

**PASSACONAWAY LODGE OF NEW  
HAMPSHIRE**

**NATIVE AMERICAN REGALIA**

**CEREMONIAL REGALIA  
THE FOUR PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS**

**DANCE REGALIA**

Prepared by Anita Creager

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## INTRODUCTION

In the forward to his book, The New England Indians, C. Keith Wilbur indicts Boy Scouting, among others, for perpetuating the stereotype of Native Americans as western Indians of the mid to late 1800's "living against a backdrop of canyons, plains, galloping soldiers and whooping cowboys."

In OA ceremonies, we often see Mandan buffalo horn headdresses, mixed with Chippewa feather roaches, Iroquian breechclouts and even psychedelic war paint.

"Full feathered war bonnets, spears, totem poles and a teepee village will be sure to add color- and a lack of authenticity- in the celebration. Our (New England natives) would never recognize themselves! They deserve a better fate," concludes Wilbur.

In an effort to rectify this, this booklet takes information from Wilbur, from the Modockawanda Lodge in Maine (per Gerald Maraghy) and other sources, which we hope will aid our Lodge ceremonial teams in more closely recreating the natives which inhabited this area before the time of European contact, when they struggled to maintain their dignity and culture against the white tide.

The Penacook confederacy of central and southern New Hampshire consisted of the following tribes and villages, Agawam, Nashaway, Naticook, Maumkeag, Amoskeag, Merrimac, Pentucket, Piscataqua, Souhegan, Squamscot, Patucket, Winnipesaukee among others. At one point the Abenaki of southern Maine and Northern New Hampshire, including the Saco, Ossipee, Pequaket and others, considered the Penacooks to be their southernmost group, but by 1620, when the Penacooks had grown, they considered the Abenakis as their enemies. At this point, they were ruled by the great Passaconaway from his capital at the present Manchester, NH. In the 1700's, they once again banded together to fight the encroachment of the colonists. The Micmacs, Passamaquoddy and Penobscots of Maine were traditional enemies. The western Abenaki (Sokoki) of Vermont, the Wampanoags and other Massachusetts tribes banded with the Penacooks in defense against the Mohawks of New York, historically a warlike tribe who banded together with other tribes to form the Iroquois Confederacy. All

these tribes were Northeast Woodland Indians, who had many customs in common, due to the similarity of their environment. Their clothing, decorations and tools, previous to the arrival of the Europeans, came from their environment: skins, feathers, porcupine quills, shells, rocks, teeth, natural dyes, etc. They obtained many items from trade as far away as the western and southern coastal areas. With the coming of the “white man”, they obtained cloth, metals, beads, glass and quickly adapted these new materials for their own use. However, they continued to use natural colors and simple clothing, as befit people of the woodlands, since elaborate clothing would be seen easily in the woods and would entrap the wearer on branches and brambles as he traveled about in his world. They often wore flaps rather than fringes to avoid this entrapment. They used more decorated clothing for ceremonies only.

The bright colors and elaborate regalia of the West were more suited to the plains Indians, who had nowhere to hide anyway. They developed flamboyant clothing, with which to impress and frighten their enemies. This regalia has no place in our New Hampshire ceremonies. Order of the Arrow policy does not allow facial paint as part of your regalia.

It remains for you to bring these characters in our ceremonies to life. Here, then, are the four major characters who appear in our ceremonies, in a more realistic mode.

## ALLOWAT SAKIMA

He is the sachem (pronounced “saw-kem”), the leader of his nation or federation. In most New England tribes, he did not necessarily inherit his position or rule with monarchical power, as do the “kings” of the southern New England tribes. He was chosen for his strengths and knowledge of his people, and governed by developing consensus within his Council to support his position. He was the civil authority, and might or might not rule in war. Among the Mohawk tribes to the west, the women of the tribes, who hold great power, choose the sachem, or chief.

Allowat Sakima is proud, majestic, dignified, confident of his position and his role among his People, but is not haughty or disdainful.

His headgear is usually of erect turkey feathers mounted on a headband, which may be decorated with animal skins or quillwork. The natives of this area frequently had tattoos on their chin and cheeks, but we, as non-natives, are not to decorate ourselves in this manner. Skin paint is not in the policy of the Order of the Arrow. The sachem generally wore his hair long and loose. He wore a skin or shirt tied around the waist with a sash of finger woven material or skins decorated with local beading, shells or native copper.

He wore necklaces of various metals or glass beads obtained through trading and mingled with stone or teeth, claws or bones from native animals.

He wore a pouch from animals skins, possibly decorated with porcupine quilling, beads or moose hair embroidery.

He often wore a sash across his chest and secured at the hip. In cool weather, he wrapped a skin robe around himself with or without the fur depending on the conditions. The fur was worn on the inside for warmth. A blanket worn over the shoulder added dignity and was available for warmth as well. The right arm was always free for his protection as well.

He also wore leggings secured to the waist belt to protect his legs from branches in the forest, and tied below the knee with garters of leather or woven material. The leggings had flaps, rather than fringes, which would catch on branches. The breechclout or apron was secured with a belt or

thong at the waist from which hung the leggings as well. Some tribes used a double apron over the leggings. Once trading with the settlers began, they sometimes wore woolen leggings, but still topped with a breechclout or apron. Moccasins were of various designs depending upon tribal custom. Decorations were done with quilling, paint, moose hair or later with beading.

All natives wore a “medicine pouch” around the neck, containing items important to themselves or sacred to their families or tribes. The pouch was usually worn inside the clothing, as it is a personal thing, not to be displayed.

## METEU

Meteu is a shaman, “medicine man” or “pow-wow” . He is neither a priest, in the religious sense or a physician in the medical sense, but he sought to cure his “patients” by intervening with the evil spirits believed to be causing a sickness. He was often an expert in use of herbal treatments, and thoroughly understood our connection with the natural world. You would not want to be on unfriendly terms with this powerful person. He therefore expects to be respected, having proven his supernatural powers through dreams and visions. He is fearsome and often a contrary person. He drove out evil spirits with elaborate ceremonies involving chants and actions known only to him.

He wears evidence of his animal spirit helpers. He may wear the full skin of such a helper over his head and down his back or over his shoulder and carry other symbols of these helpers. He may wear other headgear, often utilizing other parts of his animal helpers, such as antlers. The Gustoweh headgear of the Iroquois is often seen on Meteu. His pouches may be decorated with such images, and contain a collection of bark, roots and herbs useful in his ceremonies. A youth would never wear parts a bear, since the strength of a bear is suited to an adult warrior.

He may carry a whistle, rattle, feather stick, flute or other tools of his trade. He often wears armbands, decorated with vegetation or symbols useful in his treatments. Noisy decorations, such as gourd rattles or dew claws of deer attached to his gaiters or ankles call attention to his actions. Later, bells were a welcome addition with the coming of the Europeans. However, we discourage noisy part of regalia for ceremonies, since it is a distraction to the spoken word.

In cooler weather, he may wrap himself in a wool trade cloth blanket, in blue or red, which he may have received in thanks for his services.

He also wears leggings, gaiters, breechclout/aprons and moccasins and a personal “medicine pouch” around his neck.

## NUTIKET

Nutiket is a warrior or guard and may be a sagamore or sub-chief. He is a bodyguard and personal emissary for his sachem. He is his lieutenant's "right-hand" man or a man of valor.

He is fierce, alert, watchful, brave, challenging and even condescending. He quick to react, because he was usually young and eager, but not old enough to have achieved great wisdom or respect. He is still trying to establish himself among his People and with his sachem.

Many warriors shaved their heads, leaving only a tuft of hair enough to secure a roach of porcupine, deer or horse hair, topped with a single feather. The Eastern roach is usually round. The warrior's feathers were often of the eagle or hawk, but non-natives are not allowed to possess these. We use turkey or duck feathers, dyed to appear as eagles. The roach was often dyed a bright red signifying the blood of a warrior. The Mohawks were known for their hairstyle, consisting of a narrow band of hair, which was a roach in itself. It was kept short and stiff with paint and grease. The Wampanoags of Massachusetts also used this style.

The warrior wore a choker representing his bravery in protection of his sachem and nation. It was often made of animal teeth and bones to attest to his prowess and courage. His knife, in a scabbard is always nearby to serve his responsibilities as guardian. He carries a tomahawk or "skull-cracker" as befits his station. He may wear earrings or other jewelry representing his clan.

In cooler weather, he may wear a mantle of an animal skin over his left shoulder and caught together under his right arm leaving it free for action. A separate skin may cover that arm for warmth without binding. The mantle may be secured with a belted sash, from which may hang the tools of his trade. In later times, he wore a fabric shirt of neutral colors to blend in with the environment.

He also wears leggings, gaiters, breechclout/aprons and moccasins, as well as his personal "medicine pouch" around his neck.

## KICKKINET

Kickkinet is the guide, native woodsman, the hunter, the tracker and the stalker.

He is patient, quiet, persevering and prepared to wait long hours beside an animal path, with little food or movement. Ever watchful and keen of observation, he can pick out the faintest trail left by man or beast. Absent are the daring colors of the warrior, for this one must be able to melt into the shadows of the forest without a trace.

He generally tied his hair into braids with skin lacings to keep from catching in branches as he traveled through the forest. From the back of a simple headband, he hung one or two turkey feathers downward. He wore dark clothing with a sash across his chest, crisscrossed by his quiver and bow case. The quiver and case are of skins.

A necklace of shell beads or a stone amulet and his skinning knife in a sheath hang from his neck. A whole-pelt traveling pouch contains all he will need on the trail: fire starter, and dried foodstuffs. A wooden cup may hang from a woggle on his belt.

In cooler weather, a plain tunic-style shirt belted at the waist may be worn.

He also wears the leggings, gaiters, breechclout/aprons and moccasins, as well as his personal “medicine pouch” on his neck.

## DANCE CLOTHING

For use in dance shows, local PowWow competition and demonstrations, we may use more modern and regalia from other tribal areas. The Native Americans adapted any new and fancy decorations for their use, and when the modern PowWow came into being, developed many special dances which require specific regalia.

Many of these dances were made to entertain the “white man”, when tourism became a great part of their support, and they used whatever they felt would appeal to these tourists. As reservation life changed their way of living, the PowWow became a big social event, where people of many tribes gathered to “party”. Days were spent in singing, drumming and dancing, and this became very competitive. Most PowWows are of the Oklahoma style, and involve intertribal dancing.

Thus came the “fancy dance”, the “grass dance” the “sneak-up” the “straight dance” and the social dances including the round dance and snake dance. There are comparable women’s dances as well, with their accompanying regalia.

PowWows are generally intertribal events, so mixtures of various cultures are frequently seen. The ceremonial regalia discussed previously is acceptable wear at a PowWow as is the more common outfit described next. The basic shirt of the PowWow is the ribbon shirt, usually made of small-print gingham. This is cooler than skin clothing and easily washed. It can be bright in color, and not of any single tribal design.

A breechclout and leggings are still basic to the regalia, but are worn over shorts or a swimsuit for modesty. The apron may be more comfortable than a breechclout for the active movements of the dancer. Although skin leggings are appropriate, they can be expensive and, unless of very thin skins, can be restrictive to the motions. Lined woolen fabric (trade cloth) or artificial suede cloth is more comfortable and can be woolen pants rather than leggings. A belt or thong is used to secure the breechclout, leggings and/or apron.

A sash is used at the waist to secure the shirt, and attach any pouches, knife sheaths, bandanas etc. Since leggings have no pockets, a pouch will be

valuable to hold such things as keys and money. Sashes can be woven or leather. Often matching bands are used on the leggings to keep them from sliding. Such bands may have bells or deer toes attached to add to the festivities. A roach is often the basic headgear, but others are suitable depending on the culture. Frequently a bandana is worn on the head under headgear for comfort and a better fit. Be sure the headgear is secure for the activity of dancing. If any part of your outfit is lost during dancing, you are disqualified from competition. Do not pick up anything dropped during dancing. Someone else will do this for you.

For traditional dancing, a bustle of natural feathers is worn, and rattles, dance sticks, fans, medicine wheels etc. are carried. Generally a dancer carries something in each hand, sometimes a fan to keep cool.

However, for fancy dancing, the two back bustles and two arm bustles are of flamboyant colors with trailers of ribbons, plastic, mylar etc. Centers are of mirrors, metals, beaded rosette circles or even CD's. The fancy dancer wears sheep's wool leggings and cowbells and carries dance rings and sticks which twirl about as he dances his "Indian Aerobics".

For grass dancing, the regalia is made of yarn or ribbons to sway in the breeze, as grass on the prairies would do so. He wears a four-sided apron and a shawl over his shoulders. Footwear for grass dancing is often painted or beaded canvas sneakers or aquashoes in matching color to the outfit. The grass dancer appears to be flattening the long prairie grass in preparation for making camp. His was an honored position in his tribe.

The straight dance includes cross-bandoliers, a long trailer in the back, often made of otter skin with brass rounds. The headgear is also often a "crown" of otter.

It is important to note that footgear is to be worn with regalia. Going barefoot has special significance and should be avoided. While moccasins are obviously the most correct, shoes are better than going barefoot. Elaborately beaded or quilled moccasins will be seen at PowWows, but simple, comfortable ones are more suited to our Scouts. They can be made from kits or simpler canvas or nylon shoes decorated with paints or beading.

It is appropriate to wear you OA sash when representing our organization, but secure it with safety pins to avoid losing it or tripping over it during the

dance. At a PowWow, you are not representing the OA, and you should not wear the sash.

Each style of clothing is unique to the dance style, and needs further research. The best way to learn what is acceptable is to attend local PowWows and study the regalia worn there. Ask questions. Our native friends are anxious to help us to do things the right way. The most important thing is to remember that we are representing their culture, and must do so with respect for their culture and beliefs. Your clothing is “regalia” or “an outfit” **NOT** a “costume”.