

Michigan's Ottawa Indians Still Stage Their Annual 'Ghost Supper' For Gods

By The Old AAA Traveler

Blue smoke rises to the heavens from the Ottawa's council fires around Harbor Springs, and in that vacation paradise of upper Michigan the vacationers find all the thrill of seeing Indians in ceremonial dress and frequently witnessing tribal ceremonies through the summer months.

Wherever you find the Indian you find an interesting individual, whether it's the Ojibwa or Navajo or the southwestern states or our own Indian here in Michigan. The Indian has color-plus when you find him in his native habitat, and, believe it or not, he loses very little of that color when he's attracted into urban surroundings.

In Michigan, in Wisconsin, through New York State and over in Canada are many Indians, most of them engaged these days in the white man's activities, but he's still an Indian, he's still interesting.

Yes, there are many Indians still scattered through this Great Lakes Country, and the Indians—no matter how civilized he becomes—no matter to what degree he adopts the white man's customs away down underneath—he's still Indian. In the old days in Michigan and Wisconsin the red man was supreme, and no tribe was a finer type than the Ottawas—called Ottawas by the other Indians because they were traders and controlled all the trade along the Ottawa River.

Driven West by Hurons. The early habitat of the Ottawas was Manitoulin Island in the Georgian Bay Country, but around 1645 they were driven westward in their fight with the Hurons. Then came their conflict with the Sioux and they returned to Manitoulin Island, and in time they moved into

the Mackinac section—and then spread pretty well over all of Michigan.

Up in Harbor Springs, one of D. and C. cruise ports of call is my old friend, Fred Ettawageshik, Chief Pi Pi Gwa, chief of all the Ottawas in Michigan. Chief Pi Pi Gwa is one of the most colorful homages you'll find anywhere in the middle west, and not long ago he told me a most amazing yarn.

That yarn goes back centuries to those days when Ottawa council fires flamed brightly in what is now Michigan, days when the great thundered to ceremonial chants—days before the thump-thump of the tom-tom had been silenced by the white man's civilization. In that day no ceremonial was more sacred than the Ghost Supper.

For in the Ghost Supper the Ottawas paid tribute to the tribe's dead. It was a colorful ceremonial, too—with gaudy ceremonial garb—the ancient chants and dancing ceremonial fires—and Indian tobacco tossed to the four points of the compass as a gift to the tribal gods.

Tribal Ceremonials. Feasting was an important part of the ceremonial. Hunters in venison and bear and beaver, and pheasant and partridge and duck, and for days before the ceremonial, cooking pipes, steamed and sizzled—and the rich odor of cooking of meats rose to the heavens. Finally came the night of the Ghost Supper.

In a central tepee the food was piled high—and there was tobacco for the elders—and little beaded moccasins for the young ones—and there were singing and dancing far into the night. Then the Ottawas left the tepee and the remaining food, and drifted away from their own tepee to sleep.

What went on in the tepee where the food was left? Well, nobody knows—but next morning, so the old Ottawas will tell you, all the food had disappeared. The Ottawas believed the spirits of the departed had returned to the settlement for the feast and had eaten the food.

Now the amazing part of the story: The Ottawas in upper Michigan are modern Americans—they are educated—they attend the white man's church—they follow the white man's customs—but, believe it or not, they still carry on the Ghost Supper. Albeit in these days, the bear and venison have been replaced by Chicago beef—and the ceremonial is held in a modern house instead of a tepee.

Leave Fred on Table. But there's the same tradition about the tobacco for the elders—and presents for the children—and Chief Pi Pi Gwa in full ceremonial regalia—and they meet other Ottawas in full ceremonial gear—for the arrival of the cruise ship is a perfect excuse for donning the ceremonial garb of their ancestors—and the Indian does love show! Harbor Springs, incidentally, is a camera fan's dream. Indian men, women and children in colorful costume—a great strip of snowy beach—high tree-covered bluffs, along which runs one of the most beautiful highways in Michigan—Indian dances—an Indian trading post in which you may buy the Ottawa

handwork. Townsite; two grandchildren, and two brothers.

Service was held at 2 p. m. Tues. day at the Bell Funeral home with burial at Woodlawn cemetery.

Melville M. Austin, 152 East Lincoln avenue, died at his home Thursday, June 19. Mr. Austin was born in Detroit Feb. 12, 1882, and moved from there to Birmingham 25 years ago. On Jan. 1, 1947 he married Edna M. Hartley.

Mr. Austin was retired president of Austin Oil corporation and was most recently associated with the Ford Benzol corporation, Dearborn. He was also past president of the U. and I club and a Mason.

Surviving are his wife, Edna; a daughter, Mrs. J. Parkes Finson of Alpena; his mother, Mrs. James Austin of Highland Park; a brother, C. W. Austin of Beverly Hills, Cal.; a sister, Mrs. H. B. Woods of Brown City, Mich.

Funeral services were at 11 a. m. Saturday at the Bailey funeral home with burial at White Chapel memorial park. The Rev. Harold Toyne read the service.

Duncan Henry Bentley, Sr., of 32920 Lahser road, died suddenly Sunday while en route to a Detroit hospital. He was born Sept. 27, 1869 in Blenheim, Ont., and was a veteran Detroit business man, conducting a business for over 30 years on Michigan avenue.

A charter member of the Woodward Avenue Presbyterian church, he had been a resident of Detroit since 1898 until he moved to Huntington Woods 15 years ago and Birmingham one year ago.

Surviving are his widow, Luelia; three daughters, Mrs. G. B. Helmrick of Birmingham, Mrs. Fred L. Parker of Pleasant Ridge and Mrs. Fred G. Reid of Huntington Woods; two sons, LeRoy and Duncan, Jr., of Detroit; eight grandchildren; two great grandchildren, and a sister.

Prayer services were held at 11 a. m. Wednesday at the Kinsey Funeral home in Royal Oak. The body then lay in state from noon until service at 2 p. m. in the Woodward Avenue Presbyterian church with entombment in Roseland Park mausoleum.

Mrs. Ida C. Rossom, 1206 Cedar drive, died Tuesday, June 18, at the residence of her daughter, Mrs. Donald Barnes, 1206 Cedar drive. She was visiting here from her home in Virginia, Minn. Mrs. Rossom was born in Sweden Aug. 11, 1869.

Besides her daughter, she is survived by two sons, Ruben and Hartley, and one brother, Charles Engberg, of Green Bay, Wis.

The body was sent from the Bell Funeral home to Virginia, Minn., for service and burial.

Mrs. Violet F. Wilson, Mrs. Violet F. Wilson, of Lathrup Townsite, died Sunday. Mrs. Wilson was born May 5, 1868, at Van Meter, Iowa, and was the wife of James W. Wilson. She came to Detroit 30 years ago and had been a resident of Lathrup for the past 16 years.

Surviving are two sons, Floyd of Detroit, and Fred of Lathrup

Michigan History in Pictures



Mackinac City's first fort (1715-167) succeeded Ft. de Suede at St. Ignace.



It included also a church built by Fr. Joseph Marest about 1711.



De Lignery records include sketches for a fort at Mackinac since 1715.



May, 1716: 225 soldiers go to Mackinac, enroute to war on Wisconsin Foxes.

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Obituary

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FOODS FOR APPETIZING MEALS

FRESH DAILY FROM OUR OWN KITCHENS

Meat's hard to get and from now on the weather is going to be too warm to stand over a hot stove, but your family can still enjoy those zesty, vitamin-rich meals if you shop in our delicatessen department regularly this summer.

Potato Salad	lb. 30c	Baked Beans	lb. 30c
Cabbage Salad	lb. 30c	Steak Pies	each 40c
Macaroni Salad	lb. 30c	Corned Beef Hash	each 40c
Chicken Pies	each 55c	Vegetable Salad	lb. 30c

Brick American CHEESE 5 lb. brick \$2.09	Fish Department * Live Lobsters * Fresh Scallops * Red Snapper * Jumbo Shrimp * Fresh Lake Trout * White Fish * Finnan Haddie	Eviscerated Roasting Chickens lb. 68c Fowl for Stewing lb. 62c Fryers lb. 72c Corn Fed Geese lb. 57c
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CIGARETTES All Popular Brands Carton \$1.30	DREFT 1 lb. pkg. 23¢	OXYDOL 1 lb. pkg. 23¢	COLUMBIA & MARA lb. 39¢
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Buttercream Frosted Yellow Cake Squares	per dozen 42c
Pineapple Streusel Danish Coffee Cakes	each 31c
(Fri. and Sat. only) Small Golden Snow Layer Cakes	each 40c
(Fri. and Sat. only) Chocolate Frosted Silver Layer Cakes	each 66c

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You must do more than drive carefully. You must drive safely! HOW ARE YOUR LIGHTS?

Remember. **SPEED** is the KILLER. AUTO INSURERS SAFETY ASSOCIATION