

Feathers In The Wind

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Quilt of Belonging – Coast Salish

Copied from: <http://www.invitationproject.ca/listing.php?Listing=1305>



This block, created by weaver Myrna Crossley, is an example of an ancient Coast Salish art form, currently making a serious comeback. Taught by master weaver Rita Lewis, Myrna feels most connected to her cultural past as she dyes the wool and works it into a traditional design like that shown in the block. Here a miniature blanket is created in natural coloured and hand-dyed sheep's wool, spun to the same size as would be used to make a full-sized blanket or garment. As this type of weaving is often used to create sweaters, the block has been embellished with wooden buttons and with one fringe left showing.

Although sources vary, the Coast Salish name is deemed to encompass several tribes, including the Comox, Sechelt(h), Sliammon, Hul'qumi'num, Homalco, Klahoose, Squamish and Tsleil Waututh, Halq'emeylem, Ostlq'emeylem, Pentlatch and Straits Salish (of which there are further divisions, such as, Lummi, Saanitch, Sooke and Songish, as well as subsidiary groups the Semiahmoo, Klallam and Samish). They all speak dialects within the Salishan linguistic group (a branch of the Algonquian-Wakashan family) and have similar cultural aspects.

An adaptable people, the Coast Salish are now the largest group of First Nations in British Columbia, having rebounded from the devastating affects of contact with Europeans, disease and death. They traditionally occupied and used the waterways of what is now southwest B.C. and the northwest United States. They lived in communal homes (up to 30 m long by 12 m wide) constructed of massive cedar logs and roof beams. Hand-split cedar boards were set parallel with the ground, between pairs of narrow poles and tied into place with twisted cedar branches to create walls. An example of this type of housing is in the Grand Hall of the Canadian Museum of Civilization. Figures carved on the interior houseposts are thought to represent powerful animals or ancestors.

The Salish are known for a distinctive method of grooving (or 'kerfing') a cedar plank, steaming it and bending it to create the sides of containers adapted to many uses, such as boxes and buckets. They made many other everyday tools and utensils from the cedar tree as well. Carved, ornamented bowls were used to serve delicacies at gatherings, canoes were created in many forms and sizes, and boat bailers and clothing made from fibres processed from the bark. The fibres were worked by hands covered in fish oil, effectively waterproofing the finished product. The fibres were woven by hand to create clothing, capes or rain hats.

Food was supplied by the abundant marine life: salmon and eulachon, cod, seals, sea lions and whales. Seaweed and shellfish were supplemented with a wide selection of berries, lupine, roots and hemlock bark.



The First Native American Christmas Carol

adapted from

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Huron_Carol



The "Huron Carol" (or "'Twas in the Moon of Wintertime") is a Canadian Christmas hymn (Canada's oldest Christmas song), written in 1643 by Jean de Brébeuf, a [Jesuit missionary](#) at [Sainte-Marie among the Hurons](#) in Canada. Brébeuf wrote the lyrics in the [native language](#) of the [Huron/Wendat](#) people; the song's original Huron title is "Jesous Ahathonhia" ("Jesus, he is born"). The song's melody is based on a traditional [French folk](#) song, "[Une Jeune Pucelle](#)" ("A Young Maid"). The [English](#)

lyrics were written in 1926 by [Jesse Edgar Middleton](#), and the copyright to these lyrics was held by The Frederick Harris Music Co., Limited, but became public domain in 2011.

The English version of the hymn uses imagery familiar in the early 20th century, in place of the traditional [Nativity](#) story. This version is derived from Brebeuf's original song and Huron religious concepts. In the English version, [Jesus](#) is born in a "lodge of broken bark", and wrapped in a "robe of rabbit skin". He is surrounded by hunters instead of [shepherds](#), and the [Magi](#) are portrayed as "chiefs from afar" that bring him "fox and beaver pelts" instead of the more familiar [gold](#), [frankincense](#), and [myrrh](#). The hymn also uses a traditional [Algonquian](#) name, [Gitchi Manitou](#), for [God](#). The original lyrics are now sometimes modified to use imagery accessible to Christians who are not familiar with Native-Canadian cultures.

The song remains a common Christmas hymn in [Canadian](#) churches of many Christian denominations. Canadian singer [Bruce Cockburn](#) has also recorded a rendition of the song in the original Huron. It was also sung by Canadian musician [Tom Jackson](#) during his annual [Huron Carole](#) show. The group 'Crash Test Dummies' recorded this hymn on their album "Jingle all the Way" (2002). In the United States, the song was included as "Jesous Ahatonhia" on [Burl Ives](#)'s 1952 album [Christmas Day in the Morning](#) and was later released as a Burl Ives single under the title "Indian Christmas Carol." The music has been rearranged by the Canadian songwriter [Loreena McKennitt](#) under the title "Breton Carol" in 2008.

Handsome Fellow



There is a mysterious fellow who is a handsome brave who wears white buckskins, and brings gifts to Indian children. His name, appropriately is 'Handsome Fellow'. Other gift bringers come at different times of the year, often in the summertime, but the gift bringing element is always a part of the American Indian

culture, whatever the occasion is for a gathering.

There was a real native American man in the 1800s, who was an important leader and warrior in the Creek tribe. His Indian name was Chief Hobbythacco, which means Handsome Fellow. Chiefs in native American cultures were often the beneficiaries of many gifts. According to the traditions of native Americans, the chief would then share these gifts with others of the tribe who were less fortunate.

Handsome Fellow, Fanni Mico, and later, White Lieutenant, were leaders of a Creek settlement named Okfuskee and were deeply involved in Creek-British diplomatic relations throughout the colonial period. Chief Hobbythacco (Handsome Fellow) had often supported the English, but at the outbreak of the Cherokee war, he decided to support the Cherokees. He lead an attack on a group of English traders in Georgia and thirteen of the traders were killed during the fighting.

Christmas Gift Giving



Many Tribes accepted Christianity some 400 years ago, have the custom of a dance on Christmas Eve or Christmas, where gifts are offered at the Manger. There are many representations of gifts brought to braves in the fields by the great Thunderbird; or scenes with the wise men being replaced by the chiefs representing the great Nations.



Aboriginal Travels - El Salvador

Copied from

<http://www.invitationproject.ca/listing.php?Listing=6015>



El Salvador, the smallest of the Central American countries (about the size of Prince Edward Island), was named by the Spanish for 'The Saviour.' The Maya, who used the beans of the abundant cocoa trees for currency, also called it '*Cuscatlán*' or 'land of precious things.' It is a land of earthquakes and volcanoes. The most famous, *Izalco*, was at one time the nation's most regularly active volcano (it erupted at least 51 times since 1770), earning it the title of 'the lighthouse of the Pacific.' El Salvador's population is comprised mainly of *mestizos* (mixed Spanish and Amerindian descent), followed by Amerindians and Europeans. The official language is Spanish, although some Native American groups continue to speak indigenous languages such as *Lenca*, *Pipil*, or *Kekchi*.

El Salvador's culture is a blend of Western, European and native influences. Its strong heritage of arts and literature includes sculpture that is displayed around the world, and poetry that expresses important issues. Religious and folk festivals are popular activities that feature the sounds of *salsa*, *cumbia* and *lambada* music, played on such common instruments as the *pito* (type of flute), *marimba* (wooden xylophone) *tambor* and *tun* (drums). There is a strong tradition of folk art, which includes *sorpresas* (surprises), detailed pictures of village life painted inside small, round, walnut-sized shells. Other traditional Salvadoran handicrafts include wicker furniture, ceramics and pottery, weavings, masks, textiles and basketry, all made from natural materials.

There are many names for Santa around the world:



- Belgium - Pere Noel
- Brazil - Papai Noel
- Chile - Viejo Pascuero (Old Man Christmas)
- China - Dun Che Lao Ren (Christmas Old Man)
- Dutch - Sinter Klaas
- Netherlands - Kerstman
- Finland - Joulupukki (Yule Buck)
- France - Pere Noel
- Germany - Weihnachtsmann (Christmas Man) also Kris Kringle (which comes from the German term for "Christ Child.")
- Hawaii - Kanakaloka
- Hungary - Mikulas (St. Nicholas)
- Italy - Babbo Natale (Father Christmas)
- Japan - Hoteiosho (a god or priest who bears gifts)
- Norway - Julenissen (Christmas gnome)
- Morocco - Black Peter
- Poland - Swiety Mikolaj (St. Nicholas)
- Russia - Ded Moroz (Grandfather Frost)
- Sweden - Jultomten (Christmas brownie)
- Turkey - Hagios Nikolaos (Greek for Bishop of Myra)
- United Kingdom - Father Christmas





Land of the People

This is a continuation of an article in our November newsletter.

Two photos are of Percy Williams, during his chieftainship potlatch. He is holding a talking stick in one photo and standing in front of the flag of the Haida nation in the other. The shoes are custom-painted by Sondra Simone Segundo, a Haida artist living in Seattle, whose family are from Hydaburg, an Alaskan Haida community. One pic is of a silver Hummingbird. The pic after that is a Haida beaver headdress and the last pic is of old Haida totem poles.

As a point of interest to you, Percy Williams is the father of my fiancé, Terry, who is shown wearing his blanket at his father's chieftainship.

Sincerely yours,
Carrie Elaine Chapple





Native American Christmas Customs

from: Christmas articles from

<http://www.aanativearts.com/article1412.html>



Looks for Buffalo, an Oglala Sioux spiritual leader, the full-blood Oglala grandson of Chief Red Cloud and White Cow Killer, and a Cheyenne Oglala leader, explains the meaning of Christmas to the traditional Indian people of the Americas: "Traditional American Indians are raised to respect the Christian Star and the birth of the first Indian Spiritual Leader. He was a Star Person and Avatar. His name was Jesus. He was a Hebrew, a Red Man. He received his education from the wilderness. John the Baptist, Moses, and other excellent teachers that came before Jesus provided an educational foundation with the Holistic Method."

"Everyday is our Christmas. Every meal is our Christmas. At every meal we take a little portion of the food we are eating, and we offer it to the spirit world on behalf of the four legged, and the winged, and the two legged. We pray--not the way most Christians pray-- but we thank the Grandfathers, the Spirit, and the Guardian Angel."

"The Indian Culture is actually grounded in the traditions of a Roving Angel. The life-ways of Roving Angels are actually the way Indian People live. They hold out their hands and help the sick and the needy. They feed and clothe the poor. We have high respect for the avatar because we believe that it is in giving that we receive."

"We are taught as Traditional children that we have abundance. The Creator has given us everything: the water, the air we breathe, the earth as our flesh, and our energy force: our heart. We are thankful every day. We pray early in the morning, before sunrise, to the morning star, and the evening star. We pray for our relatives who are in the universe that someday they will come. We also pray that the Great Spirit's son will live again." "To the Indian People Christmas is everyday

and they don't believe in taking without asking. Herbs are prayed over before being gathered by asking the plant for permission to take some cuttings. An offer of tobacco is made to the plant in gratitude. We do not pull the herb out by its roots, but cut the plant even with the surface of the earth, so that another generation will be born its place."

"It is really important that these ways never be lost. And to this day we feed the elders, we feed the family on Christmas day, we honour Saint Nicholas. We explain to the little children that to receive a gift is to enjoy it, and when the enjoyment is gone, they are to pass it on to the another child, so that they, too, can enjoy it. If a child gets a doll, that doll will change hands about eight times in a year, from one child to another."

"Everyday is Christmas in Indian Country. Daily living is centered around the spirit of giving and walking the Red Road. Walking the Red Road means making everything you do a spiritual act. If your neighbour, John Running Deer, needs a potato masher; and you have one that you are not using, you offer him yours in the spirit of giving. It doesn't matter if it is Christmas or not."

"If neighbours or strangers stop over to visit at your house, we offer them dinner. We bring out the T-Bone steak, not the cabbage. If we don't have enough, we send someone in the family out to get some more and mention nothing of the inconvenience to our guests. The more one gives, the more spiritual we become. The Christ Consciousness, the same spirit of giving that is present at Christmas, is present everyday in Indian Country."





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