

Smoke Signals Radio Archive Episode 1991-08-10
Segment 2
Episode air date: 1991-08-10

Dan Smoke reads a teaching about how the Big Drum came to the Anishinaabe people, originally told by Shelly Bressette. After, Dan Smoke, Mary Lou Smoke, and guest Harold Kohler tell listeners about events coming up in the London, Ontario community.

Host(s): Dan Smoke, Mary Lou Smoke
Guest(s): Harold Kohler

DAN SMOKE: That was **7th Fire**. The song, "**Colonial Attitudes**." We're going to talk a little bit about the **pow wow** season right now that's happening throughout Indian country this summer. The last weekend there was a pow wow up on the **Wiikwemkoong Reserve in Manitoulin Island**. This weekend, there's one taking place at the **Saugeen Indian Reserve** and next week, there will be a pow wow at the **Cape Croker Indian Reserve** that is a traditional pow wow. And also, next weekend will be the pow wow at the local **Chippewas of the Thames Reserve**. For our listeners who are in **London**, Chippewas of the Thames Reserve is about 20 miles outside of London near the town of **Delaware**. But I'd just like to take this one moment to read about the **teachings of the drum**. It comes from the July issue of **Native Beat**, and it's an article by **Shelly Bressette**:

"Today, the significance of the pow wow varies from one community to the next. Most communities view it as a seasonal celebration, a time to welcome old friends and reunite families. A time for sharing, giveaways, forty-niners. At the centre of every pow wow is the drum. Its beat, according to ancient mythology, represents the heartbeat of the Native Nations throughout **North America**. The **drum** is universal, and all Aboriginal nations from the **Arctic Circle** to the **Gulf of Mexico** had a **drum society**. Some used **hand drums** and others, **water drums**. The **Big Drum**, according to legend, was given to the **Anishinaabe** by the **Great Spirit** during a time when the Indian people were being wiped out by the **[to be transcribed]**, the **Big Knives**, or **American soldiers**. **Myron Pyawasit** is **drum carrier** for the **Smoke Town Drum Group** from **Green Bay, Wisconsin**. He is **Menominee** and follower of the Big Drum. 'The Big Drum,' he says, 'represents health, love, peace, life, and death.' Pyawasit explained that the drum is sacred to his people. 'The **Big Drum Society** has many teachings,' he said, 'most are for Anishinaabe only.' He shared the legend of how the Big Drum came to the people. 'The **Sioux** were under attack by the **Chemongins**. A woman feared for her people, who were being pursued by the soldiers. She ran to a lake where she cut reeds along the shore and lay under the water. She lay under the water for four days, thinking in fear. Then the Great Spirit spoke to her. He told her he was giving her the Big Drum. He taught her the songs and the rules and told her that if the people followed the rules, no harm would come to them. He told her to gather four singers and four sticks, one for each direction. The woman taught them the songs given to her. She told them to offer **sema, tobacco**, to the **Grandfather**, the **four directions**, and the Great Spirit. She told them to form a circle when they sing their songs. 'Do not be afraid,' she said, 'Stay by the drum. Keep singing, keep praying. No harm will come to you.'" That is the legend of how the big drum came to the Anishinaabe. That is something I think that from time to time we will share with our listeners, some of our teachings.

DS: At this time, I would like to introduce **Harold Kohler** and **Mary Lou Smoke** who will be reading some of our community service announcements, some of the public service announcements as well, in the London area. Harold?

[Mary Lou and Harold continue with community announcements]

DS: So, now that the Smoke Signals Native Peoples' Program has got a new time and new place on Saturdays at 12:00, we'd just like to welcome our listeners to tune in to 94.7 CHRW on Saturdays. We will see you next Saturday. My name is **Dan Smoke**. On behalf of **John Turner**, Mary Lou Smoke, Harold Kohler, we will close with a song from **Kashtin's** latest release. It's called "**Shteteian Departure**."