

Akwesasne Elders 1992 Julius Cook

Story by: Tsonni Fox

Julius Cook, Sakarohokiac (Clear Sky, Chases the Clouds Away), was born May 16, 1927. He moved back here to Akwesasne when he was 2 years old, and has been here ever since. He lives in a beautiful, earthy log cabin along the St. Lawrence River.

His parents were Louie Cook and Elizabeth Herne Cook. He was the fourteenth of fifteen kids. His father was a strong man. Julius recalls when he was 16, "I could fit both my hands into one of his". His father provided for his large family by farming. His mother was a midwife, she delivered close to 500 babies here in Akwesasne.

Their family moved around (River Rd. & St. Regis Road), before finally taking over his maternal grandparents homestead on State Road. Living on a farm, as you can imagine, "There was never a idle moment. We were always busy". But he adds with a smile, "I don't regret it. No, not one bit."

They visited relatives regularly, "a lot more than people do today", he says. He knew all his cousin's by name and age. "When we went to Hogan, it wasn't a 15 minute thing, it took all day". Of course, horse and wagon were the main means of transportation, although one of his older brothers did later buy a car.

There was a need for neighborliness then because everyone stayed here and worked the land. The idea of helping your neighbor was strong, the atmosphere was nice.

He went to school on Cook Rd., which was quite a walk from State Rd.. He was often late and remembers having to write on the chalkboard "Only fools are late for school". His older brothers and sisters spoke Mohawk fluently, although he as well as some of the younger siblings did not. His parents felt they were helping

them by not speaking Mohawk to them, because the school did not allow the children to speak Mohawk. He regrets not learning the language, although he can understand much of it.

He came in contact with Ray Fadden at the age of 11, when he joined a boy scout club, which was later called Akwesasne Mohawk Counselor Organization. This group had been organized to train them to be camp counselors and they would in turn teach young children about Indian history and culture. Ray Fadden had been a great influence on him. By the time he was 13 he had good understanding of Indian culture, ceremonies and history.

Julius was brought up Catholic, but began attending ceremonies at the Longhouse. He enjoyed the ceremonies very much, and decided to join the Longhouse. The word 'Longhouse' was almost a dirty word back then, due mostly to the rejection of it by the church. There was only a handful of people that attended the Longhouse at that time, but "They were strong and never gave up" he says. Julius discussed his decision to join the Longhouse with his mother and she accepted his decision to join the Longhouse, and no longer attended church. She said "It's all right, as long as you be a good boy". He smiles, "And I was".

Julius dropped out of high school at the age of 18 and joined the army. He was stationed in Germany. He taught himself (in 1 week's time) to play the bugle, he later learned to type and became company clerk as well as mailman.

He later returned home and finished school. He was married in 1943, to Alda Benedict. "44 years", he says with pride. They have two children, Beverly Cook Jackson and Ray Cook. They also have 4 grandchildren, 2



Photo: Kevin King.

of which they care for during the day. His three year old granddaughter fondly wraps her arms around his neck, during the interview, as he tells of his life. Julius has many talents, he can play the bugle, piano, and banjo. He used to perform with his

brother Phil and later his nephew Philip at square dances as well as weddings. Square dances were a major part of their leisure life. "The most excitement they had", he says. In his teenage years he mentions that they would play

lacrosse in warm months, and skate in the winter. The worst thing that anyone ever did was sneak a cigarette every once in a while, drinking wasn't allowed. (He also recalls great activity all years round on the river, swimming, skating, fishing.)

Julius is a renowned jeweler, and previous to doing jewelry, he did very intricate leather work. Upon looking at his jewelry you would not only think of him as a fine craftsman, but also a gifted artist. His jewelry is unique, it reflects Iroquois culture and tradition in every exquisite piece. Consequently, he has never had an inventory, people buy his pieces as fast as he can make them.

When asked when he noticed environmental problems here in Akwesasne, he replied "It has to be mostly after the Seaway". He remembers going out on a boat to collect their drinking and cooking water from the St. Lawrence river.

"A good example of how clear the water was before the Seaway... My brother Phil, my brother-in-law Ernie Benedict and I went spear fishing at night..." "Ernie had a 12-foot pole with a spear on the end..." "He was in front of the boat and we were over near Ernie's Bay over on Cornwall Island, in the back water." "He saw a sturgeon down at the bottom and I was right along side of him and I saw the same sturgeon..." "He got his 12-foot pole and he lowers that pole down till about 3 feet was out of the water, and he has a hold of the end of it, and (then) he jabs at the sturgeon and he never touched him". "He almost fell into the river, because he couldn't hit bottom and that tells us we could see over 12-feet, because the pole was 12-foot." But today, no one can look down that far. He says that in one little life time the river

changed from something beautiful to something ugly.

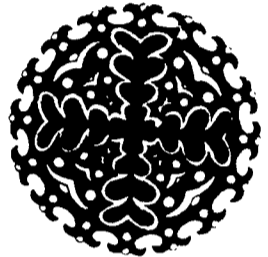
We asked Julius what he thinks about the future of Akwesasne, the future of our younger generation. He repeats a pledge they had learned when they were camp counselor's...

"I pledge allegiance to true Indianhood and I will never allow the good names of our ancestors to be trampled into the dust. We turn back five centuries for our example and act according to the uprightness displayed by our forefathers at that time. Let us honor and revere the memory of them by setting a good example." He adds with conviction, "And that last sentence is what our people need."

"This idea of doing drugs and drinking whisky and burning up the highway, smuggling and gambling, you are not setting an example for the young people and you are not showing the world that you are a proud people."

"What frightens me is that our young people of today, learning the things that they are learning and doing the things that they are doing, (these are the people who) are going to be the elders of the future..."

"I know a lot of people won't agree with what I'm saying, but our only hope of salvation is to go back to our ceremonies and the Longhouse. They might not like it, but it's the truth. Because there's nothing wrong with the Indian way. Not a thing."



TOURNEY

Cont'd from previous page

Brant scored two each on the way to a Tyendinaga 7-5 loss to Salmon River.

Barnes scored two goals with Troy Benedict and Louis Oakes scoring once.

In the final championship game, Tyendinaga went up against the Pine Trees in the most exciting game of the tournament.

The Trees got on the board first with three goals by Nick Sunday, Jeremy Jacobs and Mandy Francis all before the game was three minutes old.

Francis stole the ball from a Tyendinaga passing play and made an end to end rush and scored on goaltender Kevin Smart.

Brian Brant opened up the Tyendinaga scoring with an unassisted goal at 4:09.

AMS got another goal by Jeremy Jacobs.

Craig Fuller went to work for Tyendinaga and scored two straight goals.

AMS slowed down their rally when Lindsey Roundpoints shot went off goalie Kevin Smart but the rebound went to Rudy King who scored.

Fuller scored again for the visitors with 1:50 left in the first period and AMS led 5-4 going into halftime.

In the second period, Fuller continued his attack with the period: 15 old.

He scored on the back hand to tie up the game at five.

The Pine Trees pushed and scored three goals on Tyendinaga goalie Smart. These were from Kody Thompson, Jeremy Jacobs and Peter Hoppes.

Not giving up, the Bay of Quinte team mounted a strong offensive and scored three goals: Brant scored twice and Fuller scored once.

Although no overtime was in the rules, organizers decided to throw in a five minute sudden death period.

The visitors seemed to have the upper hand in the extra period when Rudy King of AMS went in the penalty box for High Sticking with 1:19 gone.

One minute and two seconds later, Jeremy Jacobs took the ball in the other to the right of Tyendinaga goalie Jason Maracle. (Smart was injured in the first period). While the Tyendinaga players were all over him, he saw Dany Davidarked alone in front of Maracle and gave him the pass. He did not hesitate and knocked it in.

The AMS Pine Trees won the tournament.

The rain continued throughout the tournament but did not dampen the spirits of the feisty players.

Tyendinaga coach Jack Green said it was an exciting final and was "hard fought" by both teams.

It was a strong showing for Tyendinaga who only had two practices prior to coming to the Island.

"Some kids never played at all", he added.

Akwesasne is making a strong come back at lacrosse, the same with Tyendinaga. "Last year our Bantams made it to the provincial finals last year but lost in the semi-finals to Markham," says Green.

"It's good to see Mohawks playing lacrosse together."

Nancy Simpson of AMS said the tournament went off very well.

"The kids were encouraged and we are hoping to make this an annual event."

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(NC)—In Canada, 31.6% of the population is able to speak French and 81.8% is able to speak English. These figures include bilingual Anglophones (6.1% of the population) and bilingual Francophones (9.6% of the population).

Did you know...

STAY IN SCHOOL

It is estimated that, by 2001, youth will only make up 13 per cent of the population compared with 17 per cent in 1986 and 20 per cent in 1976.

NC

Did you know...

STAY IN SCHOOL

Research indicates that between 43 and 45 per cent of young people leave school early for non-school related reasons.

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Environment News

Garden Pests

Not everything that flies and crawls is a pest -- there are some very useful creepy-crawlies out there but unfortunately, when we scatter pesticides with abandon we're killing the cops as well as the robbers. Not to also ignore the estimate by the National Academy of Sciences that pesticides cause 20,000 cancers a year. So look for some of the less dangerous kinds to buy.

You'll find them under the trade names of Botanix, Dipel, Thuricide, and Envirobac -- these contain a substance call BT (bacillus thuringiensis). This will kill cabbage worms, cutworms, gypsy moth, tent caterpillars, potato beetles and the larvae of black fly and mosquito. Apply BT directly to the plant or soil, preferably when it's not raining, and in the evening, as sunlight breaks it down.

Rotenone and Pyrethrum, are substances extracted from plants but will kill any insect they come in contact with, including frogs and fish. They are non-toxic for pets and people.

Dormant oil spray is useful for fruit trees as it suffocates scales, mites and other insects, if applied before budding.

Tanglefoot is painted around a tree trunk or limb and snags ants, canker worms and anything else that climbs. First paint a band of latex paint around the tree or limb, then put the tanglefoot over it.

Diatomaceous earth is best used

indoors for earwigs, silverfish, cockroaches and ants. It's made of the splintered remains of such things as coral, which puncture the shell of insects, so they die of dehydration. You don't want to be that indiscriminating in the garden.

For a more adventurous do-it-yourself job, introduce predators to your garden: Ladybugs eat aphids, mealybugs, plant lice and mites. Dragonflies are wonderful, they eat mosquitoes. Spiders, praying mantises and wasps gobble up many insects.

Attract birds to your garden, their diet is insects and they can devour thousands every day. However, if you use toxic pesticides to destroy your insects you're likely to kill the birds too.

Snails love the shade -- trade them under an upside down flowerpot.

Slugs will congregate under a board, simply flip the board over in the morning and collect them up. Then put them in your blender, with a little water and spray over your plants as a pest deterrent.

Plant garlic and chives around your vegetables to keep out rabbits.

Another natural pesticide is soapy water mixed with blended garlic and green onion tops, strained and sprayed on the leaves and stems of plants.

The Birds and The Bees

Encourage birds into your garden--they're on your side. Not only are they (mostly) beautiful, they eat thousands of insects every day. One purple martin will eat thousands of mosquitoes a day, so building a purple martin house should clear your entire area of these pests.

A warbler can chew his way through 6000 aphids and a flicker can eat up to 5000 ants.

Plant shrubs which bear berries, such as Nanking bush berry and June berry. You could also try white flowering dogwood, honeysuckle and holly--and evergreens for nesting. They also love sunflowers and marigolds. An ornamental bird bath will add to their pleasure and yours.

If you have fruit trees in your garden, having some of the above berry-bearing shrubs may divert the birds. But don't lay all your bets on it. Here are some tips from various expert sources:

* For small trees and shrubs, drape squares of netting over them. The birds are afraid of getting entangled in the nets.

* Stand an 8-inch board down each side of a strawberry patch and stretch the netting over the top, looped on nails for fast removal at picking time.

* For large fruit trees, get heavy-duty black thread and weave it all over the tree at random

We're told that perching an owl in a tree doesn't fool a bird for more than a day and flapping foil pie plates and scarecrows are equally ineffectual.

Bees are essential in your garden, so never spray the fruit trees when they are in flower or you'll poison the bees. Encourage bees with plantings of borage, bee balm and comfrey. They need all the help they can get--they have to fly 48,000 miles (twice around the earth) to produce a pound of honey!

Environmental Damage Widely Recognized as Threat to Human Health, Poll Reveals

Environmental damage, once dismissed as a concern of the rich, is now widely recognized as a threat to human health, according to a 22-country poll released by the Gallup organization.

Protecting the environment has joined problems of economic livelihood, crime and violence as "major concerns around the world," the George H. Gallup International Institute said in its Health of the Planet Survey.

The survey questioned the assumption that rich and poor countries are deeply split over who is to blame for environmental problems, an issue thought to be hampering negotiations for the UN Earth summit next month in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

"Residents of poor, rapidly growing nations acknowledge the threat of overpopulation and also accept partial responsibility for creating global problems," it said, while people from richer countries "recognize the disproportionate impact" on the environment from their industries and lifestyles.

Polling from up to 12 more countries will be added in three or four months, after which the survey will reflect attitudes of two-thirds of the world's people, said Washington State University sociologist Riley E. Dunlap, the project director.

Preliminary results were released Monday (May, 4/92) to be available prior to the Rio Summit. Source: Standard-Freeholder, May 1992

GOING GREEN
with the
National Round Table
on the Environment
and the Economy
NRTEE

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