Coming Home

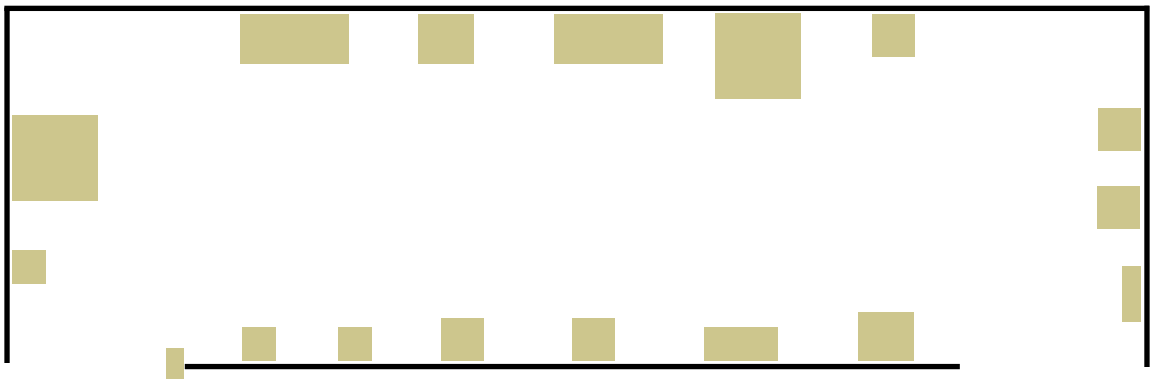
GALLERY GUIDE

This gallery guide includes additional information and background about the stories and objects in *Coming Home*. As with most museum exhibits, there is always more to say than will fit on the walls! If you would like to dig a little deeper, learn a little more about what you will see in the exhibit, take a look.

Please return the Gallery Guide before you leave the gallery.

This gallery guide can also be found on the Abbe Museum's website at http://abbemuseum.org/exhibits/ComingHomeGalleryGuide.pdf

Throughout this Gallery Guide, you will find small maps to help you locate the piece that is featured in each section of the guide. For example:



American Museum of Natural History, 50.1/9923.

Caring For Collections: Cultural Values

When handling or exhibiting cultural objects, it is important to understand and take into account the beliefs and cultural practices of the people who created and used the objects. This might include:

- how much people from outside the culture should know about the use of an object
- which objects should or should not be exhibited or stored together
- who can and cannot handle certain objects
- if objects with several parts should be displayed assembled or not

For example, unless a pipe is being used for a ceremonial purpose, the pipe stem and pipe bowl are not attached. So when they are exhibited, the bowl and stem should not be connected.

Probably the most familiar example of how cultural values should be incorporated into caring for collections comes into play with funerary objects and human remains. The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act provides a framework for federally recognized tribes to request that the remains of their ancestors be returned to them. However, there are some cases where the ancestors and their belongings remain in museum collections, perhaps because they have not been claimed by a particular tribe, or because the repatriation process can take a long time. In cases like this, many museums make an effort to apply culturally-appropriate practices to the care of this sensitive material. These practices are often based on cross-cultural ideas of what is appropriate, and may include:

- not displaying human remains or funerary objects under any circumstances
- not handling or approaching the objects when under the influence of a substance, or
- participating in a purification ritual before interacting with sacred materials.

In some cultural traditions, women are forbidden from handling certain objects when menstruating, but some contemporary tribal elders argue that this practice stems from western patriarchal societies, not the traditional matriarchal social structures of their own communities.

Many museums that collaborate with Native peoples have begun to change the way they discuss and interact with our cultures. I remember attending a reception at the National Museum of the American Indian, during which elders from other tribes blessed the building and everyone in it before performing traditional dances. When I was invited to view the permanent collections, I was surprised (in a good way) to find out that there was a ceremonial space specifically designed for smudging, complete with the necessary herbs from multiple traditions. Now, at the Abbe Museum, we invite Wabanaki elders and leaders to welcome artifacts home with traditional songs, prayers, and ceremonies. The museum world is changing, and Native cultural values are finally becoming a part of it. -George Neptune, Passamaquoddy, Museum Educator

American Museum of Natural History, 50.1/7264.

A Linguistic Perspective

The Wabanaki communities are among the few Indigenous groups on the eastern seaboard who have kept their Indigenous languages intact. The languages spoken in the Wabanaki communites are Passamaquoddy-Maliseet, Mi'kmaq, and Penobscot. All three languages follow the same grammar rules, and they share many root words with one another, making it possible for speakers of one language to communicate with another. During pre-European times, it was likely that Wabanaki people spoke multiple languages within the Algonquian language family.

In the Wabanaki languages, concepts are often explained through the creation of compound words. For example, take the word for basket: *posonut*. The root of the word comes from *opos*, meaning stick or twig (though in some communities, it is used for tree), with the ending *–onot* denoting a holder or carrier of some sort. So, *posonot* could be interpreted as literally meaning "stick-bag," a container made of sticks.

For the objects in *Coming Home*, we did our best to find the traditional words used to describe the pieces. However, many of these pieces were created specifically for sale or trade to non-Natives, so did not necessarily have a traditional name. The word for powder horn—*ahalonossis*—is a good example. The root of this word, *halon*, is actually a Passamaquoddy pronunciation of the English word horn, with the ending *–ossis¬* being diminutive. However, the Passamaquoddy already had a word for antler, *somu*, showing that the word *ahalonossis* was developed post-contact, and specifically refers to the powder horns used with European firearms.

A note on spelling Wabanaki words

The Wabanaki did not use written language to communicate. Prior to European contact, the only writing system present was the Mi'kmaq pictographic system, so Wabanaki words were written down in English or French phonetics. Wabanaki people then used these phonetic spellings until linguists and tribal elders began to develop writing systems in the 1970s. Each language now has a separate writing system, with some communities using additional difference to represent their dialect.

Loaned by Boston Children's Museum, Boston, MA.

wikhikoninut

Loaned by Boston Children's Museum, Boston, MA.

molocessinut

Loaned by Boston Children's Museum, Boston, MA.

tulehpinut

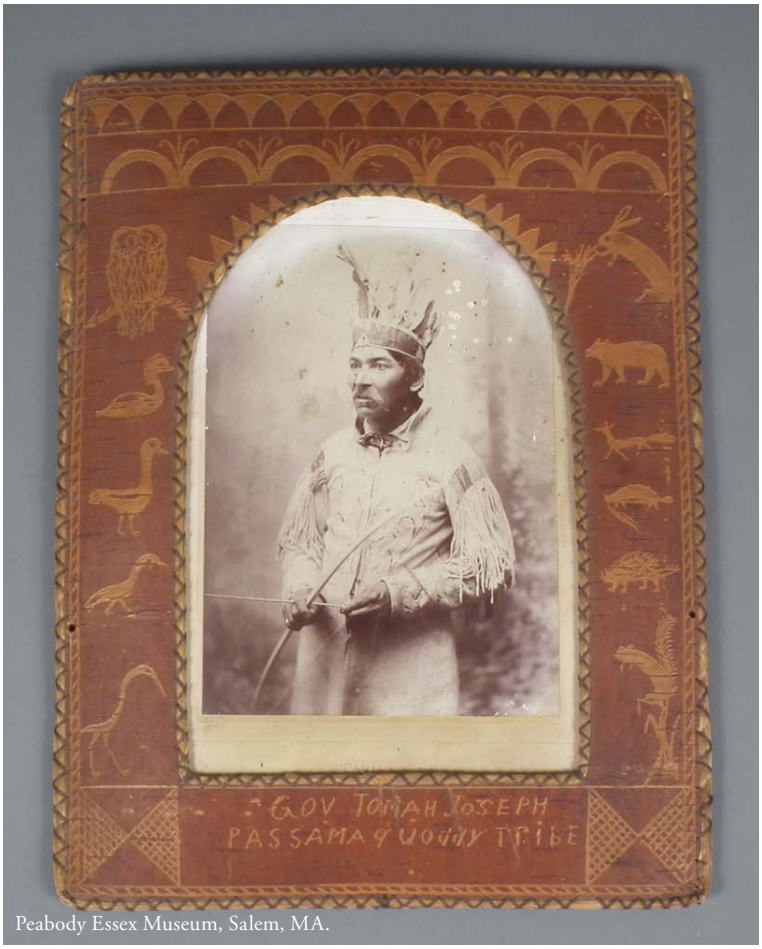
Other pieces, like Tomah Joseph's work, were developed as part of the tourist trade, and did not have specific names. In order to name them, Museum Educator George Neptune, Passamaquoddy, worked with his grandmother and linguist Connor Quinn to name some of these objects. The word, used for picture frame, has the root word of *wikhikon*, meaning a drawing or design, and the ending *–inut*, denoting a container. Thus, a picture frame in Passamaquoddy would literally translate as a "drawing holder." The same is true for *tulehpinut* and *molocessinut*, with the roots *tulehp* meaning playing card and *molocess* meaning glove.

Additional resources:
Passamaquoddy-Maliseet Language Portal, online at http://pmportal.org/splash or http://pmportal.org/.

Peskotomuhkati Wolastoqewi Latuwewakon: A Passamaquoddy-Maliseet Dictionary, by David A. Francis and Robert M. Leavitt; Margaret Apt, Community Research Coordinator. University of Maine Press, 2008.

Penobscot Indian Nation Cultural and Historic Preservation Department, Listen to the Language web resource at http://www.penobscotculture.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=4&Itemid=71.

Mi'gmaq Online Dictionary at http://www.mikmaqonline.org/default.html.



Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, MA.

Tomah Joseph

In the late 19th and early 20th century, Passamaquoddy artists applied their birchbark basket making skills to produce goods in vogue in Victorian America, such as the decorative wastebasket, picture frames, and boxes on display in *Coming Home*. Wealthy summer residents, including Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt, bought decorated birchbark pieces to furnish their summer homes in Maine and eastern Canada.

Tomah Joseph, a Passamaquoddy artist, created many of the birchbark objects featured in *Coming Home*. His photograph can be seen in both of the birchbark picture frames in the exhibit. Born in 1837, he lived at Peter Dana Point, or Motahkomikuk (Indian Township) Reservation, near Princeton, Maine, and spent summers on Campobello Island working as a canoe guide, canoe instructor, and selling decorative items to tourists and summer residents. Tomah Joseph combined the Wabanaki traditions of *wikhikon*, or picture writing, and birchbark construction techniques to make these highly decorative yet functional items. Joseph would harvest the thicker, darker winter bark after the first hard frost, when the bark is easiest to remove. Then using a tool such as a crooked knife, he would scratch away the winter layer of bark to reveal the lighter-colored summer layer.

The objects Tomah Joseph made often illustrated portions of Passamaquoddy stories such as Koluskap's first moose hunt, seen etched onto the canoe seat back he made for Mabel Clapp (Mrs. F. T. Lord), one of his canoeing pupils during the 1890s (Boston Children's Museum catalog record). The birchbark card case depicts the story of the creation of mosquitos. Each of Tomah Joseph's pieces is marked with his own personal symbol, Ko-ko-kas. Can you find Ko-ko-kas, the little owl, on the pieces in *Coming Home*?

Other items by Tomah Joseph can be seen on display at the Roosevelt summer cottage, now part of the Roosevelt Campobello International Park in Welshpool, Campobello Island, New Brunswick.

To learn more about Tomah Joseph:

For adults:

History on Birchbark: The Art of Tomah Joseph, Passamaquoddy, by Joan A. Lester. Brown University, 1993

Tomah Joseph: A man of nature (1837-1914), online at http://www.wabanaki.com/tomah_joseph.htm

For kids:

Remember Me: Tomah Joseph's Gift to Franklin Roosevelt, by Donald Soctomah, Jean Flahive, and Mary Beth Owens (Illustrator). Tilbury House Publishers, 2009.

Tomah Joseph frequently depicted scenes from Passamaquoddy oral traditions in his work. The illustrations on this box reminded Abbe Museum Educator George Neptune of the story of Koluskap and Pukcinsqehs:

The story of Glooskap and Pook-jin-skwess (spelled Koluskap and Pukcinsqehs in the modern Passamaquoddy writing system) is an oral history that involves many places and events across the Dawnland. Tomah Joseph often featured Koluskap in his work, and in one particular etching, he is seen setting his dogs on a couple of witches.

In one version of the story of Koluskap and Pukcinsqehs, Koluskap finally catches up to Pukcinsqehs, and ultimately subdues her by grabbing her by the hair and throwing her to the ground—resulting in a huge battle that created the islands and mountains along the coast near Mount Desert Island. The image on the card box featuring the man with the hatchet, capturing his prey by the hair, reminded me of this story. This particular etching shows up on several of Tomah Joseph's pieces, and may not specifically represent Koluskap and Pukcinsqehs, but the image of grabbing someone by the hair is a strong one—and, in Koluskap's case, had some serious consequences for Wabanaki people.

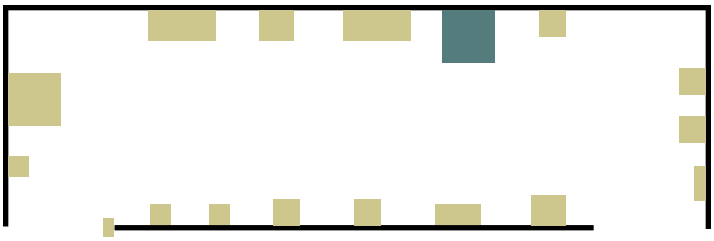
–George Neptune, Passamaquoddy,
Abbe Museum Educator

Loaned by Boston Children's Museum, Boston, MA.

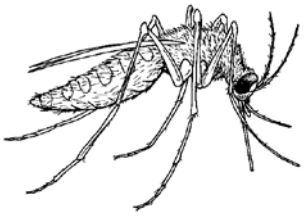
A standard writing system for the Passamaquoddy-Maliseet language was developed starting in the 1960s, well after Tomah Joseph's time. His spellings were creative, and sometimes changed over time. Using the standard writing system, Ko-ko-kas is now *kuhkukhahs*.

How the story of Glooskap and Pook-jin-skwess the Evil Pitcher, is told by the Passamaquoddy Indians.

Pook-jin-skwess was a witch who could take on the form of either a man or a woman and in the time this story took place Pook-jin-skwess looked to be a man. Pook-jin-skwess hated the chief [Glooskap] and thought constantly of how to get rid of him and take his place as chief. One day Pook-jin-skwess tricked the chief into going to collect gull eggs far from camp as the others packed and made ready to move to another camp. While collecting gull eggs, Pook-jin-skwess stole the canoe, leaving the chief stranded on the island. After thirteen days stranded on the island the chief sang out to his friend the Fox who came to his aid. Clinging to Fox as he swam to the other shore, both were battered by a fierce storm brought on by Pook-jin-skwess. After finding the camp the others had moved to, the chief commanded his younger brother to throw Pook-jin-skwess' son into a bonfire of hemlock bark. After learning about the death of his son, Pook-jin-skwess ran into the forest and confronted the chief who, using his magic, stuck Pook-jin-skwess to a tree and left him there. After working all night long to free himself Pook-jin-skwess returned to camp with part of the tree still stuck to his back. The others relentlessly mocked Pook-jin-skwess, causing him to flee. Upon arriving in Bar



Harbor, he sat down on a log and, still furious with anger, turned himself into a mosquito to forever torment all men. –excerpted and summarized from *Algonquin Legends*, by Charles Leland, 1884, page 44.



Koluskap's First Moose Hunt
As told by George Neptune, Passamaquoddy

Koluskap taught Wabanaki people many things—how to make stone tools, birchbark canoes, and other methods of survival specific to the Dawnland. In one story, Koluskap hunts the first moose. The story not only teaches which parts of the moose are safe to eat, but serves as a verbal map leading to a very important resource.

In the story, Koluskap is pursuing a cow and her calf. He picks up a rock, fastens it to a stick, and launches it at the cow, creating the first arrow. The cow falls over, and her body turns into stone, while the calf escapes down the river. Ultimately, Koluskap succeeds in taking the calf, and begins cleaning and preparing the meat on an island off the coast. He tosses the entrails to his dog across the bay, discarding other parts into the river.

Loaned by Boston Children's Museum, Boston, MA.

The entrails and liver of the calf can still be seen in Penobscot Bay. Moose Liver Rock is a placename that has survived today, and the "entrails" of the moose can be spotted near Cape Rosier in the form of a white stripe of quartz that reaches across the bay. Ultimately, the markers in the story lead you all the way back to the cow—now known as Mt. Kineo. Kineo, comes from the word *kineyu*, "it is sharp." The cow transformed into the stone that killed her, and her story teaches you how to find that stone. Mt. Kineo rhyolite was such a valuable and rare resource that groups from all over the northeast fought to gain control over it from the Wabanaki.

How do you spell that?
You might encounter a variety of different spellings of Koluskap's name on etched birchbark and in written versions of Wabanaki stories. Over the centuries, French and English speaking visitors and scholars have been fairly creative in how they decided to spell a name that had been spoken to them. Some of the various spellings include Kluskap, Glooskap, Glooscap, Gluscape, and Gluskabe.

Who is Koluskap?
Koluskap was the first man to come to the Dawnland—there were many creatures here, but humans had not been created yet. Travelling with Grandmother Woodchuck, who taught him how to live in the Dawnland, Koluskap was charged with the task of creating a race of people. First, he made the stone people, who were hard, cold, and cruel. Then, he shot one of his arrows into a brown ash tree, splitting it in half. From the split in the tree came Koluskap's children—the Wabanaki People.

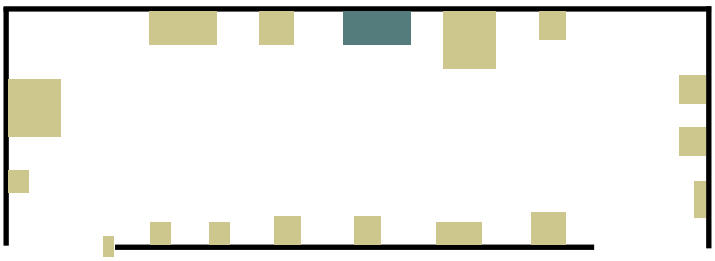
Now, Koluskap is called a "culture hero" by most scholars. He is not the Great Spirit or the Creator, but someone who was sent by the Creator to carry out instructions: a demi-god, of sorts. Through our stories, Koluskap teaches us how to behave, how to treat our elders, how to treat our children, and how to protect our people—everything that we needed to know in order to survive in our home. Koluskap was known for making many mistakes in his adventures, so you could also say Koluskap teaches us how *not* to live.

Our stories say that he is in his wikuwam*, behind the rising sun, preparing arrows for a great battle that will one day storm the Dawnland. We, the Wabanaki people, were told to wait in our homelands for him to return.*

-George Neptune, Passamaquoddy,
Abbe Museum Educator

Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, MA.

Quillwork



Quillwork was a common form of ornamentation used on clothing and other decorative objects before the introduction of beads by the Europeans. Quills were collected by throwing a blanket over the unsuspecting porcupine and as the animal raised its quills in defense and wiggled out from underneath it, the quills would lodge in the blanket. The captured quills range in length from 2 ½ to 5 inches in length depending on which part of the porcupine they came from. The quills were softened by soaking them in water and dyed using plant based dyes. Once prepared the quills could be wrapped around a base of sinew already sewn onto the clothing. If the quills were to be used to embellish a birch bark object then an awl was used to punch a small hole before the quill was inserted. The excess quill was cutoff flush with the bark, and because of the bark's thickness, the quill would be held in place.

Birchbark objects decorated with elaborate quillwork patterns became popular with tourists and collectors during the 19th century. Wabanaki artists created objects that fit with the Victorian aesthetic, and were valued additions to heavily-decorated Victorian households.

North American Porcupine (*Erethizon dorsatum*), photo courtesy of the National Park Service.

Quill work was used on items such as place mats, boxes, and these two panels which were originally catalogued as leg shields. However, the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology now think this is incorrect. It seems more likely that these are ...chair backs or box panels. -University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology staff

Loaned by the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Philadelphia, U.S.A.

Loaned by the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Philadelphia, U.S.A.

Loaned by Boston Children's Museum, Boston, MA.

Silver and Peaked Caps: Molly Molasses and 19th Century Wabanaki Women's Clothing

Molly Molasses, Penobscot, was born Mary Pelagie Nicola in the Bangor area in 1775. She was a well-known figure on the streets of Bangor and Brewer, where she made her living as a trader and a healer. Molly was said to be able to heal others by taking their sickness into her own body. As for how she got the nickname Molasses, some claim it was a coincidence because it rhymed with Balassee, the Penobscot pronunciation of Pelagie. Molly claimed it was because she was so "sweet." However, friendliness was not known to be one of her many attributes, and she would often frighten people into purchasing the things she had offered for sale.

The cap Molly is wearing demonstrates how European ideas and Indian creativity combined in changing Wabanaki clothing styles. By the early 19th century, Maliseet and Micmac women in Canada, as well as Penobscot and Passamaquoddy women in Maine, were wearing a peaked cap or hood made of two pieces of broadcloth, sewn together with silk ribbons.

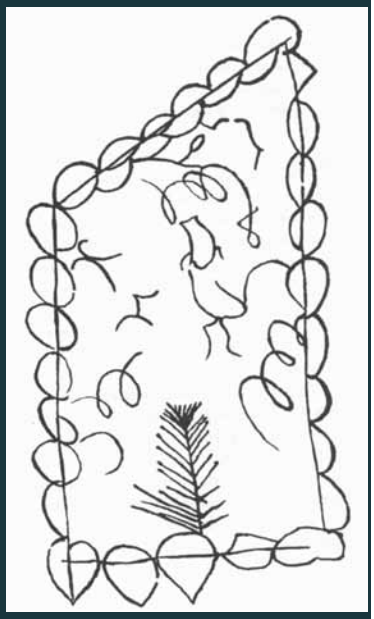
The Boston Children's Museum's Penobscot cap is made of red "annuity cloth" decorated with fine ribbon appliqué and edged with tiny white beads. In Maine, red and blue broadcloth is referred to as "annuity cloth" because 100 yards of cloth was issued semi-annually to each Indian family as part of the state's treaty obligations. The state's treaty stated one year the cloth was to be red, the next year blue. The layout and patterning of the silk ribbons may derive from ornamental borders on clothing that were once made with paint or moosehair embroidery.

Adapted from *We're Still Here: Art of Indian New England*: *The Children's Museum Collection*, 1987.

Molly Molasses in peaked cap, 1865, calling card, courtesy of the Bangor Historical Society.

Throughout the Wabanaki homeland, there are hundreds of petroglyphs, incised or pecked stone images depicting visions, legends, objects, and hunting scenes. Due to the fragile nature and cultural significance of these carvings the locations remain secret or are carefully protected by both Wabanaki and non-Native stewards. There are multiple images of peaked caps found among Mi'kmaq* petroglyphs in Nova Scotia.

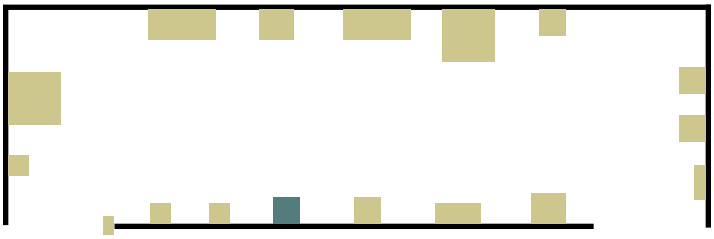
**In Maine, the Aroostook Band of Micmacs uses the the "Micmac" spelling of the tribe's name. In Canada, the "Mi'kmaq" spelling is more widely used.*



Peaked cap depicted in a Mi'kmaq petroglyph, Kejimkujik National Park, Nova Scotia. Wabanaki Petroglyphs

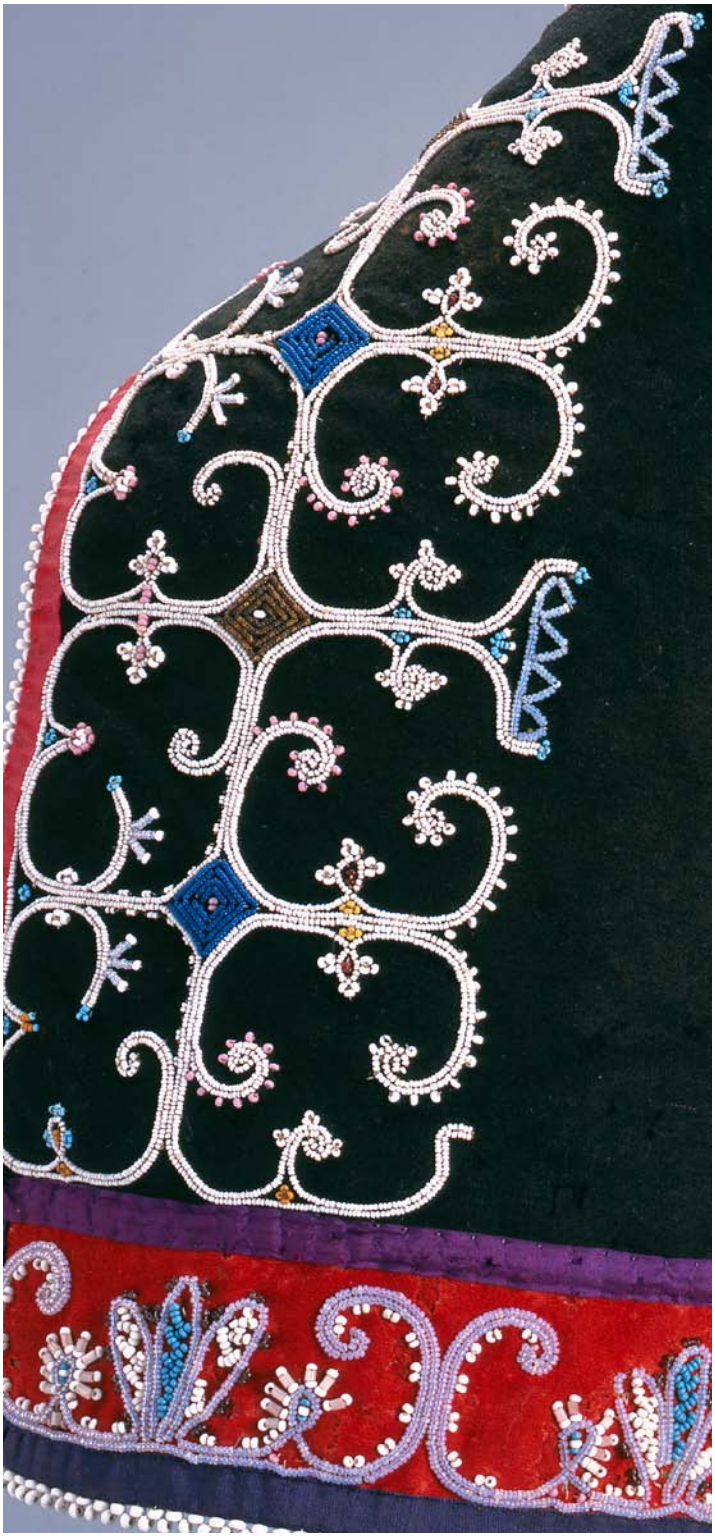
Molly Molasses, ca. 1855. Old Town Museum Collections, photograph courtesy of the Maine State Museum.

Loaned by Boston Children's Museum, Boston, MA.



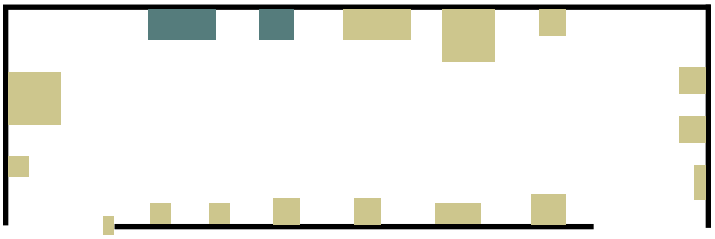
Loaned by the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Philadelphia, U.S.A.

In both pictures Molly is also wearing circular silver medallions or brooches, one of the earliest forms of silver jewelry offered to Native Americans by the colonists. Peace medals and silver crescents known as gorgets were presented to formalize alliances, and Native American leaders accepted and wore these silver offerings as status symbols, often in exchange for furs. Brooches, pins, armbands, hatbands, and bracelets were also exchanged as trade goods. The quantity of silver that a man wore was, like wampum, a symbol of his success as a hunter and provider (Boston Children's Museum catalog records).



Fenimore Art Museum, Cooperstown, New York, Gift of Eugene V. and Clare E. Thaw, Thaw Collection, T0291.

Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University. Bequest of William H. Claflin, Jr., 1985.



Double Curve Motif

Peaked caps and beaded collars were an important part of traditional Wabanaki regalia. Regalia, other forms of beadwork, and etched birchbark are often decorated with inward curling lines, referred to as double curve motifs.

Anthropologist Frank Speck researched and documented double curve designs in the early 20th century, but he was unable to obtain any concrete information as to the meaning of the double curve. Contemporary Wabanaki artists and scholars see the double curve as a symbol of balance (male/female, good/bad, day/night, etc.), but the full meaning can only be interpreted by the artist who created the design. It may have different meanings depending on the time of the year and other symbols it is combined with.

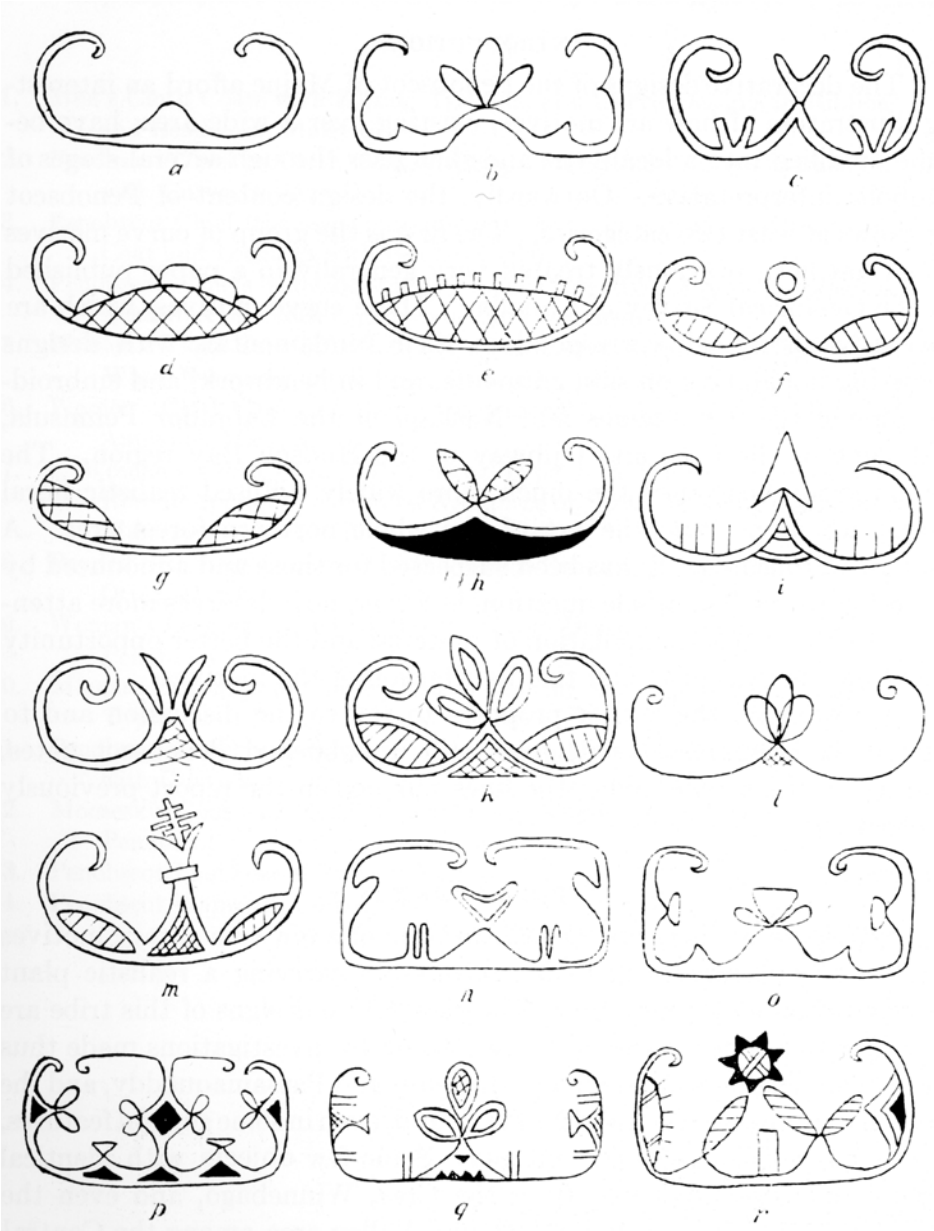
Additional resources:

The Double-Curve Motive in Northeastern Algonkian Art, by Frank G. Speck, 1914. Available online at https://archive.org/details/cu31924101521999.

Symbolism in Penobscot Art, by Frank G. Speck, 1927. Available online at http://digitallibrary.amnh.org/dspace/handle/2246/234.

The double curve is also a prominent design element on beaded bags and may symbolize vegetation and bounty. Similar beadwork is found on formal clothing such as chief's coats, hoods, caps, moccasins, and sashes. Micmac beadworkers always selected the finest red or blue wool because it provided a rich contrast to their intricate beadwork. -Fenimore Art Museum online catalog

Fenimore Art Museum, Cooperstown, New York, Gift of Eugene V. and Clare E. Thaw, Thaw Collection, T0778.



In addition to highlighting the intricate beadwork, the most commonly chosen colors of European textiles for regalia were red and blue. Red is a sacred color, often signifying protection, and blue was the only color Wabanaki people couldn't make—hence its popularity. A member of my family still has a beaded sash owned by great-great-grandfather William Neptune, the last traditional Passamaquoddy chief. -George Neptune, Passamaquoddy, Abbe Museum Educator

Photograph by Frank G. Speck, courtesy of the University of Pennsylvania Museum, 13964.

Wəskwapi (tumpline)

A tumpline is a cord worn either over the head or across the chest which helps to support and disperse the weight of heavy objects such as packs and canoes while traveling on foot. Utilizing a tumpline allows the hands to be left free as seen here in this photo of Stephen Stanislaus and his son Francis, Penobscots, carrying pack baskets with tumplines, Lincoln, Maine, 1911.

Wikepimisi (Basswood, or *Tilia Americana*)

Wabanaki craftspeople used basswood fibers to make a variety of tools such as fish and harpoon lines, nets, and bags, as well as tumplines. Basswood has a very fibrous inner bark. When processed by boiling it with wood ash and then braiding the fibers together, it produces a very strong rope.

The Passamaquoddy word for basswood is *olonikp*, which could be translated as "regular-ash." In Passamaquoddy, plants and animals are often named for physical characteristics, and similar plants/animals will share common root words—so, it is likely that basswood is called *olonikp* because of the qualities it shares with black ash.

In the Passamaquoddy language, compound words are formed by dropping certain letters of words and combining them. The root *olonikp* is *wikp*, the word for brown ash (*Fraxinus negra*). The beginning of the word, *olon-*, denotes something regular, ordinary, or in more modern interpretations, "Native."

More examples how words are built in Passamaquoddy, using the ***olon***- modifier:

Makson is the Passamaquoddy word for "shoe." ***Olon****akson*, another form of the word, also means shoe, but would more likely refer specifically to what you would think of as "moccasins," or Native shoe.

A similar word, ***olon****ahq*, is used to describe the metal iron. The ending ***–ahq¬*** denotes a hard core, as with *st****ahq****on*, "tree," or *wikp****ahq****em*, the core left over from pounding an ash log. So, "iron" in the Passamaquoddy language could be interpreted as "regular metal."

-Dr. Conor Quinn, Linguist, and George Neptune, Passamaquoddy, Museum Educator

American Museum of Natural History, 50.1/7611.

Fenimore Art Museum, Cooperstown, New York, Gift of Eugene V. and Clare E. Thaw, Thaw Collection, T0289.

Emkwan (Belt Cup with Moose Figure)

The word *emkwan* actually refers to a big spoon, like a ladle, while *emkwansis* refers to what English calls a spoon. So the perspective of which one is basic, and which one is the bigger/smaller from that basic, is different between the two languages. Penobscot [and Passamaquoddy] starts from the bigger one, and then gets to the smaller one with –sis, while English starts from the smaller one, and gets to the bigger one with 'big spoon' or 'ladle'.

–Conor Quinn email to Carol Dana, 2014

Wikuwam (wigwam)

The *wikuwam*, a traditional Wabanaki home, was most often a dome shaped structure constructed with a series of poles bent over and lashed together with spruce root. This base was then covered with birch bark strips sewn together using spruce root. Conical wigwams, like the one shown in the photographs in *Coming Home* may have been used at more temporary camps

The use of birch bark to cover a wigwam had a number of advantages. It contains a natural chemical which helps to slow rotting and insect damage. Birch bark is also naturally waterproof. There are plenty of birch trees in Maine, so it would have been easy to gather new bark when sections need replacing. When camps were moved from one location to another, the birch bark sections, if undamaged, were removed, rolled up, and carried to the new camp. The birch bark rolls were then soaked in order to make them more pliable, before they were unrolled onto the new frame.

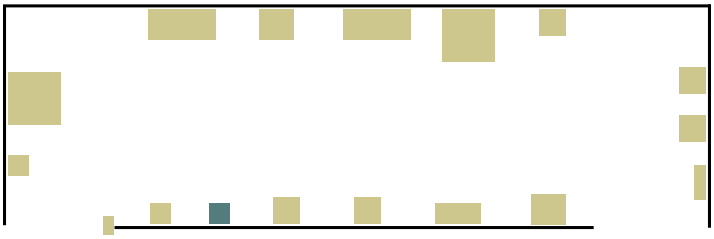
Evergreen boughs would be woven together to form a soft surface for sleeping or sitting. Even though the inside of a wigwam was an open space, Wabanaki social structure determined where people sat, depending on gender and social status. There were communal areas near the center of the wigwam and private areas closer to the edges where people could find some privacy.

Courtesy of the Peabody Museum of Archaeology & Ethnology, 2004.24.

Loaned by Boston Children's Museum, Boston, MA.

and these are then tacked in place with 1/16" stitches. Just before the end of the hairs is reached, they will be trimmed, before a new bunch of hairs is inserted underneath the last stitch. Hair tufts can be created by placing a large bundle of hair underneath a stich and pulling the stich tight. The tension will cause the hairs to stand up and be cut to the desired length. The process is the same regardless of whether the hairs are being attached to a wooden box or some type of cloth.

Moose Hair Embroidery



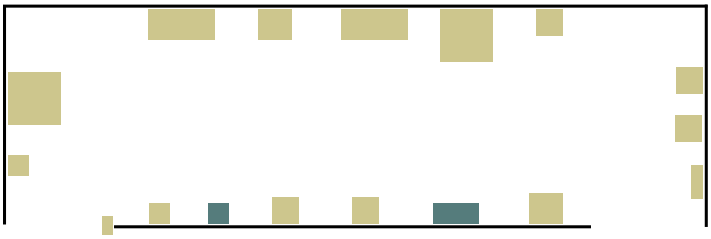
The use of moose hair to embroider decorative objects for sale to non-Natives was first done by Huron and other Native women working with Ursuline nuns in Quebec. The Native artists were familiar with the use of moose hair to decorate their own clothing and other objects, and they offered it as an alternative to the expensive silk embroidery floss the nuns had first taught them to use. The moose hair embroidered pieces in *Coming Home* were probably made by Maliseet women who spent time in Huron communities in Quebec.

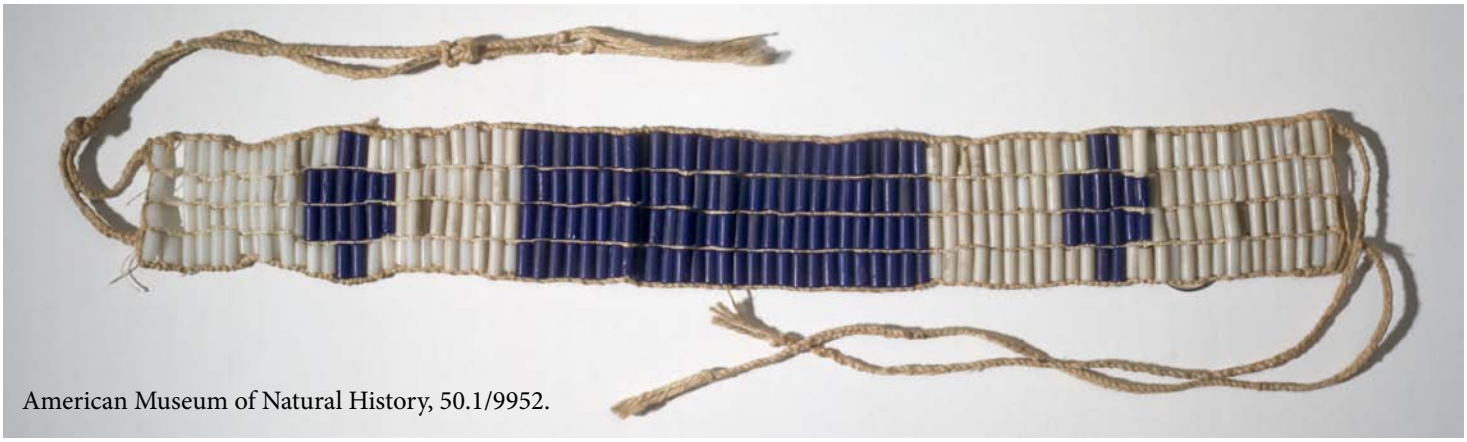
American Museum of Natural History, 10/93.

Hairs selected for moose hair embroidery are chosen from the mane, rump, or cheek of the moose, as these hairs tend to be the longest at about 5 inches long. The process of attaching moose hair embroidery is similar to quillwork. For straight lines, a group of 4-6 hairs is laid against the object being embroidered,

Wampum Stories

The primary function of wampum was to symbolize a pledge of honor, and it was often used to communicate messages among tribes. The geometric patterns woven into some wampum belts were meant to recall important events such as oral histories, treaties, and agreements. These belts were brought back and forth from important events and passed down from generation to generation. While wampum served many functions among the





American Museum of Natural History, 50.1/9952.

Wabanaki, it was never meant to, nor did it ever, serve as money. This idea was a misinterpretation of the function of wampum by early European explorers.

There are many stories about wampum in Wabanaki oral traditions. The following story was collected by Frank Speck during his time among the Wabanaki.

> All at once he met a manly, good looking man, and finely clothed. All his clothes were made of wampum. He said to him (Gesi'lat) "let us wrestle. Now if you throw me then we shall exchange our clothes." He replied, "Nehe let's wrestle." Then he threw the man and won his clothes. They changed clothes. Then in the evening when he came home his sister said to him: "How did you get such nice clothes?" He said "I won them. I have wrestled with a man whom I met. He wanted me to wrestle, saying to me, 'If you throw me we shall trade clothes!' Then I threw him and won his clothes." The next morning he met another one. Dark wampum material were his clothes and he then wanted to wrestle. He threw him too and won his clothes. – from *The Functions of Wampum Among The Eastern Algonkian* by Frank Speck, 1919.

Wampum was traditionally made from quahog (*Mercenaria mercenaria*) clam shells. First, the outer layer of the shell was rubbed against a rough surface to reveal the shinier inner layer. Next, the shell was broken to separate the purple and white areas. A bone or stone awl (or metal tipped awl after trade began with Europeans) was used to create a circular hole in the center of the piece, which could then be strung onto a piece of sinew. Once strung, the shell pieces were then run through a grooved rock to make them more rounded. The finished wampum beads were used in a variety of ways, including decoration on clothing or strung together to make woven belts or collars.

Photo by Stephen Lang, AINS/NMAI

Wampum was also used in marriage proposals. A messenger carrying wampum strings or a piece of wampum would present it to the intended and the intended's family while reciting a speech. If the intended and their family accepted the proposal, the wampum was kept and word was sent back via the messenger. If the proposal was rejected, the wampum was sent back with the messenger.

From the Anthropologist about Wampum

Upon the death of a chief several delegates were sent by the Penobscot to their neighbors carrying the…mourning belt. A mourning belt was smaller than the rest, about twelve inches long, mostly white with a section of blue on the center representing the dead chief, and flanked by two blue crosses denoting the second chiefs or captains in mourning. – from *The Functions of Wampum Among The Eastern Algonkian* by Frank Speck, 1919.

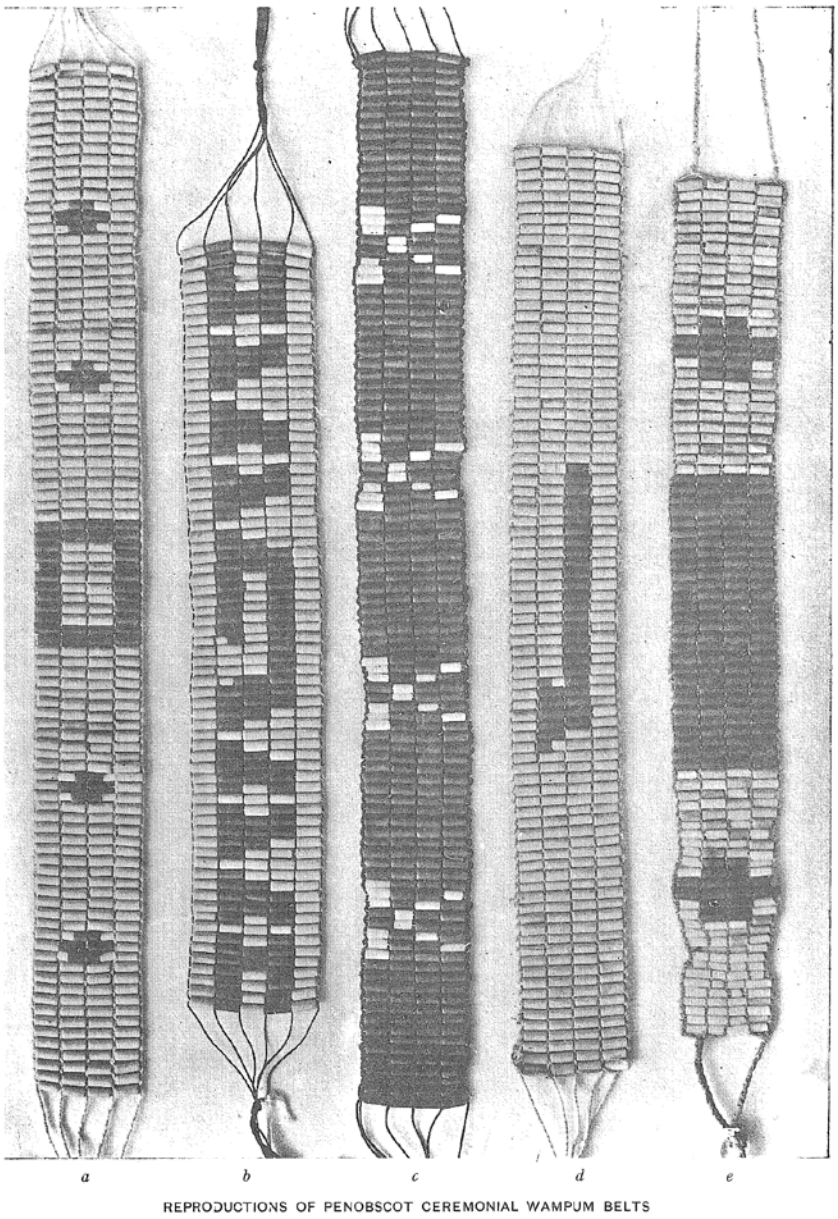


Plate from *The Functions of Wampum Among The Eastern Algonkian* by Frank Speck, 1919.

Additional resources:

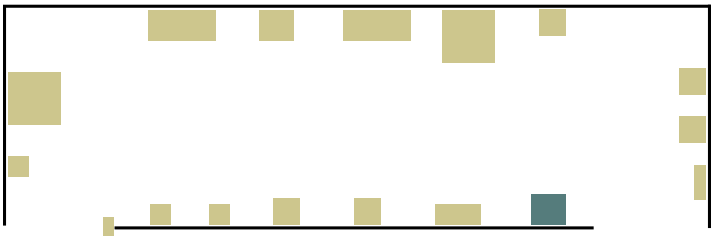
The Functions of Wampum Among The Eastern Algonkian by Frank Speck, 1919. Online at https://archive.org/stream/memoirs_06ameruoft/memoirs_06ameruoft_djvu.txt .

Wampum and Wampum Belts, by Frederick M. Wiseman, online at http://www.forgottenwaronline.org/pdf/native-studies/wampum-belts.pdf.

Waltes or Dice Game

The word "waltes" is the modern name given to this ancient Wabanaki game. In the Wabanaki languages, the name given to this game actually refers to the small dish used to play it. In Passamaquoddy-Maliseet, the words *walotehs* and *waltestakon* are used to describe this plate, whereas *walot* is a plate used when eating. The Penobscot and Mi'kmaq words are *wɑlatehámɑkan* and *waltestaqn*, respectively, and a Native speaker of one of the languages would only hear slight differences between the words.

Loaned by the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Philadelphia.



A waltes set generally consists of:

- six bone dice made from deer antler, rounded on one side and flat with a design carved into the other
- one Old Man stick, which is crooked
- three Old Women sticks, generally straight and wider than the rest of the counting sticks
- fifty-one straight, skinny counting sticks

Waltes is the ultimate game of chance. It can last a few hours or a few days before a winner is declared. There are a variety of ways the game is played, and the following description is based on several sources from Maine and eastern Canada.

Played in three rounds, scoring of the game gets more complex as the game moves from round to round. Points are scored for every time a player flips either five or all six dice alike.

The first round, "Traveling," ends when one player wins the Old Man and the other player has to pay his debt (16 counting sticks)to the player with the Old Man. If after paying the debt to the player with the Old Man the debtor still has three or more counting sticks, play enters round two. However, if the debtor is left with no sticks then the game ends and the player with the Old Man is the winner.

Round two, "Collecting Firewood," is played the same as round one with the exception that the Old Man is no longer used. Players continue to take turns until one of the players believes they have more points than their opponent. At that time one player can demand the other player pay the debt. If this debt payment leaves the second player with no sticks then the other player is the winner. However, if the paying player is left with one to three counting sticks the game enters the next round.

In round three, "Dancing," the paying player still has a chance to win the whole game. The object of the game then becomes for the loosing player to score a certain number of points, depending on how many sticks they still possess, before the other player gets a point. If the loosing player managed to score their points first they win the whole game.

Additional resources:

Waltes: A Northeastern Native American Bowl Game, online at http://umaine.edu/hudson-museum/education/curriculum/waltes-game/

Video explaining Cape Breton Mi'kmaq version of waltes, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PKINPge4SSg

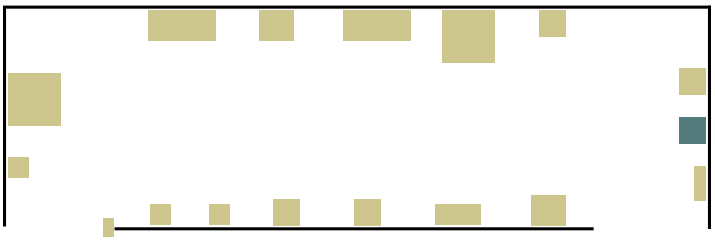
Preparing the Wabanaki Objects from the American Museum of Natural History

Once the Community Curators had identified the objects they wanted to see on display, the next task was for the lending museums to determine if the item could be safely transported, what type of packing around the object would be needed, and what if any conservation efforts needed to take place before it shipped. Staff from the American Museum of Natural History in New York shared some of the details of this process with us.

The primary function of the Anthropology Division's Objects Conservation Laboratory at the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) is to ensure the preservation of the collection for the future. The conservators' main activities include examination, documentation, treatment and preventive care, supported by research and education.

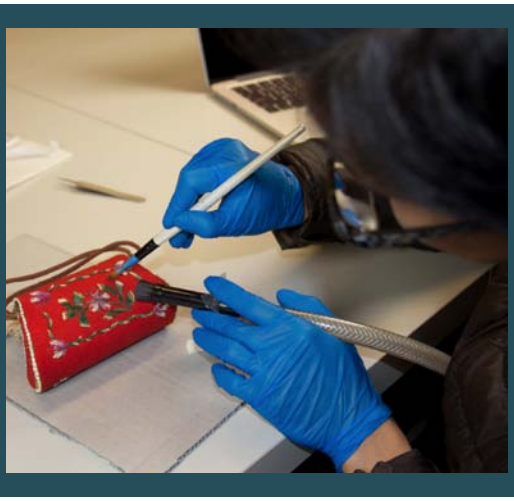
Conservators at AMNH prepared objects for loan to the *Coming Home* exhibition to ensure that they could safely travel and be displayed. They began by consulting the museum's records, archives, and other bibliographic resources for background information on the objects. Curators at AMNH, as well as community curators for this exhibition, were consulted for information about the objects and questions regarding appropriate conservation treatments. For example the pipe needed some conservation work to repair the leather tether connecting the pipe bowl and the stem, but in order to do the repair work the conservators felt it would be best to permanently affix the stem and bowl. However, the community curators were against the permanent fastening of the two pieces together since cultural traditions require the two pieces to be kept unattached unless it is being used for ceremonial purposes.

American Museum of Natural History, 50.1/7769.



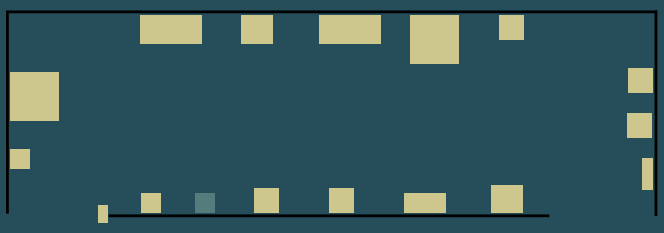
Conservators thoroughly examined and performed analysis on the artifacts using microscopes and other analytical tools to identify the materials and manufacturing methods of the objects, and to evaluate their current condition. This helped determine the safest and most appropriate way to clean and stabilize the objects for loan.

Many of the objects only required documentation and surface cleaning to prepare them for loan. In some cases, further intervention was necessary to prevent damage and loss during travel and handling. This included repairing breaks and stabilizing loose beads, quillwork, and flaking paint. Throughout examination and treatment the objects were documented with photographs, diagrams, and written reports.



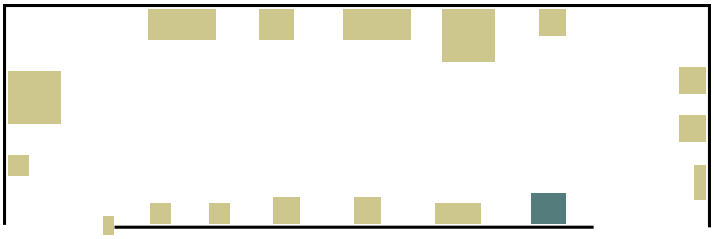
Moose Hair Embroidered Purse

The quillwork satchel (AMNH 10/93) was cleaned with a brush and vacuum, and the broken quill decoration was also stabilized in several places.



Dice Game

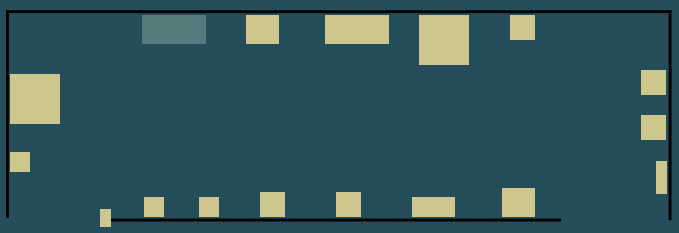
Conservators cleaned the game pieces (AMNH 50.1/7302 B-G) with cotton swabs, lightly dampened with mild solvents.



Conservators cleaned the bowl (AMNH 50.1/7302A) with soft foam sponges.

Moccasins

Before treatment some of the beads on the moccasins (AMNH 50.1/1423AB) were loose and in danger of becoming detached.

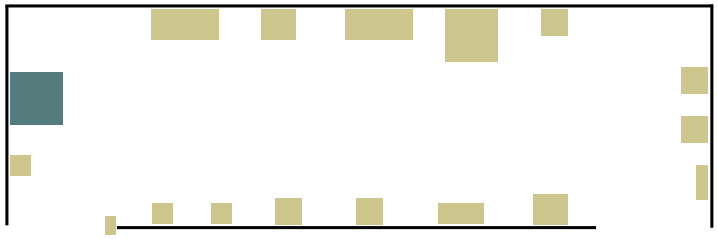


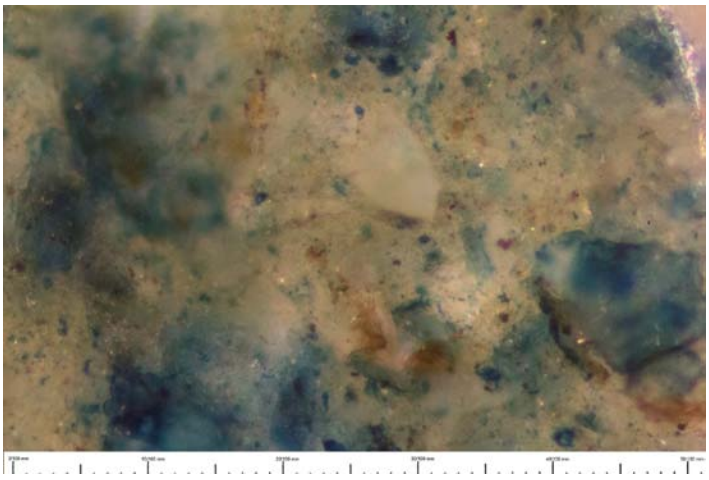
The moccasins were cleaned, and the loose beads near the heel were secured.

Carved Canoe Paddle

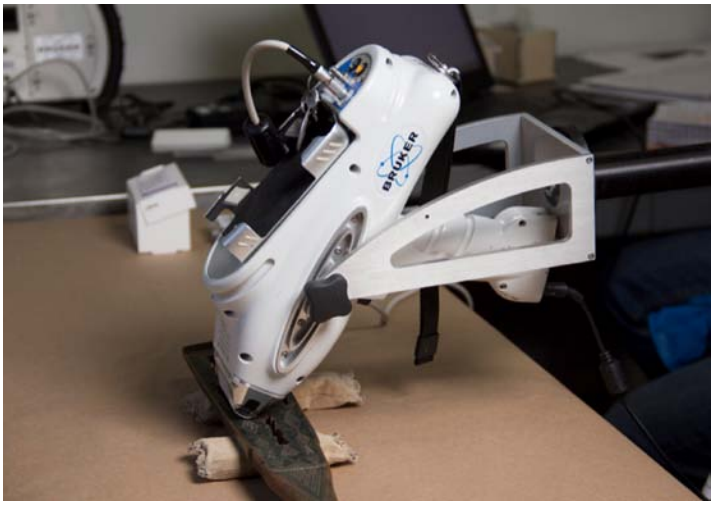
The canoe paddle (AMNH 50.1/7780) is examined with a microscope.

The canoe paddle was found to have two layers of paint. The darker top layer was flaking badly.

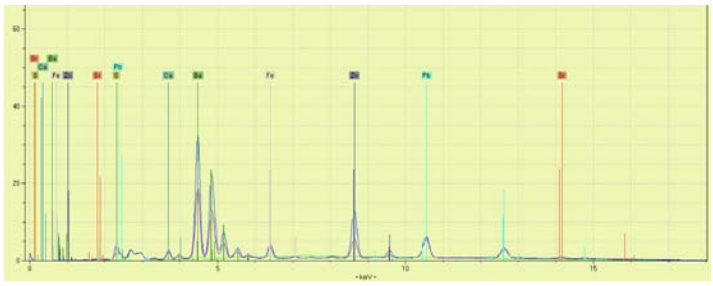




The green paint on the paddle is made up blue, yellow and white pigments, as shown in this highly magnified image.



Further elemental analysis was performed using non-destructive X-ray Fluorescence Spectroscopy (pictured) and also with Scanning Electron Microscopy to help determine what pigments were used in the paint.



X-Ray Fluorescence spectrum showing the elements detected in the paint on the canoe paddle. The combined results of microscopic examination, microchemical tests, and elemental analysis allowed us to identify the blue pigment as Prussian blue and the white as a mixture of barium sulfate, and other zinc and lead-containing pigments.

Conversation with the American Museum of Natural History's Conservator

Educators Jen Heindel and George Neptune had the opportunity to speak with the American Museum of Natural History's conservator, Samantha Alderson, and examine the canoe paddle (below) up close before it was installed. The examination and analysis of the canoe paddle creates more questions than there are answers. Why is it so small? What was the paddle designed for? Was it intended to be used, or was it made for decoration or as a souvenir?

For the last question we could have an answer —it was intended to be used, and at some point it was in the water. Evidence for this comes from the peeling paint on the broad part of the paddle. An oily coating was detected on the bottom portion of the paddle, and a waxy coating was detected on the handle, both of which are commonly found on paddles which were known to have been used.

Another piece of evidence which supports this idea is that it may have been repainted. The base layer of paint was made from green earth, crushed sedimentary rock which formed at the bottom of an ancient seabed. This green earth may have been a trade item or may have been locally sourced by the paddle's maker. The top layer of paint is an old commercial paint. A microscopic cross section analysis of the top layer of paint shows the paint has darkened over the years. Why it may have darkened is unknown.

There are a number of unique features to this paddle which are not readily apparent to the naked eye. At the right and left side of the lower, carved part of the handle (above) there are silver inlays and silver pegs bordering the carvings in several places. Inside the carvings on the handle carvings conservators found a brown-red pigment. The paddle blade is carved with symmetric double curves and geometric patterns, then painted with a white pigment.

Conservation photos provided by the American Museum of Natural History.

Coming Home made possible by

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Thank you for your support of the Abbe Museum as we fulfill our mission to inspire new learning about the Wabanaki Nations with every visit.

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Natalie Dana, Passamaquoddy
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Stephanie A. Francis, Passamaquoddy
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