

Learning Crafts from Grandmother - Pearl Kennedy-Colombe - OSEU #3

I got interested in my culture ever since I was seven years old. And the time I stayed with my grandmother, I watched her sew a pair of moccasins, big moccasins, together. She got the beadwork done.

The lazy stitch...I would sit there and watch her do that. She put her designs in and..."I could do that." I watched her sew the rawhide sole on... and she didn't have any teeth...kind of like me...and she would take the real sinew...you take the backstrap off the deer and then you take a knife and you slide it under that meat and you get that sinew off.

Of course you can fry up your meat...cook it any way you want. Take that sinew, wash it off, and take a knife and then skim over it and take all the meat off. Go put it on...like this door here...something that would soak up the water...it would just stick on there like glue. And then in about three hours, you have sinew, which is our thread. And that's what she would use to sew those moccasins with.

So just watching her I learned how to do that. So now I got my own sinew. We get it free on our own. But if we go to the store, that's \$20 a sinew. Twenty for each strap...one on each side...so that's \$40 we have to pay for thread.

So I make my own sinew. And I do...I learned how to bead... do loom work from my aunt and my mother. I'd sit there and watch them do that. "Oh that's not hard." Me and my sister Hilda would sit there. As soon as they got up to cook or go to the bathroom, we'd slide into their chair and do that loom work. So we were like eight...ten...nine...ten...eleven...in that age we learned how to do that loom work.

Then I learned how to do little tiny moccasins after watching my grandmother make moccasins. I would make little tiny moccasins like this and sew them on a pen and sell them. So when I was ten years old, Stephan found out I knew how to bead. While every afternoon for an hour and a half, they'd have me go and do loom work and make little Indian chiefs through the **UNKNOWN WORD** stitch. I learned how to do that.

So I would work for an hour and a half for Stephan...and then they had a bazaar in the fall and they would sell all my stuff...whatever I made. I must have paid for my tuition there, you know.