**APPRENTICE**

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her apprenticeship with Sophie has enabled Josie to reclaim a lost family tradition.

Sophie noted: “I started making baskets when I was nine. Because my mother always said if you want to earn some money, you’ll have to make baskets. So we made baskets, my sister and I. Every summer we used to go to Highgate Springs. We rented a house, and we had like a country to sell the baskets. We used to have one of the end of the school in June, and we would go back first September to go to school again. That’s a lot of families used to go and sell baskets in the States. It was good then, those years were good.”

After I got married, made baskets but it was for the government. We had to buy, they would buy 200-300 yards of cloth. Anytime you could make the same piece, they didn’t pay much money for the baskets. You earn about $2 a week. Working about seven days to make baskets. But we liked to pray. When you were married, a husband died, I said to myself: I’m going back home. And when I got there, I said: I’m going to try to make some baskets. So I started making baskets again. And I did it. I burned early in the morning, and at night, late at night too.

**ABENAKI DANCE**

*Heather Arthur: Deni Obonsawin, Odanak, Quebec
Apprentice: The Wabanaki Dancers*

Although dancing was officially forbidden by the parish priest, members of the Abenaki community at the reservation at Odanak, Quebec, continued to dance in private for hundreds of years. Deni Obonsawin grew up with this tradition and at the age of nine she started dancing with her grandmother and great uncle. As Deni observes, “I didn’t have to learn it. It was part of my life.” In 1999 dancing came out into the open.

Cheryl Heath and her daughter, Jackie, are learning Abenaki dance. “It’s another gift, another way of carrying on a tradition,” Heath said.

Eamon Flynn, left, and Sid Adam play Irish button accordion together.

as part of a newly instituted homecoming celebration that allowed Deni and members of her generation to perform these centuries-old dances publicly.

Unlike at Odanak, Abenaki families in Vermont were forced to hide their tradition. The Wabanaki Dancers have performed regularly in settings ranging from pow-wows to public schools.

Dancing is a means of letting loose more than a technical thing. It’s easy to learn the technical, the steps. But it doesn’t really matter. What’s more important is what you feel together. Because feeling, being able to let the spirit get in... And it’s not easy a lot of people don’t understand that the spirit of all the ancestors, all the grandparents, all the ancestors of the people in the group, come to get together in the middle of a group and be able to be part of each and every dance.

**IRISH BUTTON ACCORDION**

*Eamon Flynn: Eamon Flynn, East Concord, Vermont
Apprentice: Sid Adam, Plainfield, Vermont*

Eamon Flynn bought himself a penny whistle when he was 6 years old. He later began playing his brother’s accordion, and when he was 14 his uncle gave him a fife.