve in Rama. and she noticed that her mom would always look in people's houses and what she was looking at was their curtains on their windows. She said that they were so poor that they didn't have curtains. They didn't have material so that she could make curtains. So this kind of stuck with her to where when she grew up and she moved to Michigan, and because her husband had a well to do job, she had the luxury of buying curtains and drapes. And she would buy them maybe once or twice in a year. and what she would do with the ones that she took down is that she gave them, I know she gave us a lot of drapes, that's the reason why we had drapes in our house and curtains because Aunt Betty gave them to us. Now I don't know the extent of or who else she gave curtains to. I'm sure that she probably gave curtains to my grandmother.[237]

The act of sharing that was shared in this memory, reminds me of what Felicia Huff said in our interview as she recalled how displays of Indigenous ceremony were criminalized. As a result, she stated,

> I remember standing in the new Sundance grounds, we were all out there helping… Betsy stood up, [and] she said just imagine… 30 years ago we could have all been arrested for standing here doing what we're doing. And I just stood there for the longest time just thinking about that. That our ancestors had to live with that fear. This is why my grandma [is] scared of sweats. This is why my grandfather didn't pass on that stuff to his grandchildren… we didn't even realize how deep that stuff was for them. So yeah… sharing the canning is pretty big for me.

[237] Nancy Deleary. Interview with the author. January 23, 2023.

I draw attention to this, because the gifting of drapes in my mother's story and the sharing of Felicia's canned pickles is significant. Sharing, it takes courage to do that after so much harm had been brought to our families.

The process of colonialism may have suppressed Anishinaabe knowledge, forced the exchange of materials, and removed and attempted to erase gete-anishinaabeg from our families. It did not, however, remove the kindness, love, and care that persists amongst Deshkan Ziibiing Anishinaabeg. This research journey is an extension of that persistent love and the desire to bring to the forefront the beauty of gete-anishinaabeg creativity and knowledge, our creativity and knowledge. Community and family have been at the core of this research and intellectual inquiry as I sought to create a place for us to sit, visit, and recall the stories of our ancestors.

As the completion of my research phase arrived, but before I headed back to my family in Oklahoma, my mother and I stopped by the Detroit Historical Society (DHS) in Detroit, Michigan. At the entry of the museum, there is an exhibition about Michigan's first peoples. There were numerous items on display, but one pair of makizinan caught my attention. In Figure 64, there is a pair of makizinan that were described in the following manner,

> Pair of Moccasins, Ojibwe tribe,
> Michigan's Upper Peninsula, c. 1840
> Buckskin with red, white, clear, yellow, gray, and blue bead on top of gray silk. The red wool flaps are decorated with blue, clear, green, white, and silver beads. Red and white beads on a blue ribbon outline the flaps[238]

The makizian are beautifully constructed, but in this instance my interest lies with the figure on the vamp, which is the upper part of the makizin. What might resemble a flower, looks like a biomorphic figure or entity. This figure shares a similarity in design to a gete-anishinaabeg at the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) that I had visited with community members from Deshkan

[238] Didactic label from an exhibition at the Detroit Historical Society.

Ziibiing earlier that week. The figure on the pair of makizinan at DHS is very similar to the figures on *Shoulder pouch with snakeskin strap* (911.3.121) which can be seen in Figure 65. While visiting the ROM earlier that week, one of our group members pointed out that the figure could possibly be Nanabush. Nanabush, who I discussed in the introduction chapter, was born into this world a rabbit. His mother died while giving birth to him and his brothers. Afterward, he was raised by Nokomis, his grandmother. Nanabush was born a very powerful being and has the ability of transformation. The figures on the makizinan and snakeskin bag have large and tall ear-like formations on top of their head, but they also resemble human beings, they resemble Nanabush. Seeing this image reminded me of the strength of Anishinaabe gikendaasowin and the relationships we make and sustain with the materials that enrich our lives. In this instance, I was reminded of Nanabush's role as a trickster, teacher, and researcher. It was befitting that Nanabush would appear at the conclusion of this journey. His presence signaled the conclusion, but not the end, because there is more to this story. This is just the beginning.

Figure 64, Moccasins (1966.014.100), ca. 1840
Detroit Historical Society
Photograph by Mary Deleary

Figure 65, Shoulder pouch with snakeskin strap (911.3.121), mid-19th century
Oronhyatekha Collection; Gift of the Independent Order of Foresters
Royal Ontario Museum
Photograph by Mary Deleary

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