

Thanksgiving celebrati

Countryside

From the poem Harvest Time
by Pauline Johnson:

*Pillowed and hushed on the
silent plain,
Wrapped in her mantle of
golden grain,
Wearied of pleasuring weeks
away,
Summer is lying asleep to-
day, ...*

*.....
The north wind kisses her
rosy mouth,
His rival frowns in the far-off
south,*

**Shelia
Smith**



*And comes caressing her
sunburnt cheek,
And Summer wakes for one
short week, ...
Awakes and gathers her
wealth of grain,
Then sleeps and dreams for
a year again.*

The celebration of harvest, Thanksgiving, fell late in November in Indiana where I grew up. It was set apart by hunting wild geese and an extended family feast that celebrated all life and ... a touch of gluttony. My cousin, who once polished off the meal with two whole pumpkin pies, was an object of awe.

I happily helped pluck the goose harvest, carefully saving the great wing quills and later reassembling them into their original pattern. I was fascinated by the intricacies of avian anatomy and the patterns of feathers. This required a lot of time, scotch tape and the patience of the ladies in the family, who never seemed to mind if I played taxidermist on the kitchen table.

Canadian Thanksgiving, the harvest of Indian poetess Pauline Johnson, seems to me to fall at a more appropriate time. We no longer feast on wild goose but the spirit of thankfulness, the symbols of harvest and a sense of unity with family and friends is the same.

I was visiting Steve Smith at Talking Earth Pottery trying to decide just which piece of art work my mother and aunt would like best when I visit them this Thanksgiving. Steve's wife, Leigh, incorporates native legend and reality into the designs she etches on her husband's clay pots and sculptures.

Yellow leaves drifted past the window of the log house where the Smiths display their treasures not consigned to galleries elsewhere. Steve's yellow lab shifted closer to the wood stove, thoughts of tail-wagging deep in amber eyes.

Steve and I talked of harvest and legend, art and religion. In the American tradition the settlers held the first Thanksgiving with the Indians, who had shown and given them so much.

Steve couldn't remember any stories from native lore about Thanksgiving specifically. The holiday is, after all, a white man's tradition. But after awhile, as he wrote out the meaning of the symbols on the vase I selected, he told

