

The **2007**

Ernest Smith Commemorative Centennial Calendar

Presented by:

The Tonawanda Reservation Historical Society

Painting by Ernest Smith. From the collections of the Rochester Museum & Science Center, Rochester, NY



Ernest Smith

On the cover: The Picture Writer (The Tribe Historian) [MR 1051]

To celebrate the centennial of Ernie Smith's birth, the Tonawanda Reservation Historical Society proudly presents this commemorative calendar. Inside are 12 images from paintings that he did for the WPA Indian Arts & Crafts Project, from 1935-1941.

Ernest Peter Smith was born October 28, 1907 in a log cabin on the Tonawanda Indian Reservation. This was a mere 50 years after the Tonawanda Band of Senecas reclaimed their homeland by purchasing 7,549 acres that had been fraudulently sold out from under them. Ernie was the youngest of seven children of Louisa Sundown Smith and Peter Smith. Born into the Heron clan, he was given the Seneca name Gaon-yaih, meaning, "From the Middle of the Sky."

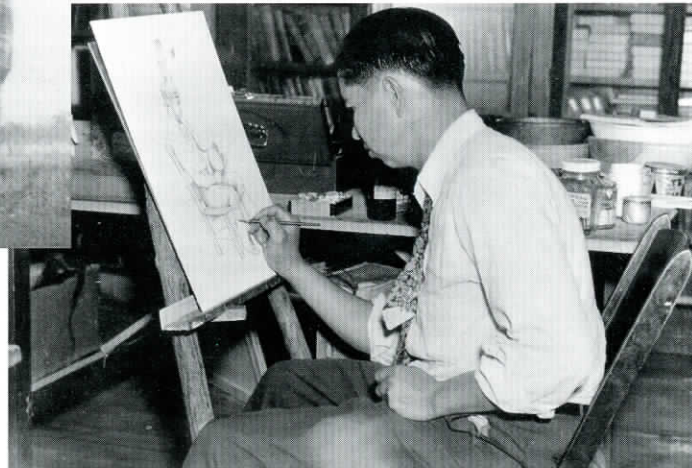
His talent for art came early; according to a New York State Museum exhibition booklet, he said: "We would sit around the table with paper and pencils and in the dim light from a kerosene lamp, we would try to see who could draw the best rabbit, weasel, owl and the big black bear or even the hard working horse we had in the barn." Although largely self-taught, Ernie did study briefly under renowned Batavia landscape artist Roy Mason.

Despite having to quit school at a young age to support his aging mother, Ernie kept up with his artwork. He had numerous jobs, including construction work, and working at Bell Aircraft. In

1935, Arthur C. Parker, the Director of the Rochester Museum of Arts & Sciences (now the Rochester Museum & Science Center), initiated the Indian Arts & Crafts Project, which was designed to employ residents of the Tonawanda Reservation to make authentic replicas of traditional Iroquois artifacts. Among the artists hired for this project were Ernie's older brother Kidd, and his sister Rose Smith Spring. Ernie was hired to paint scenes of traditional stories and culture.

Over 240 paintings were created by Ernie during the seven years of the project. The ones included here show various aspects of Seneca culture, both pre- and post-contact. While some of his paintings have become well-known as a result of publication in numerous books and articles, many shown here have never been published. They show the depth of Ernie's artistry and understanding of traditional Hau-de-no-sau-nee values.

Ernie continued to paint after the project ended and sold his works throughout his life. Exhibitions included the New York State Museum and the Smithsonian. Ernie died on February 26, 1975 at the age of 67. His artistic legacy continues to be appreciated by Indians and non-Indians alike.



Left: Ernest Smith, circa 1930. Photo courtesy Tonawanda Reservation Historical Society, From the Violet "Ekay" Reuben collection.

Above: Ernest Smith at an easel, painting. From the collections of the Rochester Museum & Science Center. [RM 9611]

Mission Statement

The Tonawanda Reservation Historical Society was established for the purpose of preserving and disseminating the history of the Tonawanda Seneca Indian Reservation for our people, for the generations yet unborn, and for the education of non-Indians about our culture. To achieve this purpose the Historical Society's goals are to collect and preserve materials pertaining to the history of the Tonawanda Reservation and its people; to record and document historically valuable information; make such materials available to researchers, the public and especially to Tonawanda Reservation residents and their descendants; sponsor exhibits, publications, and other methods to inform and educate people about the history of the Tonawanda Reservation.

The Tonawanda Reservation Historical Society

P.O. Box 516, Basom, NY 14013



The Flute Player [MR 735]

January 2007

Nisgowakneh

Sunday <i>Awëdadogëhdöh</i>	Monday <i>O'wëdë:dat</i>	Tuesday <i>Swëda:dih</i>	Wednesday <i>Ha'dewëdaëh</i>	Thursday <i>Ëyohë'tgeh</i>	Friday <i>Wë:da:k'ah</i>	Saturday <i>Wë:da:k</i>
	1 New Year's Day	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15 Martin Luther King Day	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			



The Snow Snake [MR 694]

February 2007

Niyo'not'a:h




Sunday <i>Awëdadogëhdöh</i>	Monday <i>O'wëdë:dat</i>	Tuesday <i>Swëda:dih</i>	Wednesday <i>Ha'dewëdaëh</i>	Thursday <i>Ëyohë'tgeh</i>	Friday <i>Wë:da:k'ah</i>	Saturday <i>Wë:da:k</i>
				1	2  Groundhog Day	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10 
11	12	13	14  Valentine's Day	15 Flag Day (Canada)	16	17 
18	19 President's Day	20	21 Ash Wednesday	22	23	24
25	26	27	28			



Maple Sugar Time [MR 709]

March 2007

O'not'ah





Sunday <i>Awëdadogëhdöh</i>	Monday <i>O'wëdë:dat</i>	Tuesday <i>Swëda:dih</i>	Wednesday <i>Ha'dewëdaëh</i>	Thursday <i>Ëyohë'tgeh</i>	Friday <i>Wë:da:k'ah</i>	Saturday <i>Wë:da:k</i>
				1	2	3 
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11  Daylight Savings Begins	12	13	14	15	16	17 St Patrick's Day
18 	19	20	21	22	23	24
25 	26	27	28	29	30	31



The Story Teller [MR 1050]

April 2007

Ganö'gat






Sunday <i>Awëdadogëhdöh</i>	Monday <i>O'wëdë:dat</i>	Tuesday <i>Swëda:dih</i>	Wednesday <i>Ha'dewëdaëh</i>	Thursday <i>Ëyohë'tgeh</i>	Friday <i>Wë:da:k'ah</i>	Saturday <i>Wë:da:k</i>
1 Palm Sunday	2 	3 Passover Begins	4	5	6 Good Friday	7
8 Easter Sunday	9	10  Passover Ends	11	12	13	14
15	16	17 	18	19	20	21
22 Earth Day	23	24 	25 Administrative Professional's Day	26	27	28
29	30					



Mother With Papoose [MR 736]

May 2007

Yaikneh

Sunday <i>Awëdadogëhdöh</i>	Monday <i>O'wëdë:dat</i>	Tuesday <i>Swëda:dih</i>	Wednesday <i>Ha'dewëdaëh</i>	Thursday <i>Ëyohë'tgeh</i>	Friday <i>Wë:da:k'ah</i>	Saturday <i>Wë:da:k</i>
		1	2 	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10 	11	12
13 Mother's Day	14	15	16 	17	18	19
20	21 Victoria Day (Canada)	22	23 	24	25	26
27 Memorial Day	28	29	30	31 		



Picking Wild Strawberries [MR 1010]

June 2007

Hayë:niah

Sunday <i>Awëdadogëhdöh</i>	Monday <i>O'wëdë:dat</i>	Tuesday <i>Swëda:dih</i>	Wednesday <i>Ha'dewëdaëh</i>	Thursday <i>Ëyohë'tgeh</i>	Friday <i>Wë:da:k'ah</i>	Saturday <i>Wë:da:k</i>
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Father's Day				Flag Day		
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

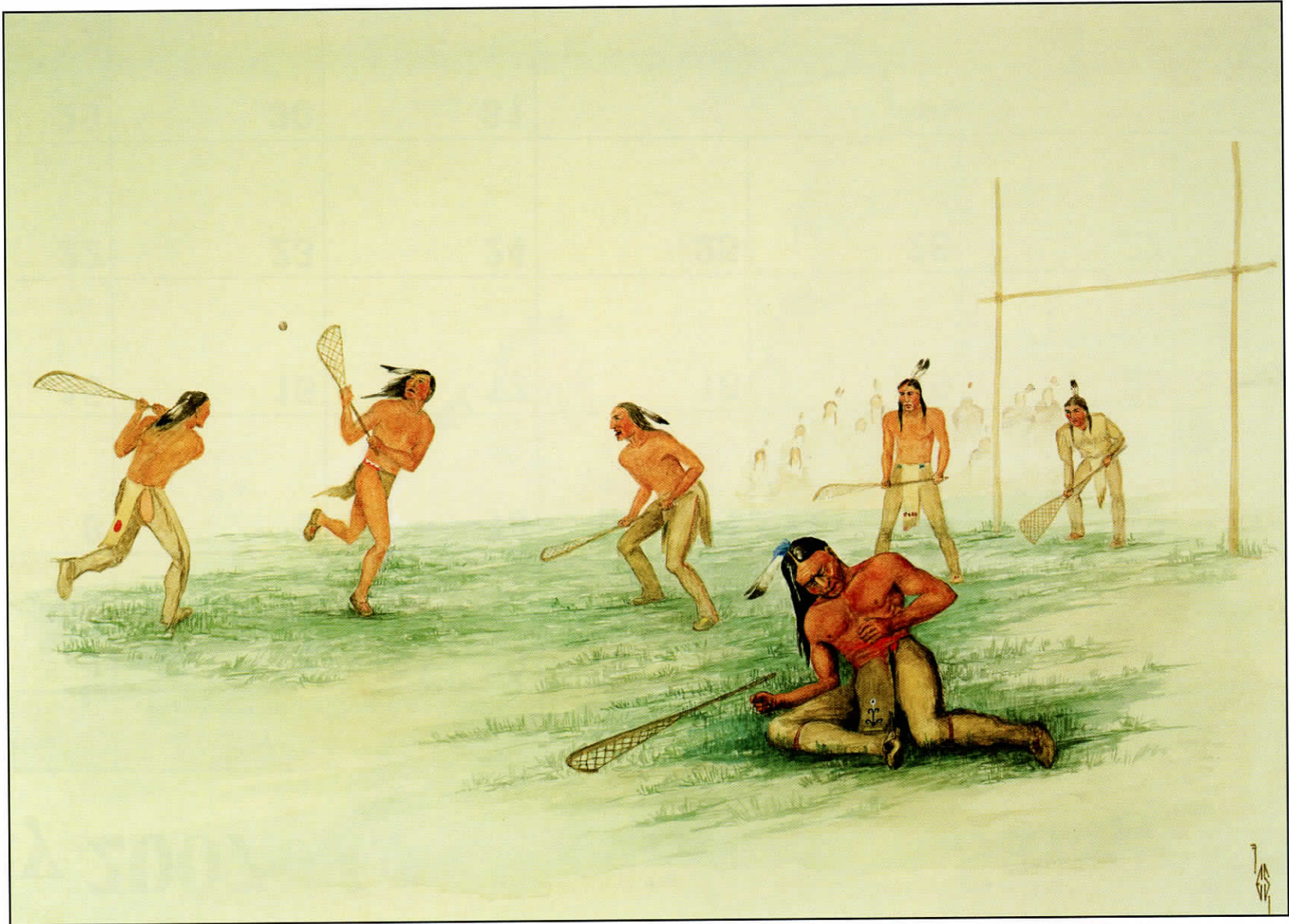


Flint Mining [MR 1132]

July 2007

Saisgekneh

Sunday <i>Awëdadogëhdöh</i>	Monday <i>O'wëdë:dat</i>	Tuesday <i>Swëda:dih</i>	Wednesday <i>Ha'dewëdaëh</i>	Thursday <i>Ëyohë'tgeh</i>	Friday <i>Wë:da:k'ah</i>	Saturday <i>Wë:da:k</i>
1 Canada Day (Canada)	2	3	4 U.S. Independence Day	5	6	7 
8	9	10	11	12	13	14 
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22 	23	24	25	26	27	28
29 	30	31				



Lacrosse Game [MR 729]

August 2007

Gedë'ökneh





Sunday <i>Awëdadogëhdöh</i>	Monday <i>O'wëdë:dat</i>	Tuesday <i>Swëda:dih</i>	Wednesday <i>Ha'dewëdaëh</i>	Thursday <i>Ëyohë'tgeh</i>	Friday <i>Wë:da:k'ah</i>	Saturday <i>Wë:da:k</i>
			1	2	3	4
5 	6	7	8	9	10	11
12 	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20 	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28 	29	30	31	



Woman Working Corn [MR 1100]

September 2007

Gë:ökneh

Sunday <i>Awëdadogëhdöh</i>	Monday <i>O'wëdë:dat</i>	Tuesday <i>Swëda:dih</i>	Wednesday <i>Ha'dewëdaëh</i>	Thursday <i>Ëyohë'tgeh</i>	Friday <i>Wë:da:k'ah</i>	Saturday <i>Wë:da:k</i>
						1
2	3  Labor Day	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11 	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19 	20	21	22
23	24	25	26 	27	28	29
30						



Collecting Chestnuts [MR 1020]

October 2007

Gahsa'kneh





Sunday <i>Awëdadogëhdöh</i>	Monday <i>O'wëdë:dat</i>	Tuesday <i>Swëda:dih</i>	Wednesday <i>Ha'dewëdaëh</i>	Thursday <i>Ëyohë'tgeh</i>	Friday <i>Wë:da:k'ah</i>	Saturday <i>Wë:da:k</i>
	1	2	3 	4	5	6
7	8 Columbus Day Thanksgiving Day (Canada)	9	10	11 	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19 	20
21	22	23	24	25	26 	27
28	29	30	31 Halloween			

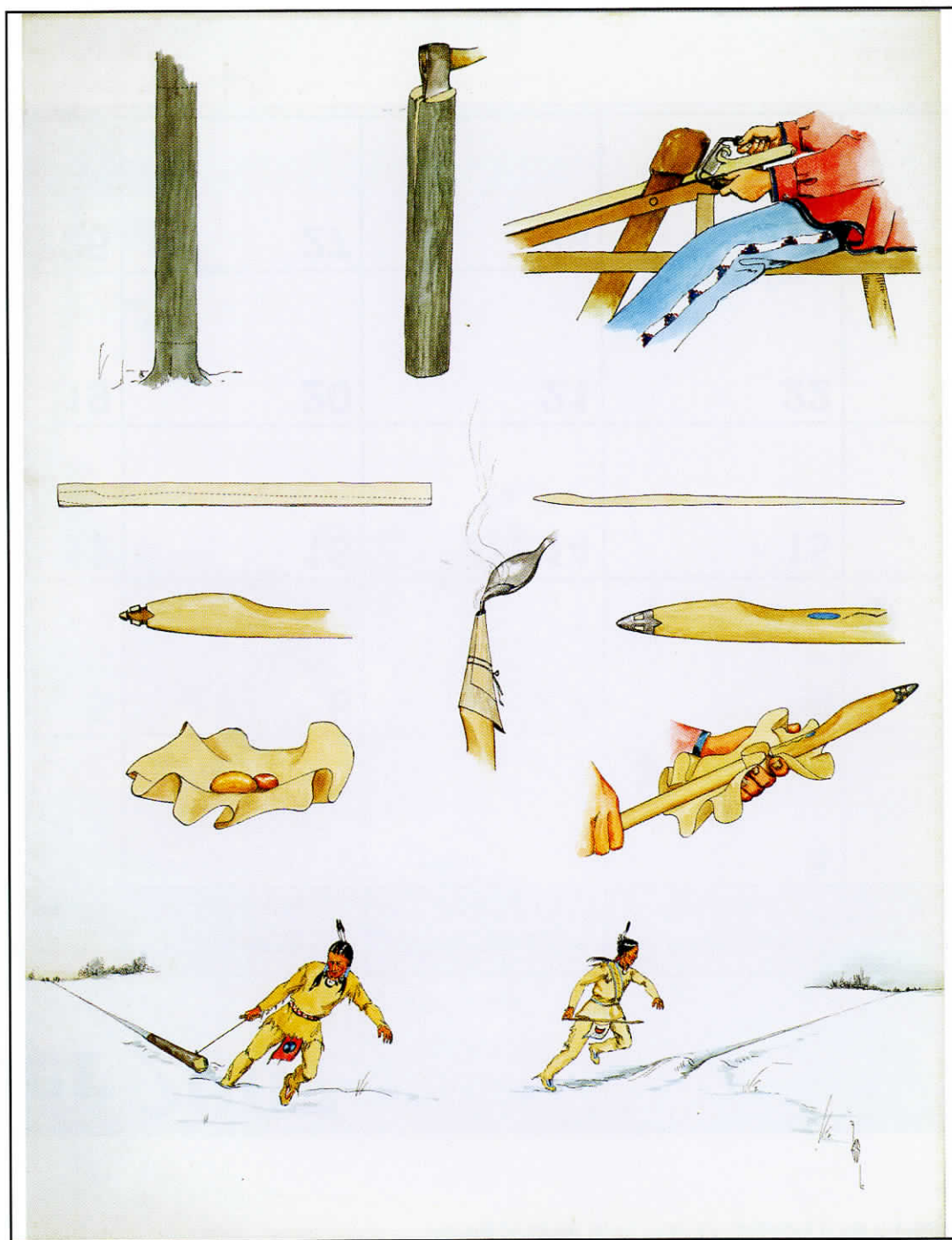


The Hunter [MR 1049]

November 2007

Jodto:h




Sunday <i>Awëdadogëhdöh</i>	Monday <i>O'wëdë:dat</i>	Tuesday <i>Swëda:dih</i>	Wednesday <i>Ha'dewëh</i>	Thursday <i>Ëyohë'tgeh</i>	Friday <i>Wëda:k'ah</i>	Saturday <i>Wëda:k</i>
				1 	2	3
4 Daylight Savings Ends	5	6 Election Day	7	8	9 	10
11 Veteran's Day Remembrance Day (Can)	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19 	20	21	22 Thanksgiving Day	23	24
25 	26	27	28	29	30	



Making of Snowsnakes [MR 1126]

December 2007

Nis'ah

Sunday <i>Awëdadogëhdöh</i>	Monday <i>O'wëdë:dat</i>	Tuesday <i>Swëda:dih</i>	Wednesday <i>Ha'dewëdaëh</i>	Thursday <i>Ëyohë'tgeh</i>	Friday <i>Wë:da:k'ah</i>	Saturday <i>Wë:da:k</i>
						1 
2	3	4	5 Hanukka Begins	6	7	8
9 	10	11	12 Hanukka Ends	13	14	15
16	17 	18	19	20	21	22
23 	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31  New year's Eve	Christmas Day	Boxing Day (Canada)			

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