

U.S. First lady visits Ganondagan

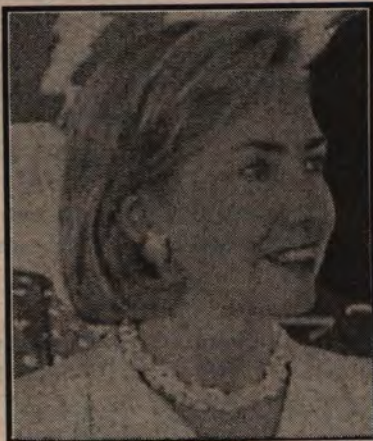
GANONDAGAN- U.S. First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton arrived in Rochester last Wednesday to mark the 150th anniversary of women's rights movement and visited three historic sites including the Ganondagan State Historic Site in Victor

Clinton arrived at Ganondagan at about 5 p.m. and while there focused on the Native American tradition of giving respect and power to women.

Clan mothers are the foundation of their communities, the First Lady was told. They appoint men as chiefs and act as the voice of the people.

Clinton met privately with five clan mothers from Upstate New York and got a quick lesson in history.

Clinton was told, that unlike white women in early U.S., history, the Clanmother told her, Native American women have always owned property, taken custody of children when a marriage dissolves and been viewed as the most important teachers of future generations.



Hillary Rodham Clinton

A light moment came in the discussions when about halfway through their 25-minute talk Maisie Shenandoah, An Oneida Nation clanmother, told the First lady that a single man could not become a Chief.

"A man is considered much more wise when he is married," Shenandoah said, causing Clinton to break out in a wide smile and chuckle.

But the clanmothers also told Clinton that although they have great power, their culture cautions them to use it wisely, fairly and with kindness.

"It's not like going to college and learning that you've got to be aggressive or you don't make it," said Janine Huff, a Tonawanda-Seneca clanmother.

"It's more important to help others than to show you're important," In fact, Native American women have lost authority over the years as they have been assimilated into white culture, said LuAnn

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