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Volume 88-89, 2018

URI : <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1073853ar>

DOI : <https://doi.org/10.7202/1073853ar>

[Aller au sommaire du numéro](#)

Éditeur(s)

Cape Breton University Press

ISSN

1718-1259 (imprimé)

1927-9264 (numérique)

[Découvrir la revue](#)

Citer cet article

Camp, A. (2018). Tying it Together: Examining Native Mid-Atlantic Fishing Nets in Collaboration with the Lenape Tribe of Delaware. *Material Culture Review / Revue de la culture matérielle*, 88-89, 79-90. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1073853ar>

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Introduction

Among Native groups of the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States,¹ fishing nets were once a ubiquitous tool, crucial to survival along the coast and shores of the Delaware and Chesapeake Bays. For the Lenape Tribe of Delaware, the work of the last community net maker, Clem Carney, offers a specific point of pride (Fig. 1). Carney's nets and tools were collected in the early 1900s by cultural anthropologist C.A. Weslager, who illustrated them in his 1943 publication *Delaware's Forgotten Folk*. While two of his nets are currently in the collections of the National Museum of the American Indian at the Smithsonian Institution (NMAI), the rest cannot be found and have probably not been preserved. This loss highlights years of misidentification and neglect of the Lenape Tribe of Delaware's material culture, as well as the need to better study what remains of this once crucial technology.

This report discusses collaborative research undertaken from February 2018 through June 2019 between the author and the Lenape Tribe of Delaware on the practice of traditional net tying. The Lenape Tribe is one of two recognized tribes within the state of Delaware. Having only gained state recognition in 2016, the group is actively working to reclaim the lifeways of their ancestors that they deem largely lost due to colonization. A public-outreach project, the research was completed in collaboration with the Lenape Tribe



Fig. 1
Clem Carney is believed to be the last netmaker of the Lenape community (Weslager 2006 [1943]:173)

and compared nets from Native Mid-Atlantic groups. Unfortunately, few examples of traditional Lenape fishing nets survive, indicative of early museum collections practices and the forced assimilation of Lenape into American settler society. While many aspects of Lenape material

culture may never be fully reclaimed, small steps, such as the simple practice of learning how to tie a net, have the ability to bind the Lenape of today to their cultural heritage, as well as build better relationships between settler and Native communities.

The research reported here was proposed and completed in collaboration with the Lenape Tribe of Delaware. This is part of a growing body of work focused on object-based decolonization and Indigenous knowledge reclamation. Scholars cannot fully understand and contextualize an object's significance if the source community is not consulted, and the source community's knowledge must be recognized as inherent to the preservation of the object's intangible meanings. While there are growing examples of collaborative research between conservators and source communities, (Clavir 2002; Pearlstein 2007; Talamantes 2013), the majority of this work has occurred outside of the conservation profession, and largely outside of the United States. One notable effort is *Visiting with the Ancestors: Blackfoot Shirts in Museum Spaces* (2016), where Peers and Brown discuss a collaborative project between the Pitt Rivers Museum and the Glenbow and Galt Museums in Canada to connect the Blackfoot peoples to shirts that were acquired in 1841. Similarly, Soares and Guedes address decolonizing efforts in the acquisition and conservation of new objects at the Museum of the Indian in Rio de Janeiro (2019). The leaders of object-based decolonization are primarily working within Canada (see Harney and Phillips 2018; Igloliorte 2017), New Zealand (Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa n.d.; Cairns 2020), and Australia (Schultz 2014). Thus, this project adds to a small but necessary body of collaborative object-based research focused on decolonization and Indigenous knowledge reclamation in the United States.

The project was completed with the Lenape Tribe's input at every stage. The Tribe chose the project's initial focus on Clem Carney's nets because they provided connections to distant ancestors and the maritime environment that sustained them. When no extant examples of Carney's nets could be identified, the project's scope was subsequently broadened to include both the technical study of all extant examples of Mid-Atlantic Native American fishing nets



Fig. 2
Approximate area of
Lenape territory. Map by
author.

in museum collections. All research findings were shared in community outreach involving the Tribe and non-Native residents of Delaware.

To provide a broader context for this research, the report begins with a brief history of the Lenape Tribe of Delaware. Then, the research project's two major parts are summarized—the technical study of Native nets and community outreach initiatives. The key findings and their significance for the community are explained. For the Lenape Tribe, this work represented an opportunity to reclaim a cultural tradition that was once central to their tribal identity. In doing so, it also established valuable connections between the Lenape of today and their ancestors, their land and environment, and the non-Native community.

The Lenape Tribe of Delaware

The Lenape Tribe of Delaware is a small community with a rich history. Following the arrival of European colonizers, many Lenape groups were forced from their homeland, Lenapehoking, along the Mid-Atlantic coast (Fig. 2). Despite their documented history on the Delmarva Peninsula, the Tribe was long overlooked within the state, resulting in what they consider to be a loss of shared cultural identity and practices. Archaeological evidence indicates that Indigenous peoples living along the east coast of modern-day North America exploited the local

Fig. 3
 The majority of the Lenape Tribe of Delaware live in the small town of Cheswold, located in Kent County, Delaware. Map by author.



environments of lakes, rivers, and coastlines since approximately 8000 BCE (Garbarino and Sasso 1994: 229; Miller 2001). Prior to the arrival of European colonists, the Lenape lived in semi-permanent communities along the Delaware and Chesapeake Bays and their tributaries in what is now New Jersey, Delaware, eastern Pennsylvania, southern New York, and western Connecticut.

European colonization began in 1610 when, sailing along the Atlantic Coast, English explorer Samuel Argall landed at another bay north of the Chesapeake. In honor of the then governor of Virginia, Thomas West, the Lord of de la Warre, Argall named the bay—and consequently the surrounding region—Delaware (Delaware Historical Society 2019). Although Delaware was subsequently used to label the region's Indigenous peoples and their descendants, these groups traditionally called themselves Lenni Lenape, meaning “the people” (Weslager 1978: 3). Numerous colonists and missionaries documented and even published their firsthand accounts and observations of the Lenape, but did not document Lenape daily lives or “material, spiritual, and social conditions” (Kraft 2001: 24).

After the arrival of Europeans, most Lenape either acculturated by converting to Christianity, marrying white colonists, or they moved. (Kraft 2001: 24). In his book, *The Delaware Indian Westward Migration* (1978), C.A. Weslager details the Lenape's mass migration. Their first known destination was the Susquehanna River Valley, in what is now western Pennsylvania. In

successive migrations, instigated in part by the French and Indian War of 1754, Lenape groups went west to Ohio, and some also traveled north to Ontario, where a Munsee-Delaware Nation is still located.² The Lenape lived at these locations in relative peace for roughly twenty years, before being seriously disrupted by the American Revolution. Forced to move again between 1795 and 1823, they spread further into western Ohio and Indiana and then into Missouri, Arkansas, Illinois, and Wisconsin. In 1868, a large group of Lenape that had settled in eastern Kansas was forced to move again, this time to Oklahoma, where the federally recognized Delaware Tribe is still based.

In his book, Weslager published data acquired from the Delaware Tribal Business Committee on where the 4,708 “Delaware Indians” of voting age lived in 1977 (1978: 251). The list showed “Delaware” people living in 45 U.S. states and Washington, D.C., but not the state of Delaware. The belief that Lenape people no longer lived within Lenapehoking persisted late into the 20th century.

In 1912, responding to rumours that people claiming Indigenous ancestry lived in the region, University of Pennsylvania anthropologists Frank Speck and Wilson Wallis arrived in southern Delaware. This sparked a variety of subsequent research and ethnographies. Speck and his student, Weslager, studied the modern-day Lenape's ancestors (including Clem Carney) and collected their objects and stories. Weslager, who noted the group's resemblance to their Indigenous neighbors the Nanticoke, failed to recognize the community as Lenape. Instead he referred to the group as “Delaware's Forgotten Folk” or “Moors,” peoples believed to be of Spanish descent. Even when, in 1948, the Smithsonian Institution did refer to the Tribe as “a surviving Indian group of the eastern U.S.” (29 DE Code 106 2016), it still failed to identify them as Lenape.

Today the Lenape tribal government is located in Cheswold in Kent County, Delaware. It is one of the state's two recognized tribes (Fig. 3). Under the leadership of Principal Chief Dennis Coker, the Tribe formed a constitutional tribal government in 2010 and was recognized in 2016 after a 26-year battle (29 DE Code 106 2016). Although the Tribe “has an unbroken history of hundreds of years of settlement and

continued residency in the vicinity of Cheswold” and “can date their ancestral ties as far backs as the early 1700s” (29 DE Code 106 2016), the lengthy battle for recognition was due in part to decades of misidentification by anthropologists like Weslager and Speck.

Over the past 400 years, many factors, including misidentification, displacement, intermarriage, and acculturation have resulted in what the Lenape deem to be a loss of traditional lifeways. Additionally, as Barbarino and Sasso so poignantly note,

The Atlantic seaboard was the scene of the first European colonies, and consequently of the first and most complete damage and destruction to Indian societies. Native American life was so disrupted that little was left to be recorded by the time scholars realized what had happened. (1994: 301)

Unlike other Delaware groups, who have been able to sustain large, cohesive communities in Canada and Oklahoma, the small Lenape Tribe of Delaware has struggled to retain a core identity in the eyes of the state and federal governments. As a part of its prolonged battle for state recognition, the community has worked to revitalize traditional practices, including cooking, herbal medicine, and crafts such as net-making.

Net Analyses

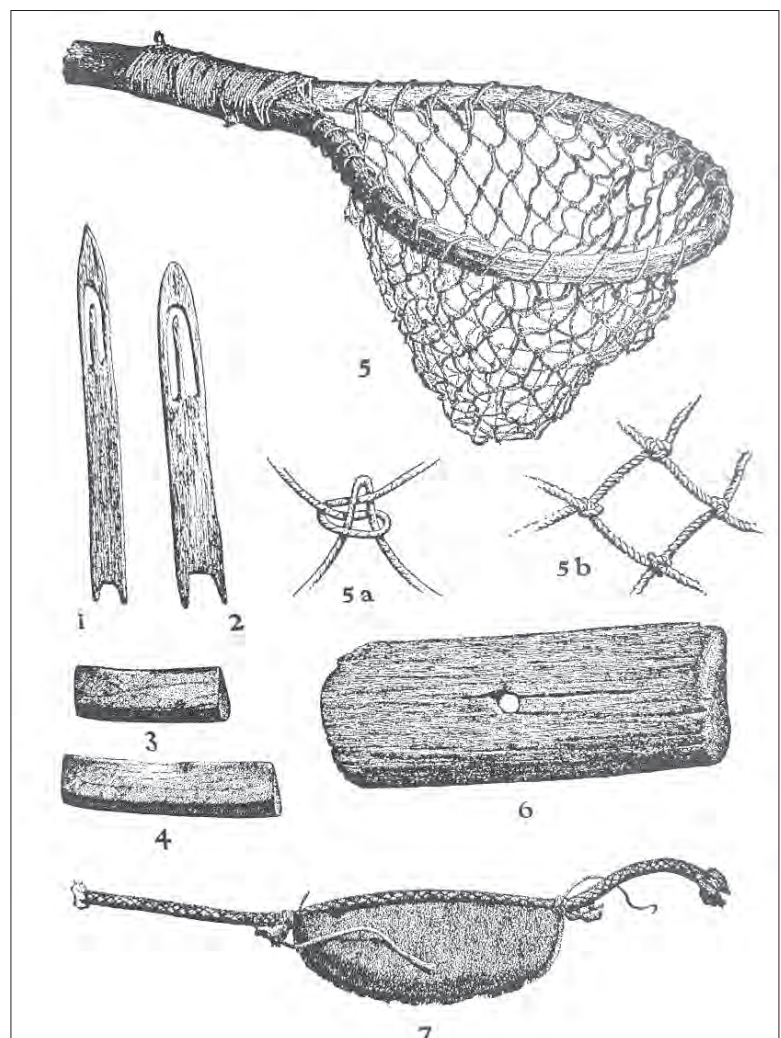
No one within the Delaware Lenape community makes fishing nets today, but the traditional practice remains relevant as the Tribe fights to remain close, both spiritually and physically, to the water that surrounds them and to their ancestors who utilized nets in this coastal environment for millennia. Due to the natural fibers used in their construction, nets rapidly degraded and were quickly erased from both the archaeological and historical records. Consequently, few nets are available for study. This, paired with a loss of the tying craft, has resulted in little information on how nets were made.

The research reported here was sparked by the Tribe’s desire to find nets made by Clem Carney, the last community net maker (Fig. 1). As of 1943, Clem Carney was considered “the only man left” in the Lenape community who could tie a fishing net, and he was known throughout

the region for his skills (Weslager 1978: 184). Unfortunately, all that is now known about his nets comes from three sources: 1) reports from those who knew him within the community, 2) C.A. Weslager’s *Delaware’s Forgotten Folk*, and 3) extant nets of similar construction and material. Few people who knew Clem Carney personally survive within the Lenape community today. Clem taught the grandfather of Tribal member Patsy Cline how to tie nets, and she remembers Carney tying nets in a shed at the end of his driveway (personal communication, October 22, 2018). Yet no one else within her family learned the craft, and no other Carney students have been identified.

During his many visits to Cheswold, Weslager collected some of Carney’s tools and nets, including two gauges, two shuttles, a net float, and a dip net (Fig. 4; Table 1). All of these

Fig. 4
Illustration of Clem’s work in Weslager’s *Delaware’s Forgotten Folk* (2006 [1943]: 186)



objects are documented in *Delaware's Forgotten Folk*, and are believed to have been donated to the Heye Collection, which was transferred to the Smithsonian Institution in 1989 and became the founding collection of NMAI (National Museum of the American Indian 2019). Unfortunately, only two of the tools collected by Weslager can be located within the NMAI collection. There is also no evidence of Carney's work within the collections of the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology at The University of Pennsylvania, where Weslager was a student.

To more fully understand Carney's tying methods, Native netting techniques of the region at large were examined. Because neighbouring tribes fished in similar, if not the same, environment for the same fish species, it is safe to draw parallels between the construction of other Mid-Atlantic fishing nets and Carney's. Additionally, these nets provide valuable information on the region's broader net-making tradition. The research involved the examination of all extant examples of Native Mid-Atlantic fishing nets as well as associated tools in U.S. museums. It included both descriptive analyses and replication of the construction methods.

All of the nets examined for this study are housed at the National Museum of the American Indian Cultural Resource Center (CRC) and the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) and came from the Nanticoke, Chickahominy, Mattaponi, Powhatan, and Pamunkey Tribes (Table 2). They primarily date to the first half of the 20th century but were made using techniques that were likely utilized pre-contact.³ Examination of the nets included documenting the net type,

mesh size, cordage material and twist, as well as any other anomalies, such as the presence of handmade cordages, repairs, or preservatives. All of these data were collected to understand the varying net-construction methods and to detect any similarities in material or technique that would suggest production by the same person or community. The data were recorded in systematic forms that are now included with the objects' museum records, better contextualizing the artifacts for future researchers and community members.

While it remained unclear if any nets were made by the same hand, the effort that each fisherman put into a net was apparent, with many showing signs of repairs. One net fragment from AMNH (50.2/600) has a large crescent-shaped repair that is incongruent with the rest of the piece, with a different mesh size and cordage treatment. This suggests that either the fisherman was completing a hasty tear repair, or the net was mended by someone else. These objects were thus something to be fixed and saved, possibly across generations. Additionally, many of the nets have evidence of preservative treatments, again demonstrating the fisherman's desire to make a lasting tool.

Of the 16 different nets or net fragments from six tribes studied, there were at least five different net types, demonstrating the diversity of nets fishermen made to suit their location and desired catch (Table 2). Clem Carney, for example, is known to have fished in the Leipsic River, a tributary of the Delaware Bay, using fykes—tube-like nets with an interior funnel and wooden hoop supports—and seines, long

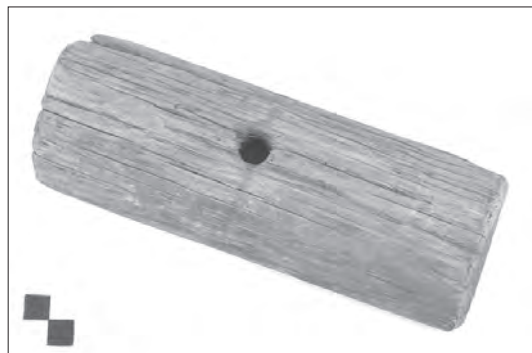


Fig. 5
Clem Carney's pine float illustrated by Weslager, National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution (246726.000).



Fig. 6
Clem Carney's shuttle, National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution (246724.000).

rectangular nets weighted on one side with floats on the other, creating a wall-like net. (Weslager 2006 [1943]: 185). One of Carney's hand-carved pine floats is in the NMAI collection (Fig. 5). Both of these net types could be staked or weighted in a river where they were used to catch fish moving with the current. Carney is known to have caught perch, bluefish, and bass using small-meshed fykes and seines and carp in large-meshed ones (Weslager 2006 [1943]: 185). The meshes of Carney's nets reportedly ranged between approximately one and two inches wide (185). These measurements fall within the range of mesh dimensions observed on the extant Native Mid-Atlantic net samples and are further supported by the measured width of Carney's shuttle in the NMAI collection (Fig. 6).

Examples of cast and dip nets were also examined. The construction of cast nets is similar to that of seines. However, instead of sinkers on one side, cast nets have weights on both sides to entrap fish as the net sinks. Although Carney is known to have used cast nets, they are believed to have been a recent introduction to the Lenape community that was foreign to Carney's elders (Weslager 2006 [1943]: 184). Carney additionally made dip nets, also known as hand nets (184). Dip nets were typically employed to catch small numbers of fish to be used as bait or to pick crabs from the bottom of a creek or coastline. Eel traps made from oak splints were also commonly used and are found within the NMAI collection. This variety demonstrates how fishermen altered their construction techniques to fully reap the benefits of the coastal environment.

Cordage material also varied depending on the region and access. Commercial cordage of cotton, sisal, and hemp was widely available beginning in the Industrial Revolution, but was likely uncommon in isolated communities, including Native communities of the Mid-Atlantic (e.g. Cheswold) until the introduction of mail-order catalogues at the turn of the 19th century. Carney used mail-order commercial cordage for his nets (Weslager 2006 [1943]: 184), but the brand and supplier are unknown. His shuttle at NMAI (Fig. 6) is wrapped with commercial cotton cordage with a structure of $S(4z)$,⁴ providing insight on the materials and techniques he used.

Prior to the use of commercial cordage, fishermen made cordage from locally sourced

plants. Very few archeological or historic examples survive, and almost all previous research on these fibers was conducted from a western perspective that grouped them together under the broad term "Indian hemp." Recent research at NMAI focused on the identification of bast⁵ fibers commonly used in cordage (Frankel et. al 2019). Many of the identified species studied were likely used in the production of Native fishnet cordage, including dogbane, milkweed, nettle, slippery elm, and basswood. Cordage made from at least three of these fibers—dogbane, slippery elm and either milkweed or nettle⁶—was found on the nets examined for this study.

Eight different handmade cordages were examined (Table 2). Of these, only one example—the use of milkweed or nettle cordage to lash the hoop of a fyke—served a structural purpose. All other examples were thick cordages of relatively short length that appear decorative on the nets' exteriors. This suggests that while fishermen used commercially available cord to streamline the net-making process, they maintained a relationship with the environment around them, possibly grabbing and twisting fiber materials while out fishing or preparing nets during the off-season. Thus, these nets provide examples of not only utilitarian objects, but also a small window into the now lost craft of cordage making.

Public Outreach

At the request of the Lenape, this project's other major component involved two sets of community outreach activities. For the first, a Tribal delegation accompanied the author on a research visit to the CRC. The second consisted of public lectures and workshops led by the author for both Tribal members and non-Native residents of Delaware, with the dual purpose of sparking interest in the practice of net-making and strengthening the Tribe's visibility.

Tribal Delegation

The delegation's visit to the CRC on August 28, 2018 was organized to examine the mid-Atlantic nets and net-making tools in the Smithsonian collection. The delegation included eight members of the Lenape community: Chief Dennis

Coker, Ruth Ann Purchase, Simon James, Drew and Melody Cline, and their three children, Charlotte, Cannon, and Jude (Fig. 7). They were joined by Delaware archaeologist Henry Ward, and Delaware Public Media journalist Sophia Schmidt.

Prior to viewing the collections, the delegation had the opportunity to pray and perform a traditional sage burning. They also interacted with the Center's conservators, archivists, and collection managers. The visitors were moved by the sight of Carney's tools and of nets that resembled his works. Melody Cline, a direct descendent of Clem Carney who saw his net-making material for the first time that day, spoke repeatedly of the power of seeing tools that bore the signs of her ancestor's use. The tools, which included a pine float (Fig. 5) and shuttle with cordage (Fig. 6), were both hand-carved.



Fig. 7
The Tribal delegation, including the Cline family, Chief Dennis Coker, Simon James, and Ruth Ann Purchase, poses in front of a statue of Chief Joseph at the Cultural Resources Center in Suitland, MD, 2018. Image courtesy Sophia Schmidt.

Although Carney's nets could not be found, the delegation was excited to see the handmade cordage samples and the variety of net types because they represent significant associations with their coastal environment. During the visit, Ruth Ann Purchase spoke of the Lenape's strong connection to the water, calling it "their lives." The variety of nets demonstrates the diverse life within the Lenape environment, but they also

indicate how much Lenape cultural and natural landscapes have changed post-contact and since Clem Carney's lifetime.

Today, due to socioeconomic reasons, the Lenape Tribe has limited access to the state's waterfront. The rivers in which Chief Coker fished as a young boy—and likely Clem Carney fished before him—have been locally dammed, forever changing their ecology. When Clem Carney was using a dip net to catch crabs from the bottom of a creek, he would have seen ten or more feet deep (Dize, personal communication, August 20, 2018). That is no longer the case as damming and pollution, primarily from agricultural run-off, have muddied the once clear water. However, despite their limited access, the Lenape continue to advocate for cleaning the waterways of the Delaware and Chesapeake Bays and the surrounding wetlands. For them, the nets act as a tangible connection to the waterways of their ancestors. Although access to their traditional coastal lands is limited due to heavy development, and the waterways themselves are heavily polluted, the nets reinforce the Lenape connection to the Delaware landscape.

The handmade cordage offered the delegation insight into the native plants their ancestors used for cordage, knowledge which has largely been lost within the Lenape community. Knots occur on nets made primarily of commercial cordage, demonstrating that even though the craft was no longer a necessary skill, it was retained by fishermen. This represents a larger connection to and understanding of their native environment. During the visit, Sophia Schmidt captured the wonderful moment when Nora Frankel, Andrew W. Mellon Fellow in Textile Conservation, taught 7-year-old Charlotte Cline how to make dogbane cordage (Fig. 8), similar to that seen on two of the nets. In that moment, it became clear that the knowledge and connections of these nets persist. In a world where cordage making and net-tying are no longer necessary for livelihood, the skills nevertheless serve an important purpose: they reconnect people to their material culture and the ancestors who made it.

Public Lectures and Workshops

To aid Lenape efforts to be heard within their local and statewide communities, public presentations and net-making workshops were conducted for Tribal members and the general public. It was hoped that these activities would promote greater knowledge of, and respect for, the Native peoples of the region. A series of talks were given at various stages during the project to keep the Tribe and others informed of the progress. Early updates were presented in Cheswold and Newark so that Lenape, as well as scholars from throughout the state, could learn about the research. Tribal community members and elders, University of Delaware professors, and employees from the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary attended and engaged in valuable discussions about the initial research. Chief Coker and other community members provided feedback and suggestions on how to continue the research and best ways to engage a larger audience.

A public lecture was presented as part of a Delaware State Park Lecture Series at Seashore State Park, in Bethany Beach, Delaware. Many of the attendees, who were living along the waterways once fished by Lenape, were unaware of the Tribe's existence and walked away with greater respect for the people who have lived in the area for millennia. Finally, the research was presented as part of the University of Delaware Center for Historic Architecture and Design Symposium, *Documenting Delaware's Historic Architecture and Heritage*, on May 4, 2019, bringing this knowledge about Lenape material culture into a scholarly setting.

In addition to sharing the project through lectures, it was important to the Lenape Tribe that members gain a better understanding of net-making methods (Drooker and Webster 2000: 1). Chief Dennis Coker knows that few, if any, tribal members will begin tying nets as a result of this research. However, he believes that understanding these objects is most valuable as an "exercise in reminding [Lenape] people in how resourceful they were in order to survive" (personal communication, August 28, 2018) and that the nets have the ability to spark a greater interest in the Tribe's material culture in general.

The Biggs Museum of American Art in Dover, Delaware, located approximately seven



Fig. 8
Nora Frankel, former Andrew W. Mellon Fellow in Textile Conservation, shows Melody and Charlotte Cline bast fibers commonly used for cordage at the Cultural Resources Center in Suitland, Maryland, 2018. Image courtesy Sophia Schmidt.

miles from Cheswold, agreed to host a series of net-making workshops. The three workshops provided an exciting opportunity to bring Native American art and technology into an American art museum. Because no one within the contemporary Tribe learned net tying, the workshops were led by the author based on techniques observed during the object examinations at NMAI and AMNH and based on consultations with fishermen from the surrounding region. The tying workshops were held in conjunction with the museum's admission free Saturdays, so that the events were available to all community members and open to the public. The first two workshops were traditional lessons on tying flat nets and tying-in-the-round, respectively. After listening to an overview of the project and the significance of nets within the Lenape Tribe, participants were supplied with cordage and tools (shuttles and gauges) and taught how to cast on and tie using the two methods. Participants varied in age, with the youngest participant being ten years old.

The third workshop coincided with Dover Days, a long-running, free event that brings hundreds of visitors through Downtown Dover and the Biggs Museum. A shorter hands-on activity was developed with head curator Ryan Grover to engage visitors as they walked through the

museum. It involved a quick introduction to the project and the option to tie a few meshes onto a net that continued to grow throughout the day. It was a successful method for introducing the craft and its history to the broader Dover community.

The project's impact was broadened by unexpected but much appreciated media coverage. To date, this research has been featured on six different websites, including statewide and national news sources. It has also been acknowledged by two professional organizations in archaeology and art conservation, as well as the Delaware State Parks Department. Information regarding the project has been shared in hard copy newsletters, exhibition brochures, web articles, blog posts, and a variety of social media outlets including Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. Based on attendance at the public events and the recorded number of people reached by web-based content, it is estimated that over 8,000 people have learned about this research and Lenape traditional culture. This number continues to grow, far surpassing the project's initial goals.

Conclusions

This project on Native American fishing nets achieved its two goals of engaging Delaware's Lenape community in the study of their material culture, and in doing so, providing avenues for

the reclamation of cultural heritage. The project was simultaneously heartbreaking and hopeful. The loss and misidentification of Clem Carney's nets and tools reveal the myriad problems of museum collection practices that have not only contributed to the dispossession and disappearance of important examples of Indigenous material culture, but also frequently fail to offer restorative methods that engage contemporary Indigenous communities. In the continued aftermath of colonization, the interest of Delaware's cultural leaders and the general public in Lenape material culture nevertheless shows the potential of museums in efforts towards reconciliation, and that objects can communicate in meaningful ways across cultural and temporal boundaries. The engagement of both Native and non-Native community members evidences this project's important contribution in not only documenting Lenape cultural heritage but enabling a renewal of the group's cultural identity. The Lenape Tribe of Delaware knows that much information about their heritage may never be reclaimed, but gaining an understanding of traditional practices, such as net-tying, can powerfully bind them to both historic periods and more ancient ancestors. This project reminds all of its participants that the Lenape have always been in Delaware. While they may have been "forgotten" by colonial forces, they were never gone.

Table 1. Clem Carney's objects recorded by Weslager (2006 [1943]: 186).

Object	Illustration Number (Fig. 4)	Location	Accession Number
Long shuttle	1	NMAI CRC	246724.000
Short shuttle	2	Unknown	
Short gauge	3	Unknown	
Long gauge	4	Unknown	
Dip net	5	Unknown	
Float	6	NMAI CRC	246726.000
Weight	7	Unknown	

Table 2. Nets or net fragments examined as part of this research.

Institution	Accession number	Title	Possible Net Type	Culture	Presence of Handmade Cordage (Y/N)
NMAI	97121.000	Fragment of fish net	Unknown	Nanticoke	N
NMAI	106575.000 (.1)	Fragment of handmade fish-net	Unknown	Chickahominy	N
NMAI	106575.000 (.1)	Fragment of handmade fish-net	Unknown	Chickahominy	N
NMAI	32473.000	Fragment perch net	Possible seine	Nanticoke	N
NMAI	32490.000	Fish fyke	Fyke	Nanticoke	Y: 1, probable dogbane
NMAI	32491.000	Turtle fyke	Fyke	Nanticoke	N
NMAI	33805.000	Net	Fragment	Nanticoke	Y: 1, probable dogbane
NMAI	97119.000	Unfinished net	Possible dip	Nanticoke	N
AMNH	50.1/9906	Shad net	Possible dip	Powhatan, Pamunkey	N
AMNH	50.1/9907	Herring net	Possible seine	Powhatan, Pamunkey	N
AMNH	50.2/602	Net piece	Seine	Nanticoke	N
AMNH	50.2/600	Net	Unknown	Nanticoke	N
AMNH	50.2/598	Fishing net	Fyke	Nanticoke	Y: 6, possible slippery elm, dogbane, and milkweed/nettle

Notes

Thank you to the National Museum of the American Indian and the American Museum of Natural History for allowing me access to their collections. I am indebted to my research advisors Dr. Jill Neitzel, Laura Mina, and Dr. John Montano. Thank you also to Dr. Vicki Cassman, Ben Dize, Debra Hess Norris, Dr. Nancy Odegaard, and Marilen Pool for their guidance throughout this project. Thank you also to the Delaware State Parks Department, the University of Delaware Departments of Art Conservation, Anthropology, and Art History, the Center for Historic Architecture and Design, the American Institute for Conservation, the Biggs Museum of American Art, Sophia Schmidt of Delaware First Media, the Archaeological Society of Delaware, and National Native News for their support. Most importantly, I am indebted to the Lenape Tribe of Delaware. Special thanks to Ruth Ann

Purchase, Chief Dennis Coker, Richard Durham, Patsy Cline and the Cline family for allowing me to study a part of their community's rich history and to share my findings with such a diverse and engaged audience. I owe final thanks to Clem Carney and the many unnamed netmakers whose work proved such a powerful research topic.

1. The phrase "Mid-Atlantic" is used here to describe the states of the Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, Virginia, and eastern Pennsylvania. This region is united by the fact that they are part of the Delaware and Chesapeake Bay watersheds.
2. The Lenape language includes two dialects: Unami, which was spoken among the southern tribes, and Munsee, spoken in the north (Kraft 1984: 1). The Munsee are today considered a sub-group of the Lenape.
3. Net-making techniques vary little throughout

time and region. The leading factor that contributes to differences among net-making techniques is the desired catch. Because these groups were fishing in roughly the same environment for similar if not the same species of fish, it is appropriate to draw parallels between their construction, not only between groups but across time.

4. Cordage structure is described using Jeffrey C. Splitstoser's Parenthetical Notation Method (Splitstoser 2012).
5. Also referred to as phloem, bast fibers come from the inner stems of certain plant species.
6. Milkweed and nettle cannot be differentiated without further analysis that requires sampling (Frankel et. al 2019).

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