

retain some traditional features; and “character dolls,” independent creations depicting people from Zulu society without reference to courtship dolls. It is followed by what may be the most useful section of the book for researchers. It provides full descriptions of each doll including information Jolles gathered while collecting the dolls and is filled with a wealth of detail about Zulu dress, beadwork, and behavior. An appendix adds further information about these subjects. Observant Zulu beadwork enthusiasts working on identifying pieces from this period and region will be able to use the descriptive section of the text to identify some beadwork styles and the areas they came from. For example, the traditional doll in Plate 36 is described as having an “*umemulo* [‘coming of age ceremony’] hairstyle called *ufezela*, ‘scorpion,’ on account of the similarity to the curved tail of the scorpion.... The red, white and black beadwork motif and white apron with pointed chrome studs suggest an origin in the Upper Umvoti district just south of Msinga” (p. 133).

This book is a highly valuable resource for researchers interested in mid- to late-20th-century Zulu dolls from the Tugela region along with associated dress, customs, and beadwork.

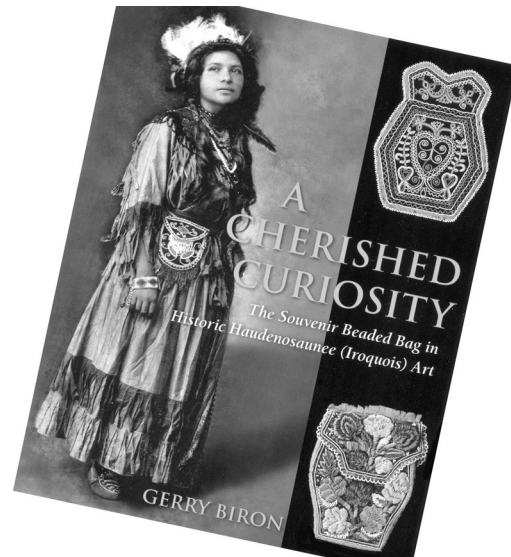
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### *Cherished Curiosity.*

**Gerry Biron.** Self published, P.O. Box 250, Saxtons River, VT 05154-0250. 2012. i-vii + 184 pp., 158 color figs. ISBN 978-0-9785414-1-5. \$34.95 (cloth).

For years, in times when the focus of attention was firmly placed on Native American beadwork arts of the Great Plains and other cultural areas, the attractively designed beadwork purses made in the North American Northeast went largely unappreciated and were widely dismissed as kitsch “souvenir art,” devoid of any great ethnographic or even artistic value. Not only were these purses vastly underappreciated, they were also very much misunderstood, being routinely dated by authors, museums, collectors, and auction houses as several decades later than their actual date of manufacture by the various Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) groups of New York state and eastern Canada. To

a large extent, some of the myths and misinformation have persisted. Gerry Biron’s new book, *A Cherished Curiosity*, goes a long way to setting the record straight.



Divided into five main chapters and lavishly illustrated in full color with examples of early Haudenosaunee purses and related ephemera from Biron’s own private collection, the book is beautifully designed and visually appealing.

The opening chapter provides an introduction to the emerging tourist market, and European or Euro-American demand for exotic souvenirs of travels in the American Northeast, discussing the establishment of Niagara Falls as a locus for the sale of a whole range of Indian-made curios expressly designed for the non-Native market. To the honeymooners and other visitors to the falls, these objects were at once exotic and fashionable, giving rise to a fascination for anything “Indian.” Reacting to this demand, a number of repositories of Indian goods sprang up, especially following the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825, an event which gave rise to a population surge in western New York state and opening regions further west to settlement.

The chapter is illustrated with a number of interesting period views of stores such as Mason’s Indian Bazaar, the Six Nations Indian Store, and Dean’s Metamora Indian Depot, all purveyors of beadwork and decorated bark articles at Niagara Falls for the early tourist market.

The second chapter examines traditional design motifs found on the earliest Haudenosaunee purses, including the double-curve, celestial dome (sky dome), heart motif, and other recurrent imagery inspired by indigenous cosmology and flora.

Chapter Three examines the so-called “Classic period” of Haudenosaunee souvenir purses, produced from around 1800 until the 1840s. Beginning with purses beaded on hide and evolving into versions made using trade materials such as woolen cloth and silk ribbon edging, these earliest purses were applied with a range of designs from the Haudenosaunee repertoire, typically including diamonds, sun symbols, double-curves, and zigzags on a background of red, black, or navy woolen cloth. A few documented examples are illustrated, including an example from the collections of New York State Museum, collected by Dennis Doyle from an Indian in Albany, New York, in 1807.

As Haudenosaunee beadworkers became more and more experienced and more savvy in terms of the marketing of their artwork, their beadwork designs became increasingly sophisticated. Some specimens produced during the late Classic period employ larger areas of solid beadwork decoration in their designs. Also presented in this chapter are unusual hybrid purses combining Huron-Wendat style moosehair embroidery with Haudenosaunee style beadwork, reflecting the complex cultural interaction between different neighboring nations in the 19th century, amongst other mitigating factors.

In Chapter Four, the author analyzes the factors that led to the adoption, from the late 1840s and for a few decades thereafter, of polychrome floral designs on purses and other fancy articles of beadwork. This transition from predominantly indigenous imagery to European-influenced floral forms may have been prompted by the 19th-century fashion for Berlin woolwork and beaded versions thereof, whereby two-tone shading was employed to create a three-dimensional effect. Paper patterns were placed beneath the beadwork to serve as templates and heighten the iridescent effect of the more translucent bead colors. Of the tens of thousands of these floral-decorated purses that must have been made, each one was unique in terms of design, a tribute to the inventiveness of their makers.

Instrumental in the development of the Haudenosaunee floral beadwork style was a young Tonawanda Seneca woman named Caroline Parker. A highly accomplished needleworker, Caroline produced a number of pieces collected in 1849 by Lewis Henry Morgan for the eventual New York State Museum in Albany. Several pieces in the distinctive “Parker” style she almost certainly played a part in developing are illustrated in this section of the book.

The mid-19th century trend for ladies’ purses as a fashion accessory is brought to life by the inclusion of early portraits and other photographic material featuring European or Euro-American ladies in contemporary dress, holding their highly prized Indian beadwork purses. At the

end of this chapter Biron studies Tuscarora novelties in the raised beadwork technique, including box-shaped fist purses amongst other styles of bag, many of which are inscribed “Niagara Falls” in beads. Also showcased is the work of one modern-day sewer, Rosemary Rickard-Hill, who continues the Tuscarora beadworking tradition to the present day.

Chapter Five goes on to examine the distinctive early style of purses made by the Mohawks in the vicinity of Montreal, Quebec, an active 19th-century center of commerce. Exhibiting a keen flair for enterprise, the Mohawks of Kahnawake especially took advantage of their location and went on to produce large quantities of raised beadwork for the commercial market, many of the pieces bearing novel inscriptions designed to appeal to European buyers.

Also described here is the small community of Akwesasne Mohawks engaged in the production of raised beadwork souvenirs in the Greenwich Village area of New York City around the turn of the 19th century, led by Chief Dibo (Longfeather). This Mohawk colony, numbering approximately 40 individuals, went virtually unreported until, in 1900, a local newspaper article revealed their presence and creative activity.

Finally, in an appendix, the author takes a look at the host of Indian “medicine shows,” Wild West shows, Indian entertainers, and fraternal organizations such as the Improved Order of Redmen, and the role they all played in the development and marketing of Haudenosaunee raised beadwork.

Gerry Biron is an artist, collector, researcher, and author of *Made of Thunder*, *Made of Glass*, which also treats the subject of northeastern Native beadwork. His latest book is a well-designed hard-cover publication, with an attractive dust jacket featuring the Seneca woman Goldie Jamison Conklin wearing a beaded purse with stylized curvilinear designs.

Readers with an interest in northeastern beadwork in particular or indigenous arts in general will certainly want to add a copy of this volume to their bookshelves. As the print run is relatively small – only 1,500 copies – be sure to grab a copy while stocks last. I can guarantee you will not be disappointed!

*A Cherished Curiosity* represents the culmination of many years of dedicated interest in northeastern Native souvenir art and reflects the author’s devotion to his subject. It also highlights the artistic beauty and historic complexity of Haudenosaunee beadwork made for the souvenir trade. No longer can their souvenir beadwork unashamedly be relegated to the category of mass-produced kitsch,

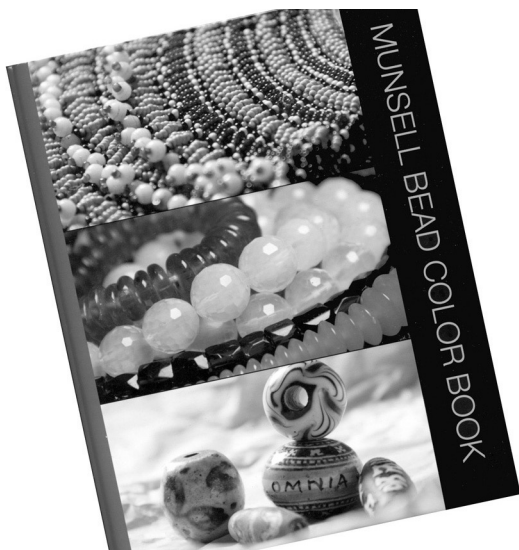
commoditized tourist craftwork. We have now moved on to a greater level of understanding of this culturally precious, aesthetically delightful, and most deeply cherished of curiosities.

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### *Munsell Bead Color Book.*

**Munsell Color.** X-rite, 4300 44th Street, Grand Rapids, MI 49512. 2012. Ring binder, 5 pp., 5 color chip pages. Item no. M50145B. \$157.00 (hard cover).

A.H. Munsell (1858-1918) was a painter and professor of art who is best known for having devised and developed the color notation system that bears his name. After his death, his son and other interested experts further developed and refined the system, and a number of publications are available under the Munsell name, including the *Munsell Soil Color Chart* which is used by geologists, archaeologists, and others. Other charts, dealing with rock, food, and plant colors have been printed, and the latest of these is the *Munsell Bead Color Book*, created in response to the needs of the many researchers in the world of bead studies.



The full *Munsell Book of Color* book costs US\$945, so this smaller book represents a considerable saving in both

dollars and bulk. Prepared with the assistance of the Society of Bead Researchers and its officers Alice Scherer, Karlis Karklins, and Laurie Burgess, it comes as a colorful ring binder measuring 8 by 6.5 in., with five loose-leaf pages of explanatory text and diagrams in black and white plus five pages of color chips with their names and codes on five facing pages. There are 176 glossy color chips which represent the colors that have thus far been recorded by North American archaeologists. The colors are arranged in spectral order, starting with the reds and ending with neutral values (white, gray, and black). When denoting colors, the Munsell code should be included after the name as some names apply to two Munsell color chips.

The color names are not drawn from the Inter-Society Color Council–National Bureau of Standards system as stated on p. 4, but from the 1950 *Descriptive Color Names Dictionary* produced by the Container Corporation of America, Chicago. The color chip pages have a circular hole 10 mm in diameter below each chip, a useful feature that facilitates the determination of the color of beads incorporated into beadwork or some other fabric. There are guidelines regarding the best light to view the beads, notes on cleaning dirty or patinated beads, and information about how to determine whether the glass is opaque, translucent, or transparent.

The introductory pages end with an explanation, including two diagrams, of the Munsell notation system: hue (color, listed in the order of spectrum colors), value (depth of color), and chroma (Greek for color and a measure of color purity). The inside front cover has a color image of the chroma scale of values above a color wheel of the hues which may make it easier for a beginner to understand the Munsell color system.

The *Munsell Bead Color Book* will prove useful to all who need to accurately record bead colors, whether they are archaeologists, ethnologists, museologists, or collectors. Munsell Color and the Society of Bead Researchers are to be congratulated on their initiative in creating this useful research tool and making it available to a worldwide audience.

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