

*"They will report, or be pressed into service!"*

## Mohicanland Praise

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"The book arrived today. It's great and well worth waiting for. I can't wait to get up to the mountains! Thanks!" --- Jim W.

"... Great job on the book. I've been to NC three times now. First time we took in Chimney Rock. 2nd time Linville Falls and Table Rock and then this past weekend drove to Greenknob Overlook." --- Theresa B.

"... the book is great. Very well done! It almost makes me want to come back down to NC for a vacation again." --- Cheryl C.

"My sister recently purchased your book. Anyway .... With book in hand, she and her husband guided my husband and I around on a QUICK tour last weekend. We had a great visit; it was so exciting seeing the sites. We plan another visit in October. Thanks for the great job with the book! I'll have to order my own copy before the trip in October ....(if we don't go back before then :))" --- Ann S.

"Received your book. I enjoyed reading it and looking at the pictures. Thank you for taking the time to make a book like this." --- Helen F.

"I just received my book today, and all that I can say is 'Wow!' Thank you." --- Sherry H.

"I received the book today. Excellent work!" --- John B.

"Thanks for sending (and writing) your wonderful book, *On the Trail of the Last of the Mohicans*. It was delivered in plenty of time to serve as the guide for our 'Last of the Mohicans' tour of NC ... Our trip was fabulous ... These sites were more than just beautiful, they were powerful in their own unique ways." --- Joan H.

"Thank you for creating your wonderful book. My daughter gave it to me last year for my birthday ... your book helped me immensely ... I am glad to know there are other Mohican-ites out there. Now that I have my own computer, I can stay in touch with the other fanatics who don't mind that 6 years have passed ... Best wishes and thanks again."

--- Dayna W.

"I received my *Last of the Mohicans* book today--WOW! It was fantastic. You did a superb job. It was exactly what I was looking for. Thanks so much ... I really enjoyed it!" --- Dave B.

"Congratulations! ... Your guidebook is informative, well written and obviously a labor of love! The photos are beautiful! Your relentless pursuit of the exact locations of *The Last of the Mohicans* sites is priceless! Thank you so much!" --- Kathy H.

"I just wanted to let you know that I think you did a terrific job with it. the color photography is beautiful, and the text compliments it very effectively. Congratulations on a fine job." ---Tim T.

"Hi from Scotland! Just wanted to let you know that I received today my copy of *On The Trail of The Last Of The Mohicans*. I have to say that I was very surprised to receive the booklet so quickly! It can't have been more than a week since I placed the order! Now that is service!! Anyway, I can't tell you how much I enjoyed reading the booklet! I am now determined that one day I shall make the pilgrimage to Mohican-land! ... no excuses for not knowing where to go and how to get there!! But once again, thank you for such prompt service. The booklet is absolutely wonderful and worth every penny!" --- Sheelagh P.



"I received your book and it is a delight. It's so meticulous. Thank you for this memento." --- Madeleine Stowe

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Another note of recognition: Our web site was included as a part of an exhibit devoted to filming in North Carolina by the North Carolina Museum of History in Raleigh, NC. Exhibit ran from November, 2014 through September, 2015. It was quite an honor!



# ON THE TRAIL OF THE LAST OF THE MOHICANS ...

*... the author's expanded  
edition ...*

by Rich Federici

With assistance and inspiration from Elaine Federici



MOHICAN PRESS

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Marion, North Carolina

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courtesy of Jim Smith

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**D**edicated to the Memory of Our Great Sachem, Mike (Kantan-keron) Phillips ... who may have loved *The Last of the Mohicans* as much as we do!

*"Oh, a lot of people still remember me. You know, and I'll tell you, from off the reservation, different reservations call me up at times. They tell me, 'I'm so proud.' I make them proud to be an Indian. I says, 'Yes. It does. This is what I think about, too.' I'm seeing myself, and at the same time, 50 years from now my grandchildren will be seeing me."*

**W**ith special consideration to my children, Jesse, Adam, Christopher, Miriam, Elizabeth, Olivia, Daniel, Isabella, Michael, & Sophia, and to the woman who bore them all along the way,  
Elaine

**S**pecial thanks to all the fine members of Mohicanland for their undying encouragement, support, and friendship!

**I**n fond remembrance of deceased Mohican Board Maniacs and friends, Scott Bubar, Dana Steckler, Ellen Parker & Mike Sleas [Seamus] - all passed on way too soon! In addition to Mike Phillips, other cast members who have passed away include Russell Means, Patrice Chereau and Pete Postlethwaite.

25 years  
have passed since this film  
was actually shot; 24 since its release  
on the big screen. Try as we might, it is  
virtually impossible to keep this book up-to-date.  
Ownerships change, trees grow, erosion occurs,  
construction takes place — the sites do change. Keep  
this in mind while exploring. Check with the web sites  
of various locations before traveling for up-to-the  
minute changes and events. Chimney Rock Park,  
Biltmore Estate, Dupont State Forest, &  
Pisgah National Forest, among  
others, all have web sites.

*And so, I hope these few little morsels help to make the booklet just that much more complete. I have loved putting it together for you, have enjoyed the contacts - and encouragement - I've had with many of you via AOL and the Internet, and feel now that, finally, I can put it to rest.*

## *A Shoney's Morning*

**I**t was with those closing words that I ended my first foray into writing a guide book to the locations used in the filming of *The Last of the Mohicans*. Ah well, so much for the best laid plans. Put to rest it wasn't. Seven years, many interviews, a partnership with Eric Schweig, a slew of Mohican Gatherings, and a huge Web Site later ... we have this! What? Another book? There was a time, please understand, that *The Last of the Mohicans* was not the sole purpose of my existence. Dimly, I do remember a time before Mann.

My earliest recollection of anything related to *The Last of the Mohicans* is a fuzzy, black and white television image from the Phillip Dunne version of 1936. Just a hazy snippet of a memory ... moccasined feet tramping over the forest floor. That's it. No required reading of the James Fenimore Cooper novel in school, no pretending to be Hawkeye as I ran through my childhood neighborhood on summer evenings with my friends ... no, my favorite hero was always Robin Hood in those days. There was a family trip up to Lake George one summer where we did visit Fort William Henry. I can't even remember if I made the connection to *The Last of the Mohicans* while there.

My first real fascination with America's frontier history came in 1960. I was eight years old. My dearly departed Father took me to see John Wayne's *The Alamo* on the big screen. I was forever more hooked. I read on the subject, anything I could find. Eventually, years later, he recommended I watch *They Died With Their Boots On*. To the best of my recollection, I was in the seventh grade, which would make it about 1964 or '65. Setting my alarm clock for 2 AM, I wiped the sleep from my eyes, went downstairs, turned on the TV set ... and became, to this day, a Little Bighorn buff. Like *The Alamo*, several years earlier, *They*

*Died With Their Boots On* captured my imagination forever. For the rest of my life, the American frontier would be the subject that most ignited the juices in my heart & soul.

As I went through the usual adolescent changes, on my way to teenager-dom, and beyond, my keen interest was put on the back burner. I had bigger fish to fry. We won't go into that story. Suffice it to say, the late 60's - early 70's were turbulent years in my life, as they were for much of America. As the unrest subsided, and my life was set upon the path that I am still following, I was fortunate enough to meet my wife, Elaine.

This remarkable lady, full of an acute wit, a sponge-like ability to absorb all knowledge, tremendous perceptive powers, was also, as fate would have it, fascinated with history. A stroke of good fortune for me! Then, in 1984, *Son of the Morning Star* was published. I read it, a birthday gift from my brother, and all the juices, that first poured forth in 1960, began flowing again. Big time. I read ... and I read ... and I read. Frontier America was at the forefront of my consciousness. We, Elaine and I, studied the history of the ground upon which we lived; we studied Indian ways & lore; took field trips to faraway places where important frontier events took place; we absorbed all we could.

Then, as the chapter, *In the Beginning*, will explain in much greater detail, we moved to North Carolina. The year was 1991, the very year that a film was being shot there. Not only in North Carolina, but in the very part of the state that we were moving to. And it wasn't just any film. Not by a long shot. It was a film that was based on perhaps ... no ... it was based on a novel that IS the standard American frontier literary piece. It is taught in schools. It has been the subject of films from the art forms earliest days. It is, of course, James Fenimore Cooper's, *The Last of the Mohicans*, written in 1826 and been with us ever since.

We were barely aware.

We read in the local paper, *The Rutherford County Times*, that filming was going to occur at Chimney Rock Park, as the crow flies just 3 miles, or so, from the farm we then lived on. There were photos in the paper of Daniel Day-Lewis and Madeleine Stowe. Who were they? We

didn't know. So, though we thought it a good thing, and planned to see it someday, that was about it. The Earth did not move for us. I do remember, I believe it was in December of '91, reading a little article about the burning of the set of Fort William Henry on the shores of Lake James. Too bad, I thought. Never did get to see it standing. The movie opened, nearly a year later, in October 1992. Perhaps we read a notice somewhere. We never did get to see it on the big screen ... well, not till a much later date, as a result of our Great Mohican Gatherings.

It wasn't until the video version of the film was released, in March of 1993, that we finally got to see Michael Mann's version of *The Last of the Mohicans*. Our lives would never again be the same, at least not for the next eleven years ... and counting. Immediately, the music was a hook. Caught our attention right away. The cast seemed just so perfectly placed. Everyone, from the major stars, to the supporting actors, to the bit players and extras just seemed so perfect. The cinematography was gorgeous. The lighting, the framing of scenes, the colors. It was a hard thing to look away from. And we didn't. I must have watched it a dozen times over the first couple of weeks. Elaine wasn't far behind. But of all those wonderful things, it was the scenery that really nailed it for me. Right off the bat, I could recognize the Chimney Rock Park location. And so, off I went to begin to follow the Trail. I photographed and videotaped. I would watch the movie again. Funny thing, despite the neat little brochures that the Park handed out, I would notice folks walking the Cliff and Skyline trails still not sure of what they were looking at. I would assist. No, it was over there ...

So, I wondered, where was the rest of this film shot? The next location I found was the site of Fort William Henry and Lake George. The locals in that area could all tell me where the fort had once stood. We went there. I think it was at that point that I was hooked. As I discovered and explored the other locations, found one at a time, in various ways, I soon found that I wasn't entirely alone. I often encountered others, like myself, searching for a location, though, without fail, they were at the more easily found sites. I would help them. No, no, that scene didn't take place here, it was at ...

Spring. 1993. Was it May? I think so. We were at a Shoney's Restaurant in Forest City, North Carolina. Along with my immediate family,

were some in-laws. We were celebrating the First Holy Communion of one of our sons, and enjoying one of Shoney's famous all-you-can eat breakfast buffets. Hmmm ... hmmm! Good! And a good time to announce, for the record, that I had decided to put together a full color, photographic guide book to all the sites used as film locations in the movie, *The Last of the Mohicans*. I had committed. There would be no turning back now ... We were *On The Trail*.

*I tried to get a feeling for the historical character within myself, and use that, but, basically, you can only go by the script and the words that you're given. That's what you have to stick to. So, that's what I do, but mentally, I tried to get into Munro and what he thought and hopefully, that would come across in the face. In speeches like ...one of the officers says we should do this, we should do that. He said, "Well, yeah, they'll just lob stuff over the walls ..." I mean I try to get it by into the face, but I remember that scene quite clearly, and I just felt that rather than a medium close-up, which is what I think is - what it's done in - it should been done as a close-up. You don't quite get right into the eyes, and if you don't get into the eyes in a movie, well then, you've had it. You've kind of lost a bit. I think if they'd had got closer into the eyes of Munro, you'd have gotten a bit more of that. Does that make sense?*  
- Maurice Reeves - From *On the Trail of the Last of the Mohicans*, the web site.



**S**et in the “Mahican Channel” of 1757 upstate New York - from the highlands of Albany northward through Lake George and on to Montreal - the diversity of cultures in North America was honed to a fine edge. English, French, colonials, and a broad spectrum of Indian Nations all struggled within themselves and against each other for their supposed rightful place on the continent.

The French and Indian War was the violent manifestation of this great cultural diversity - an intense struggle set in rugged frontier scenery; beautiful in its majestic mountains, rushing rivers, and ancient forests. This serene landscape provided the awesome backdrop for bloody massacre as these assorted forces battled for control of the others.

It is into this paradoxical setting that James Fenimore Cooper's classic 1826, loosely historical, novel begins, and where a beautifully romantic love story is developed. Michael Mann's 1992 film adaptation of this adventure powerfully projects all these images to the screen. Partially based on Cooper's tale, the current film relies heavily on the 1936 Phillip Dunne screenplay, as well as encompassing original material. Superb casting, fine acting, a terrific soundtrack, and stunning photography combine to make a visually pleasing picture of beauty and violence in an era when our country's seeds were sown - and the biggest stars of all are the counties of western North Carolina where the entire film was shot. With this guide in hand, you can walk in the footsteps of Hawkeye, Uncas, Cora, Magua and all the others, following the film and experiencing firsthand some of the most awe-inspiring landscapes this part of the country has to offer, many still approaching pristine wilderness.

Enjoy! There is a wide variety of settings to visit, encompassing a sizable selection of outdoor activities - from rafting the rivers to hiking along the cliffs to riding horseback in the woods to driving the crest of the Blue Ridge - and perhaps you'll come away with a whole new perspective of the film, the frontier era, and this beautiful country.

*"Tiring, isn't it! But that's ...."*

## *The Lay of the Land*

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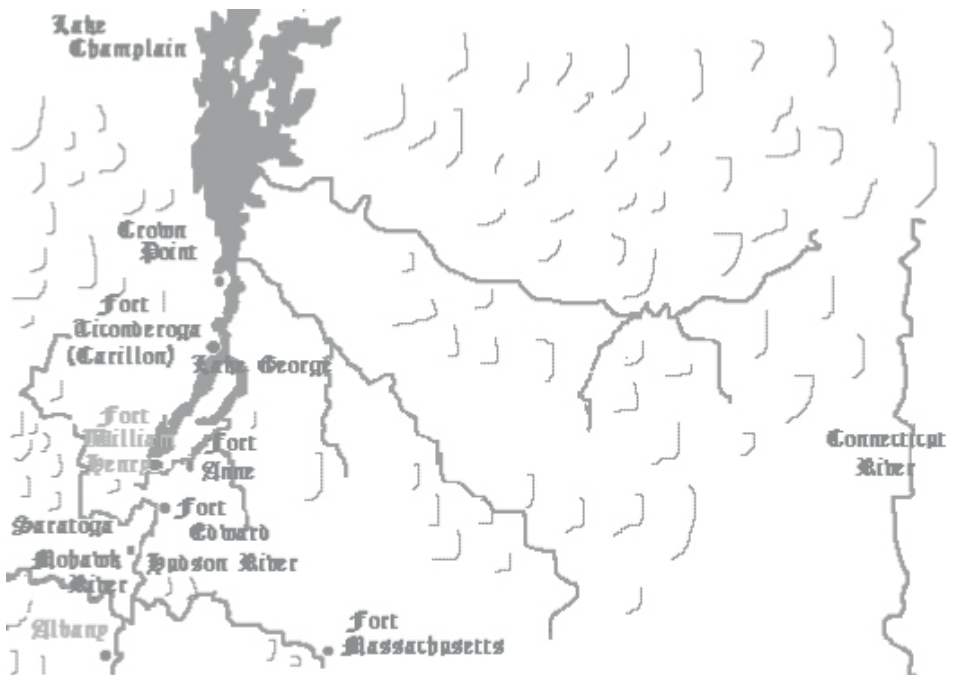
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2016: To clarify - The original booklet was 60 full-color pages [incl. Covers]. That is included here - with additional field note entries, edits & GPS coordinates - to comprise the first 122 pages of the book you now hold in your hands. So, some 60+ pages have been inserted. Plus, all the addendums are added to fill out the expanded edition with additional information. Page 228, btw, was the text on the back cover of the original.

*"Head for the River!"*

Last second bonus add-in: Sketch map of some of the key locations around the "Lake George" site. When our heroes "head for the river," they actually paddle into this cove ... see Page 224.



MAPS OF THE AREA - ABOVE - The historical locations of 1757  
 Upstate New York - BELOW - The film locations of 1991 Western  
 North Carolina (\* - site locations) Please note that the maps are not to scale!





*The Opening & Closing Vistas as seen from the Greenknob Overlook of the Blue Ridge Parkway (milepost 350). View is toward Old Fort in McDowell County.*





*"It was a feature peculiar to the colonial wars of North America, that the toils and dangers of the wilderness were to be encountered before the adverse hosts could meet." James Fenimore Cooper*

## The OPENING & CLOSING VISTAS

Wilderness it is. The beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains create the setting for the screen adaptation of *The Last of the Mohicans* and the opening shots are the scene setters for the film. It is into this world of folding ridge lines, enveloped in fog, that Chingachgook (*Russell Means*), his son, Uncas (*Eric Schweig*), and his adopted white son, Hawkeye - or Nathaniel Poe - (*Daniel Day-Lewis*), struggle for survival in their everyday lives in what passes for 18th century upstate New York.

Complex conflicts capture the trio's attention, not out of loyalty for one side or the other, but out of that ever-present need to survive. The landscape, serene as it appears from this vantage point, is filled with hostility and violence at every turn. Whether tending to daily living or performing heroic feats of rescue, that struggle is constantly present.

And so, as you travel the Blue Ridge Parkway to get to this peaceful place, try to imagine the horror the trees these characterize saw in their time. Think of the tumult the peoples who inhabited this continent, whether in New York, North Carolina, or anywhere else, had to endure in order that we can exist as we do today. The film powerfully begins at this spot with this in mind.

### Greenknob Overlook, Blue Ridge Parkway ... McDowell County

"Somewhere up on the Blue Ridge Parkway." Hmmmm ... by that time, I'd pretty much figured that out. But where? I placed a call to the

National Park Service, who administer the Parkway, to inquire. No one there knew, but they said they'd pass the word around. One thing I should note. Everyone to whom I spoke regarding the locations used as filming locales in *The Last of the Mohicans*, was intrigued ... and enthusiastic about a forthcoming guide. So, I waited.

Meanwhile, after speaking with Michael Bigham, I came to the conclusion that if the book were to proceed, it would have to do so with photographs that simply represented the shots seen on film. So, I called the NPS again and asked them where a good spot might be to photograph the mountains with some early morning fog nestled in their midst. A Ranger informed me that a good spot to go would be what was then known as the View from the Head of Licking Ridge. He told me of an old tree standing there that would make an excellent frame for any photograph taken from there. I decided that was going to be the best I could do.

Lo & behold, just as I had dejectedly decided upon this path, Russell Whitlock called me. Whitlock was with the film crew on the day they filmed those shots, as the NPS representative and guide. Not so coincidentally, the actual location, The Greenknob Overlook, was a mere .8 miles away from the recommended photo shoot. That's how close I would have been had he not called! I was elated!

I proceeded to pack my 1990 4-wheel drive Dodge Colt Vista with my camera gear, a hot thermos full of coffee, and my sleeping bag, and headed out from my Marion, North Carolina home up Highway 221 to the Blue Ridge. It was early evening on a July, 1993 day. It was warm and clear. I stopped at a convenience store on the way up there and bought myself some breakfast snacks to go with my coffee. Yes, I was going to sleep up there to be certain I would catch the very first rays of sunshine.

I reached the place as the glow of the setting sun was brilliantly coloring the rolling mountains to my front. It took my breath away literally. I was there. I could hear the soundtrack, the drums ... it was fantastic. What a sight lay before me! I just gazed and gazed. After darkness fell, I remember turning on the car radio and tuning in to the Atlanta Braves baseball game. They had just completed the deal for slugging first baseman Fred McGriff. It was his first appearance in a Braves uniform.



I lay there in the back of my car on my sleeping bag, listening to the ball game for awhile. It was a beautiful starlit night, and as I peered out the window, looking over the ridge on the other side of the road, it looked just like the night sky at The Burial Ground, when Cora & Hawkeye looked up at it. I suppose my imagination was running away with me.

I slept well that night considering, but awoke while it was still complete darkness. A slight morning chill made me all the more happy I had brought along my thermos of coffee. I sat on the hood of my car, sipping at the coffee, munching on my store-bought breakfast, and awaiting the sun. It was incredibly peaceful, and this experience rates right up there as one of my most memorable in my locations quest.

Gradually, I could see a faint glow of the rising sun appearing to my left. Hurriedly, I set up my tripod, checked my camera and camcorder, and got ready for the moment. What a moment! The skyline burst into radiantly gorgeous reds, oranges, and yellows, and my wait was rewarded with what was to become the cover of our first book ... the guide book. I never had, nor have since, seen a more beautiful sunrise. Nature lent me a great hand that morning. The mountains to my front, the south, were covered with sunlight and a low-lying fog. It was all perfect. I shot away, as I had the evening before, ran the camcorder, a clip of which is now viewable on our Web Site, and just took it all in. The book now had all the pieces save one. We'll discuss that final piece a bit later on.

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This site is freely accessible, an overlook on the Blue Ridge Parkway, and involves no hiking. Just park your car, get out, and gaze. The view you see varies slightly from that on film. There was a fire tower off on the ridge to your rear as you look out over the view. I am reasonably sure filming took place from there. The use of filters and telephotography also enhances the scene on film.

**Note:** It is possible - rumor has it - that at least one shot was done at Max Patch Bald, located in the "Harmon's Den" area of the North Carolina National Forest - [http://hikingthecarolinas.com/max\\_patch.php](http://hikingthecarolinas.com/max_patch.php)

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*The scene of The Elk Hunt was shot along an approx. 4.6 mile stretch of Forest Service Road #74, near Barnardsville in Buncombe County, in Pisgah National Forest's Toecane District. The sequence culminates adjacent to Corner Rock Picnic Area. (opposite)*



*"We do honor to your courage and speed ... your strength"*

## The ELK HUNT



*The scene of the elk kill.*

The scene switches to the interior of this wilderness as we find Chingachgook, Uncas, and Hawkeye chasing down and killing an elk. Who are these people - they who so reverently acknowledge their kill? They, of course, are the last remnants (in Cooper's fiction) of the Mohican tribe. And just who were the Mohicans?

The Mohicans (Mahicans), were an Algonquin tribe living mainly along the Hudson River south of Lake Champlain in New York. At the time of the French & Indian War they were living - what few remained - mostly under the protection of the Mohawks, although they closely associated with the Delaware. Ironically, the Mohawks had been one of the primary causes of their demise in earlier times. A commonly seen spelling of the tribe, *Mohegans*, actually refers to a related tribe living in Connecticut.

## Coleman Boundary, Pisgah National Forest (Toecane District), Buncombe County

These locations were pinpointed, as best they can be, somewhere in the middle of my search. My first clue came in some literature being passed around by one of the Tourism Authorities in the area, as part of their "tour" to the locations. Following that, you'd end up at the Blue Cross/Blue Shield offices in Virginia. No joke! Pretty wild, but there was some close-to-valid information in their brochure. Douglas Falls was quoted as the location where the opening sequences were shot. I naturally assumed they meant the opening sequences ... the vistas. They didn't. They meant The Elk Hunt sequence.

I went to Douglas Falls, which is a mini-Hickory Nut Falls in appearance, and is found a short walk along a beautiful trail that meanders from the dirt parking area at the end of Forest Service Road #74 in Pisgah National Forest near Barnardsville. The hike is well worth it, traversing territory that has some beautiful old-growth timber here and there, but I was sorely disappointed when the falls I saw there were not identifiable as any seen in LOTM. The rain that began to fall on my sons and I as we reached the falls, made it all the more a sad first jaunt to The Elk Hunt area. Yes, we were close!

Calling around, I was put in touch with the now defunct Misty Mountain Riding Center folks. Their location was just a half mile, or so, short of the beginning of Forest Service Road #74 (Presently, a larger farm occupies the site.) You have to pass them to get there. At the time, the fence used at Cameron's Cabin proudly adorned their property, for it was cut from trees they owned (No longer there, sadly). I spoke with a woman there



named Marcia Kummerle. She was so excited that someone was interested in this and she gave me much useful information. One of my greatest regrets was never taking her up on her offer to lead me on horseback through some of the locations there in that part of Pisgah Forest. Unfortunately, she too repeated the mistruth about some of the filming taking place on the trail to Douglas Falls.

I wrote to the National Forest Service, and was put in touch with a Ranger by the name of, Lee Thompson. He was with the film crew at all times, and assured me that was not the case. Best of all, he told me what was!

He went out in the field and had a hard time figuring out exactly where sites were, so much had changed since the film crew was in there. During filming, paths were laid out through the forest with dried hay for the actors to run along. Mark A. Baker, the re-enactor, and perhaps the foremost authority on frontier life in the era of this story, recounted the story of Daniel Day-Lewis hurting his ankle on one of those paths. The scene of the actual elk kill was drastically altered for filming with much forest debris and the like covering the rocks.

Poking around, though, enabled me to positively identify much of the running action during this sequence, most notably, the creek crossing.

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This site is freely accessible, a part of the National Forest system. No real hiking is involved, but several short strolls through the woods at the various stops would be highly recommended.

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*The site of Cameron's Cabin is located on private property in the Reems Creek area of Buncombe County near Asheville.*

*"You do what you want with your own scalp.  
Do not be tellin' us what to do with ours!"*

## CAMERON'S CABIN

Trekking through the forest after their hunt, the Mohicans arrive at the homestead of their friends, the settlers John & Alexandria Cameron (*Terry Kinney, Tracey Ellis*), in what is probably the most calming scene of the movie. There they encounter another acquaintance, Jack Winthrop (*Edward Blatchford*), who is present on a mission to raise militia for the British to aid in the defense of the strategic Hudson Valley against the encroaching French. At least that is the situation as the English colonists saw it.

In actuality, both the French & British had laid claims to the area, but if anyone could be said to own the place, it would have to be the Mohicans who were present long before any European power. Nevertheless, the British had built Fort William Henry on Lake George to guard the Valley, and Albany, against any French advance out of Fort Carillon (subsequently Ticonderoga) at the other end of the lake.

Hawkeye et al want no part of this conflict that isn't theirs and say so in no uncertain terms the next day to a flustered British recruiting officer. Jack and some of the gathered colonists, on the other hand, decide to attempt to come to terms with the British and head south to Albany for further discussions.

### Sawyer Cove Tree Farm, Buncombe County

Driving through the area in which I lived, I often times thought that maybe, just maybe, I had spotted a location. Invariably, I hadn't, but my eyes always seemed fixed on my duty. "Could that be Cameron's Cabin?" No, it wasn't. Never did find a place in that fashion, but I was always looking.

I might never have found Cameron's Cabin ... ever. No one had any idea where it was filmed, and it wasn't visible from any road. This one

had me worried. I pleaded and begged, and finally succeeded in getting the Western North Carolina Film Commission folks to spill the beans and give me the names of the locations scouts. Michael Bigham, whom at this point I had not had any success in reaching, was the head honcho, but there were numerous scouts working under him, and each found different locations. What one knew, the others might not necessarily have any idea about.

I spoke to a fellow named, Doug MacKenzie, and he knew. He gave me the information I needed to at least get to the general area ... the Reems Creek area of Buncombe County. He knew it was a place called Sawyer Cove Tree Farm. I headed up there and inquired. The area was chock full of "coves," so it required several conversations. It was the folks at the Zeb Vance Birthplace Historic Site who set me in the right direction. I drove up and down the road, finally resorting to knocking on someone's door to get specifics. I got the OK to head up there and explore.

Some time ago, I posted a bit about one of our On The Trail experiences. Here then it is, culled from our Mohican WWWBoard:

*We were at the site of Cameron's Cabin. It was my second trip, as the first resulted in being in the wrong field. Elaine was with me, as were Miriam & Elizabeth, just a baby. I pulled into the overgrown field ... straight into a ditch. The front passenger side went in, lifting the rear driver's side end about 2 feet, or more, into the air. We were alone, in a remote spot ... and stuck! Elaine got on the rear bumper and tried jumping and other contortions to attempt to get the tire to touch the surface as I tried driving out. To no avail. Elaine could not drive a stick shift, so I gave her a first lesson right there. After a little practice getting into gear, I got out on the bumper and we reversed roles. Tried & tried. Still nothing. Not even close. The car, it was obvious, wasn't going anywhere, and neither, it would seem, were we. Stuck with a baby in the middle of nowhere. I got in the car and put it in gear, one last, desperate time. It was as if a giant, gentle hand reached out of the sky & nudged us out of the ditch, for the car easily pulled out, as easy if it were sitting on dry, level pavement. It was the strangest thing.*



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This site is located on private property. Request permission before entering the premises.

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*ABOVE: The Bass Pond Bridge at Biltmore Estate in Asheville (Buncombe County) BELOW: Buildings of Albany, including Webb's HQs, at Asheville's Manor Inn*



*"I thought British policy is 'Make the World England' ...  
sir."*

## ALBANY ... part I

**A**lbany - the site of colonial congresses at the time - is comprised of various locations in the film. First seen is the tranquil Bass Pond, and its spanning bridge, at the Biltmore Estate. In the carriage is loyal British officer Major Duncan Heyward (*Steven Waddington*) bearing dispatches to the commanding general. With buildings refaced and some sets constructed in the parking lot, Asheville's Manor Inn becomes the focal point. As Heyward enters British colonial headquarters, the Inn's lobby, we find Jack and some militia already arrived and discussing terms of enlistment with Major General Daniel Webb (*Mac Andrews*).

Webb, a true historical figure, was known for his incompetence and timidity. Placed in temporary command of the district only two months before, he withdrew from Fort William Henry - leaving charge to its ranking colonel - upon learning of the French approach. He then set up shop in safely distant Fort Edward. After the debacle soon to occur, he was removed from command.

The colonials get what they want from Webb, permission to return to their homes should they be threatened, and leave for Fort William Henry. Duncan, a staunch believer in English rule, is appalled at what he interprets as pandering to the colonials and immediately gets into it with Webb. He curtly receives his orders and then inquires into the whereabouts of the daughters of Colonel George Munro (spelled Monro historically) who he is to escort to the Fort. Upon learning that they are at a nearby house, he is introduced to the Huron, disguised as a Mohawk guide, Magua (*Wes Studi*).

### The Bass Pond Bridge, Biltmore Estate & The Manor Inn, both in Asheville, Buncombe County

The Bass Pond Bridge was most probably readily identifiable to any viewer who had ever visited the Biltmore Estate. I hadn't, and so it wasn't. It didn't take me long to figure this out, though ... my first contact with a member of the Biltmore staff, Suzanne McCullough,

brought this response, "... the crew filmed at the Bass Pond Bridge, in the woods, and in a farm building that is not open to the public." Bingo! There is but one bridge in *The Last of the Mohicans*. The other two items wouldn't be quite as easy to locate.

The Manor Inn is mentioned in the credits, simply as "The Manor," which caused just a tad of confusion. The same scout who pointed me towards the Sawyer Cove Tree Farm, confirmed this as the place. When I arrived on the grounds of the Manor Inn, I was amazed at how small the complex is. Seen in the movie as a bustling section of Albany, with a carriage moving hell-bent through the streets, it is really a cramped little space - in a bustling district of the city - in its own little world. Entering the lobby of the building, Webb's HQs, I feel the scene come to life. Even without the set accouterments, even with the building facings seen in the movie removed, I still half-expected Magua to be lurking in the shadowy corners of the room.

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The Bass Pond bridge is freely accessible to visitors of the Biltmore Estate. The nearby Manor Inn can be accessed without permit. The lobby is often locked.

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Somehow, word got out that we were shooting in the neighborhood and a large group of locals showed up to watch. The people were very respectful of the production crew, and in spite of a pretty big crowd everything went smoothly. After lunch, as I was walking back to the set I started talking to a family that had come by to watch. It was truly bizarre, because these people acted like I was some sort of celebrity. They were very nice, but had about a million questions and I remember that as I walked away, the mom told some people standing near-by that she talked to one of the "real Hollywood make-up artists" and I was "actually really friendly" (like a tattoo artist for extras wouldn't take time to mingle with mere mortals). It was about that time that I realized that I was involved in something some people only dream of. Here I was, living in a cheap motel with no money, about as low on the production totem pole as possible and people outside of the project were treating me like royalty. That kind of stuck with me as the weeks dragged on and I heard cast and crew people complaining endlessly about the weather, schedule, accommodations, etc. ... Rick Martinko, tattoo department

*NEXT PAGE: The guest house, courtyard, & adjacent field at the Biltmore Estate, scene of the patroon's house in Albany.*





*"Have you seen the Red Man?"*

## Albany ... part II

The film returns to the Biltmore Estate for the conclusion of the Albany segment. Though not in a visitor area, the location of this scene, the Guest house & vicinity, is clearly visible from the road. Heyward arrives at the patroon's house to find a love from back in England, the elder of the two daughters of Colonel Munro, Cora (*Madeleine Stowe*).

The two engage in some awkward conversation and then settle in for some tea where it becomes apparent that the love he has towards Cora is not reciprocal. It is here that we begin to sense that the story being told, despite the tensions and bloody violence to come, is really that of love - love lost and love gained. Duncan, hopelessly in love, dismisses Cora's indifference and desire to remain simply friends. Cora Munro has lived a privileged life and her aristocratic ways predominate. However, she is also the daughter of a military man, and as such she is familiar with the ways of war and has seen time on the battlefield in nurse duty. Her young sister, Alice (*Jodhi May*), on the other hand, is too young for all that. She is naive and innocent - not at all prepared for the "adventure" this cast of characters is about to embark on.

The road to Fort William Henry will be quite a bit more dangerous than even an experienced military man like Duncan Heyward can imagine. And with a native "Red Man" to lead them through this wonderful wilderness, why worry? The scene ends, and the mood will shift, with Alice's youthful exuberance dominating.

### The Guest Cottage, Courtyard, & adjacent field at Biltmore Estate Asheville, Buncombe County

Farm house? I was told a farm building ... This was not my idea of a farm building, but after a talk with the gentleman at the entrance gate, I was easily able to spot this building from the road as the scene of Albany. I parked my car and assessed the view. Yep! That was it. I walked over to the tree where the shot had been set up at. The one where

Duncan rides up on his horse. Inexplicably, I never did shoot a photograph from that exact location. So, I walked inside the courtyard - viewed the interior at some length, figuring out where the apple press had been located, where Cora was standing - and on through, and out to the green, grassy field where Cora & Duncan had sat. Pretty easy, all things considered.

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The Guest Cottage, and adjacent field, on the Biltmore Estate are easily viewed from the road. Please ask Estate personnel for permission to enter the courtyard.

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*The purple pigeons. Somewhere along the line, as they're being escorted to the Fort, they're wanting Cora to have an hallucination. We're standing there on the first day, and this cage goes by. They had spray painted about two dozen pigeons purple. We see the 4-wheeler go up with this cage on the back. Full of purple pigeons. Cora's mind is supposed to be wandering ... panther, and these purple pigeons are supposed to fly up. That's all I know about them. We seen the darn things go in, we talked about them forever ... movie comes out, we never see them.*

*... on our second trip to Linville Falls, where we had to go back. I can't remember the sequence in which it happened, as far as the filming was concerned ... On the side of the hill there, they had these platforms set up in a stair step type thing with cinder blocks. You've got 75-100 people eating on these things. One of North Carolina's oldest park rangers just so happened to be there. 80 or 90 years old. It was really kind of sad, because he was the only one who got hurt. Something happened, one of the blocks gave way at one of the top levels. They didn't actually tilt over, they just kind of slid down. One started the other, all the way down. All the chairs, everybody that was sitting, just started tumbling. I'm not sure what happened to the old fella ... being in construction, I would have braced it in some way, shape or form. The only person to get hurt and it had to be him. I don't know whether he was actually working there or if he just wanted to be a part of it. To have that memory and then get hurt because the tables fell ... it was kind of odd.*

*... Eric Hurley, Soldier #2*



*On the trail back from Erwin's View at Linville Falls (Burke County)*



*"Magua say, 'Understand English very well.'"*

## The ESCORT

Escorted by a company of British regulars, the party heads out through the wilderness along the George Road to the remote Fort William Henry. We can follow the same path by first enjoying the view of Linville Falls from the point known as Erwin's View, and then strolling back towards the Visitor Center. Here, particularly during off-hours when visitors are few, you can get a feel for the isolation and apprehension one might have experienced traveling through unknown territory at that time.

With Magua in the lead, though, and the presence of a portion of the finest army in the world, there is little to fear. Unfortunately, what the English don't know is that Magua is not a friendly Mohawk, but a Huron, allied with, and spying for, the French. Long associated with the French, the Huron, or Wyandot Indians, were bitter enemies of the Iroquois - though of the same linguistic group - and so were easily able to infiltrate the British intelligence. Displaced and nearly destroyed by the Iroquois, of whom the Mohawks were a subdivision, the hatred ran deep. And thus, this was Magua's motivation for revenge.

With little more to worry about than the comfort of his women wards, Heyward, along with his company, make their way through the forest, anxious to join forces with the command at the fort, confident in little resistance from the French.

### National Park Service Linville Falls Trail just off the Blue Ridge Parkway, Burke County

Here is the one error found in the original guide booklet. The soldiers of the 60th Regiment were not walking back the other way. This stemmed from a misinterpretation of information supplied to me by one of the locations scouts, yet which I never could reconcile on site. In point of fact, the troops providing the escort to Fort William Henry for the Munro sisters & Major Heyward were headed "up trail" towards the



gorge overlooks. The confusion, in my interpretation, lay in the fact that this location is beyond the scene of The Ambush. If you were to keep walking, from here, in the direction the troops were moving, you would never arrive at The Ambush location. It is in the other direction, and, of course, you have already passed right by it on your way here.

Today, some of the large trees that were standing at the time of the filming are down due to storm damage. A shame. Still, one can get a feel for the ancient forest depicted on film. Look for the decom-

posing stump to the left of the trail visible as Magua prepares to speak, "Understand English very well."

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This location, on National Park Service land, is freely accessible & open to all. In season, there is a small Visitors' Center open at the beginning of the trail. Rest rooms are available.

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Chingachgook, a central character in *The Last of the Mohicans*, had a real counterpart among the Lenape (Delaware) Indians. John G. E. Heckewelder, a Moravian missionary among the Lenape of Ohio, published a study of these Algonquian people titled "An Account of the History, Manners, and Customs of the Indian Nations Who Once Inhabited Pennsylvania and the Neighboring States" (1819). Heckewelder presents a very different picture of the Lenape than the blood-thirsty creature in the minds of the colonials. He saw himself as the defender of these forest-dwelling people against the unjust defamation leveled at them by both the colonials and the Iroquois, who were their bitter enemies.

Heckewelder's Delaware were friendly, gracious, honorable, just, and harmonious with their environment. Chingachgook, (which means serpent; as in one who winds his way quietly through the forest), appears to be exactly the "noble red-man" Cooper envisioned. It is known that Cooper, though his knowledge of the Hudson Valley Indians was obtained first-hand, was very influenced by Heckewelder's work. It is no wonder then that he would take the "noble savage" Chingachgook and transfer him directly into the pages of his novel.

As to Cooper's usage of Mohican, it is meant to encompass or represent a large group of people. The preface of *The Last of the Mohicans* contains the following: "In these pages, the Lenni-Lenape, Lenape, Delaware, Wapanachki, and the Mohicans, all mean the same people, or tribes of the same stock." (Cooper had used Mahicanni and Mohegan in his title before deciding upon Mohican.)

Would it then not be fair to say that our heroic Mohican Chingachgook is really a Delaware? ... From *On the Trail of the Last of the Mohicans*, the web site



*Corner Rock, adjacent to Corner Rock Creek in Pisgah National Forest's Toecane District, near Barnardsville (Buncombe County - vicinity of the Elk Hunt scenes), is the location for Tracking the War Party.*





*"It is into this scene of strife and bloodshed that the incidents ... occurred, during the third year of the war which England & France last waged for the possession of a country that neither was destined to retain." James Fenimore Cooper*

## Tracking the War Party

Meanwhile, what of the trio of Mohicans? They are about to become intertwined in the story, as they come upon the tracks of a war party. Not knowing what lies ahead, they do know the trail belongs to their enemies, the Hurons, and so they follow to see what they might be up to.

Filmed in the vicinity of the *Elk Hunt* scenes, this place is very accessible, and makes for an ideal camping spot. The woods of Pisgah National Forest are remote and spacious, and here at Corner Rock - notice the creek and stand of timber easily identifiable in the movie - is a perfect location to simulate the wilds of 18th century New York.

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### The French & Indian War

Actually a misnomer, as Indian Nations fought on both sides during this conflict, the French & Indian War was a microcosm of a larger, worldwide land grab between the two super powers of the day, England and France. Both had power bases in North America, and both had developed relationships with some of the tribes of the region. Each side understood the truth that no one could win without the military aid of the Indians, and much was done to ensure the alliance of as much of this aid as possible.

Spanning the years 1754 - 1763, the war was for the control of a continent and all the resources that came with it. It was unlike formal war in Europe - organized on open fields - being fought in the shadows of the deep and unknown forests. Here, the Indian peoples were in their element, and clearly superior.

The story of *The Last of the Mohicans* takes place in the middle of this great war, in August of 1757, depicting the struggle for that strategic corridor, the Hudson River

## Corner Rock - Coleman Boundary, Pisgah National Forest (Toecane District), Buncombe County

Parking the car on Forest Service Road #74, it is but a short hike up a dirt path to this location. Once there, it's almost as if the "boys" have just left ... the creek gently gurgles as it tumbles over rocks in its bed. The large rock, Corner Rock, that gives this place its name, appears to balance precariously on edge from certain angles, but it won't be moving anytime soon.

Under it, in its cave-like shelter, a hiker's campfire residue will invariably be there ... a reminder of the celluloid Hurons who once passed this way. It's a perfect little place to camp, actually ... rock shelter, fresh water ... on a quiet, starlit night I'm quite sure you can feel the presence of the silent trackers, Uncas, Hawkeye, and Chingachgook, as they move through this place on another plane. Corner Rock captures all the essence of the scene it was chosen to be backdrop for.

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This location, on National Forest Service land, is freely accessible & open to all. Primitive camping, out of sight of the road, is permissible. Don't forget, that all the Elk Hunt scenes were filmed in this vicinity, as well. One other note ... At the end of the Forest Service Road #74 is a parking area where a trail head can be found. Following it takes you to Douglas Falls. While not in the movie, it's certainly worth a look!

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Someone asked: "What was the weapon Chingachgook used to kill Magua?" The rather imposing war club with which Magua was dispatched was typical of the type used by the 18th century Hudson Valley Indians. The Iroquois had two kinds of war clubs; the ga-je'-wa and the ga-ne-u'-ga-o-dus-ha. The first was usually made of ironwood with a large ball at the head. It was approximately two feet long, with the ball measuring five or six inches in diameter. The second, which means 'deer-horn war club', was an elaborately carved and painted club made of hardwood. Along the bottom edge was inserted a sharp-pointed deer's horn of about four inches. At both ends were ornamentations of feathers. This type would have inflicted a much deeper wound than the former, and certainly would have been very dangerous in close combat. Eventually, the deer horn was replaced with a steel or iron blade.

The Lenape had a similar ball-headed war club. It usually had a carved and inlaid face. The handle was shaped like a human leg, with a knee and a foot. There were variations of these types of war clubs used by the many northeastern woodland tribes. Chingachgook's weapon was very much like one of the aforementioned styles. There are many war clubs of the colonial period on display at various New York State museums.

While on the subject of weaponry, Hawkeye's famous rifle, Killdeer, deserves a mention. As he was a hunter, rather than a soldier, a long rifle better served his purpose. The lengthy musket became his trademark, hence his nickname by the French speaking Hurons, 'La Longue Carabine'; meaning 'the long rifle'.  
... From *On the Trail of the Last of the Mohicans*, the web site



*Just off the Blue Ridge Parkway, at milepost 316.5, is the Ambush site located on the trail to the Upper Falls at Linville Falls (Burke County). The distinctive tree overhanging the trail makes this spot hard to miss.*



*"... In case your aim's any better than your judgment ..."*

## The AMBUSH

At this point, all the major characters have been introduced and are now traveling in two separate groups. Heyward, Cora, and Alice, guided by Magua, are traveling on the trail to the Upper Falls at Linville (a change from where we left them during *The Escort*), while Hawkeye, Chingachgook, and Uncas are tracking somebody way out at Corner Rock. Little does anyone know, but Magua is leading his group into a pre-planned ambush, and the war party the Mohicans are stealthily tracking is that who are to do the ambushing. As mentioned, the scene has changed and the distinctive tree overhanging the trail will tell you that you are in the correct place. Also, look for the stump to the side of the trail. Magua mystifies Heyward by abruptly turning and walking towards the rear of the column. He strikes a blow with his tomahawk to one of the troopers, while shooting another with his musket. The surprise is complete, the signal given, and while the soldiers form up, Magua has vanished. Suddenly, the serenity of the forest is transformed into a swirling mass of screaming Huron warriors, amidst a sea of black powder smoke, muskets blazing, steel bayonets and tomahawks clanging in the confusion and reflecting flashes of sunlight off their polished surfaces. All is expertly filmed so that you experience each torturous blow and feel as if you are in the middle of it all, perhaps huddled near the stump as Cora and a terrified Alice are, watching the easy targets of the Red Coats falling one by one.

The Mohicans are too late to save everyone, but suddenly, and in dramatic and true hero fashion, they appear, firing three shots and then leaping into the scene wiping out Hurons with every blow. The animosity between the two groups is apparent, and the threesome are too much for the surprised Hurons. Magua lines Cora up in the sights of his gun ... Hawkeye notices the danger and readies to fire at Magua ... Magua instead fires at Hawkeye, misses, and disappears in the smoke into the forest. The company has been devastated. Three strangers have appeared from nowhere to save them from complete annihilation. They are stunned and relieved.

## National Park Service Linville Falls Trail just off the Blue Ridge Parkway, Burke County

As I progressed through my journey of locating & photographing all the locations, I very often shot video tape as a kind of notebook for myself. I'd return home and study the video tape to see what else I might spot. Typical of input from many of the locals who attempted to assist in my locations search, was this when I inquired of someone where the George Road Ambush was shot:

*Oh, somewhere off of Highway 221 up yonder.*

Yes, the Blue Ridge Parkway IS, in fact, off of Highway 221, but, as I traversed the trails of Linville, I had no idea the Ambush was shot here. I knew something was filmed here ... Canoes maybe? ... but I just wasn't looking for that overhanging tree that defines this place.

So, after spending a morning poking around a bit up there with my sons (I did identify the Upper Falls as being a part of the film sequence, and, standing on a bench along the trail and video taping the adjacent forest, I remarked, on tape, how typical these woods were of scenes from LOTM - little did I know it then, but I was standing right at The Escort location!), I was thoroughly surprised at what I saw as a consequence of my video taping ... One of my sons had climbed out on a limb, over hanging the path, and was playing around up there. Well, I'll be! It took seeing it on video tape to recognize it, but there it was, right in front of me on my television set, the George Road Ambush! I had walked right under that tree, twice, my son had actually played up on it, but I had no idea I was there!

Though the movie was, more or less, filmed in sequence, this was the first location chosen to shoot, here and a bit further up the trail at the Escort location. Curtis Gaston, Soldier #1, was a member of the Cadre, the Dale Dye trained core group of British regulars. About this shoot, he says:

*The George Road Ambush scene was the first in which the 35th regiment was involved. Everyone, including myself, was happy to escape the stifling repetition of training camp for a few days. We were also looking forward to displaying our newly acquired killing skills to the*



*cast and crew. It was a chance to make Papa Dye proud, while giving us some credibility within the eyes of the film's key personnel ... The weather was unpredictable. Hot days, cool nights, and bone-chilling rain made some of the days nearly intolerable (in hindsight, the Linville shoot was a cake walk compared to the draconian temperatures and humidity that we would face at the fort). Playing dead for hours at a time while encrusted in mud and goop probably has its advantages, but I don't know what they could be.*

Ah, Hollywood! At any rate, principal photography had begun. As if to drive home the point, Eric Hurley, Soldier #2, likewise a Cadre member, says about the Escort:

*We were burning up in these things [the wool uniforms]. We're in the middle of the forest at Linville Falls. Humid as it can be. Hot. We're just ready to pass out. There's no way in God's green earth that we're going to make it through the summer.*

Both Gaston & Hurley were involved with the filming from pre-production training through the last shoot at the Asheville warehouse in October ... more on that later.

So, the production goes on strike here, becomes unionized and things go merrily on their way, until, of course, the Indian extras decided to go on strike themselves later on at the lake.

Gaston & Hurley ... as long as I'm completely off the beaten trail it's probably a good time to say a brief word about the two of these gentlemen. They were among the very earliest of the folks actually involved in the filming of *The Last of the Mohicans* to contact us. In fact, it was very shortly after we had installed our Mohican WWWBoard that we first heard from Gaston. His was one of the very first posts, in May of 1997. It wasn't until September that Hurley hooked up with us, but he soon became an integral part of our understanding of the filming process. Both these guys, in good humor, offered a zillion little tidbits about the "making of." Added together with input from other extras, crew members, the cast itself, we were given an inside look into this movie like few have ever seen ... for ANY movie. We'll intersperse a few of their recollections throughout this volume.

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This location, on National Park Service land, is freely accessible & open to all. In season, there is a small Visitors' Center open at the beginning of the trail. Rest rooms are available.

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As beautiful and perfect all the various locations used in the film are, they often were actually second choices. Clauses about designated National Wilderness Areas and other red tape frequently made filmmakers look elsewhere. Among the sites the production was forbidden from using, though they very much wanted to, were Hawksbill Mountain, Catawba Falls, Craggy Mountain and Lost Cove Cliffs. So, if you ever decide to follow the Trail, remember that there are a host of other gorgeous & remote settings, which never made it to film, that you can visit while here as well.



*Triple Falls (above) and Bridal Veil Falls (below), together, comprise the River Walk scene. Both are located in Dupont State Forest (Transylvania County)*



*"I ain't your scout, and I sure ain't in no damn militia!"*

## The RIVER WALK

Following this holocaust and finally united as a group, our cast of characters continue to make their way northward towards Fort William Henry, this time led by the Mohicans who have agreed to guide them. This after sending the wounded back to Albany. As they climb the splendid Triple Falls (on private land), we detect an attraction Uncas, the youngest of the three Mohicans, has towards Alice Munro. When James Fenimore Cooper wrote his tale he borrowed the image of his character, Uncas, from that of a famous Mohegan sachem of the same name. One of the more powerful of Indian leaders in eastern Connecticut during the time of King Philip's War in the 1670's, his reputation varied from that of a great savior of his race to that of a self-interested scoundrel. Neither was probably true, though Cooper chose a characterization more resembling the former.

The tale told by director Michael Mann in this film, as fine a piece of work as it is, is actually a convoluted version of the original work. Of several differences, probably the greatest is the virtual reversal of the Cora/Alice roles. Nevertheless, Uncas falls for Alice.

As the party makes its way along the rushing waters of Bridal Veil Falls (again, on private property), it becomes apparent that Hawkeye has no affection for the British and their lack of survival skills in the wilderness. Particularly, he is put off by Heyward's arrogant British manner. It is clear the two will not get along. Cora, on the other hand, may be intrigued by Hawkeye's demeanor. They continue the tiresome journey.

### Triple and Bridal Veil Falls in Dupont State Forest .... Transylvania County

The final piece of the puzzle alluded to earlier was the four falls found at this location - two of which comprise this scene [ the other two appear later in the film and will be discussed then]. Oh, I knew well enough where they were, courtesy of locations scouts, but would I be able to get photos of them for the booklet? You know the answer if you've seen the original guide book, for they are in there, thankfully, but, this was the one single location I could not even publicly identify at

the time *On the Trail of the Last of the Mohicans* was released. Not only can we now identify this locale, but we can invite you to go visit, for it is now public land. The story, as I wrote it for our Web Site some time ago:

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*The hustle & bustle of nearly six months of filming ... including pre-production ... in the normally still western North Carolina mountains was long gone. Nowhere to be found where the trailers & stars; the cameras & lights ... Fort William Henry was but a rubble now. Even the film, the finished product, had come through the area ... and was gone! But our sojourn was just beginning! As the film made its appearance on video, in March 1993, about six months after its theatrical release, our quest to determine the exact location of each & every scene that appears on film was initiated. During that summer of '93, we were able to fairly well document all the scenes. One place, though we knew where it was, remained elusive, much to our chagrin!*

*This, of course, was the little two mile stretch of river, The Little River ... straddling the county lines of Henderson & Transylvania ... that featured four absolutely gorgeous waterfalls, each unique from the others, that was then owned by the Dupont Corporation. Though I pleaded ... and begged ... & groveled ... they refused me permission to enter the grounds and photograph the Falls! I had tried every trick in the book, all to no avail. The book would have to be presented without these scenes.*

*Well, hold on! Something I said must have made sense, and several months later, after we'd given up all hope, THEY called US and asked if we were still interested. "But, of COURSE!!!" And off we went to photograph the Falls at last! This was February '94. Accompanied by a Dupont guide, I was allowed 2 visits. One then, in February, a kind of scout, and then another, later in the Spring, when full foliage adorned the area. Originally, their logic had been that they did not want to encourage visitors to the Falls. Now, though, after reconsidering, they had decided the booklet would make nice "favors" for their business associates. Thus, permission came about ... with 2 conditions: I could not actually divulge the location in print and I had to donate several*



*copies of the finished product. No problem! I had the cherished photos!*

*Dupont sold the property a couple of years later to Sterling Diagnostic Imaging who continued the trend of maintaining the Falls with nicely marked trails, picnic pavilions, and a sense of preservation ... all for the benefit of company employees & their guests. It was at this time that we made arrangements to include The River Walk as a part of our 1999 Great Mohican Gathering. Sterling welcomed us with open arms, even offering us free box lunches as part of the deal! It was sometime after this that Sterling sold out to AGFA who decided to sell off a huge tract of the property, including all four waterfalls, placing our little visit in serious jeopardy! Luckily, for us, a local land trust, comprised largely of Sterling employees, was holding the property until a suitable buyer could be found - gone were the lunches, but our visit was salvaged! - luckily for EVERYONE, one of the four falls, Hooker Mills, was bought by the newly formed Dupont State Forest. At least one of these four was now accessible to all!*

*Just after The Gathering of 1999, the remaining property was sold to developer, Jim Anthony. High Falls, Triple Falls, & Bridal Veil Falls were now in serious danger ... not only of inaccessibility, but more importantly, of destruction! All the sordid details of the bidding process & double-talk can best be told by others. Suffice it to say, Mr. Anthony reneged on his word to make the falls accessible & minimize development. The State of North Carolina, an original bidder on the property, in the hopes of adding it to the State Forest system, has had its interest rekindled. A fight is on ... the moment of truth, barring any more delays, is at hand. Sometime between now & the not-too-distant future, the fate of the Falls will be decided.*

*The moment of truth has come and gone and we are happy to tell you that the State of North Carolina is now the owner of this bit of property, incorporating it into the 10,000 acre Dupont State Forest. Fate, this time, was most definitely on our side, and on that of the Falls.*

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Dupont State Forest is open to the general public year round. All these falls are now freely accessible. Lovely picnicking facilities are available overlooking both High and Triple Falls.

Please check <http://www.dupontforest.com/> for currently updated trail information!!

- Limited outhouse facilities -

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*View from atop Triple Falls at the opening scene of The River Walk*

*As I cruised down the twisted country lane of the Biltmore acreage, I could see the elevated "moonlight" hanging high above the old growth forest which crowded and covered the right side of the road. I did not know it at the time, but they were preparing to film the burial ground scene that night and I would have enjoyed the opportunity of standing in the background and watching the whole process. But, it was only my first day on the set, and I did not know my freedoms and my restrictions yet. The moonlight was simulated very believably with a bank of spotlights, kind of like a section of baseball field lights, all held high above the woods by a huge crane. A lighting technician sat in a protective cage up with the lights--perhaps ten stories high--and took directions from Michael Waxman (the first assistant director) concerning the up or down of the brightness or the direction of the lights. This setup was used in all of the night scenes and how the crew managed the crane in all of the forest scenes must have been an adventure in and by itself--especially at the Cameron Cabin scene, for the dirt road up to the small field of the cabin was a tight switchback and very steep. Like all parts of the support crew (the food services, the makeup, the prop department), the lighting crew had to move everything to the new location between the "It's a wrap" and the next day's filming. Entire villages of tents, trailers and assorted vehicles would be moved miles and reassembled in sometime less than 12 hours. Actors and extras had the easy job on any movie set--especially when you realize that Assistant Producers (AP's) would sometimes work 24 hours straight and the food services (Craft?) people would do their own shopping, food preparation and clean up, working solid around the clock. Then they would move to the next location and buy more food along the way. The support folks were much more tired than any of the actors or extras. Honest.*

... Mark A. Baker



*The actual fence used in the filming at the Cameron's Cabin site once resided on the grounds of the Misty Mountain Riding Center on Dillingham Road in Barnardsville - see first Cameron's Cabin scene. (Buncombe County)*



*"Miss Munro ...*

*they are not strangers ...*

*and they stay as they lay."*

## CAMERON'S CABIN II

Seeking a place to rest, the Mohicans turn to their old friends, the Camerons, and make their way to their homestead. The quiet aura and smell of smoke quickly forewarns of the terrible scene they are about to uncover. The once homey cabin is crumpled and smoldering. A white body lies where just a few days before children scampered about at play. The group warily approaches.

As previously discussed in *Cameron's Cabin*, this site is on private land. You can, however, view the fence used to contain the homestead. It is particularly convenient in that it is right on your route to the *Elk Hunt* and *Tracking the War Party* segments. Originally cut from timber on their land, the resulting fence was returned to the folks at the Misty Mountain Riding Center after filming, where it now resides.

The Mohicans are quietly stunned. The tragedy is complete. All are dead. These were close friends and the turmoil inside is great. To the outsider, though, they appear indifferent, and when the suggestion is made to bury them, Chingachgook firmly brushes it aside.

Chingachgook - quiet leader of the three Mohicans - is the true "noble Red Man" of Cooper's fiction. His character, like that of Uncas, does have a basis in history. An early 19th century study of the Delaware Indians of the Old Northwest, by a Moravian Missionary named John Heckewelder, refers to a Chingachgook who was "honorable, friendly, and hospitable ... living in harmony with the forces of nature." Cooper transferred this man to his novels.

Cora is appalled at such irreverence to the human spirit and begins to chastise the group, or more particularly Hawkeye, who we can assume she feels she can relate to slightly more than the others, seeing as how he appears white. Hawkeye shows little reason why, but leaves no doubt that they must leave them where they lay. Cora is taken aback - and is quite surprised - at this man's strong manner. Alice slips one more notch into her abyss. The group must move on.



*Although not in a visitor area, the glade, serving as the Burial Ground, is located in a wooded area of the Biltmore Estate in Asheville, not far from the Guesthouse.*



*"... it is more deeply stirring to my blood ...  
than any imagining could possibly have been."*

## The BURIAL GROUND

Deep in the forest of upstate New York - in virgin wilderness inhabited by hostile Indian tribes - the group settles down for a dark night of much needed rest. Actually, you are viewing a patch of woods on a knoll not far from the entrance gate at the Biltmore Estate in Asheville.

Though ever vigilant, Hawkeye is somewhat responsive to Cora who attempts to get to know this strange man who helped save her life.

Through her, we begin to learn about his past, as well. Their differences seem too much to overcome, but suddenly a sound brings all to astute attention. In the misty darkness they can make out a small Ottawa war party, together with some Frenchmen, probably the same group who murdered the Camerons, stealthily approaching. The fear is gut-wrenching, and almost too much for Alice who has to be quieted by Uncas. It seems certain there will be a bloodletting.

Abruptly, the war party stops and backs off into the forest.

The Mohicans had chosen this ground because of its sacredness ... it is a burial ground. No blood would be spilled here. The conversation continues ...

Cora shakes off her indignation at Hawkeye's earlier insult and renews her probe into his consciousness. We learn Hawkeye's family was wiped out when he was very young and that he was adopted by Chingachgook into the Mohican tribe. He and Uncas had been sent to the Reverend Wheelock's school - later to become Dartmouth College - to learn English and the ways of the White Man. And we learn of his political and social feelings.

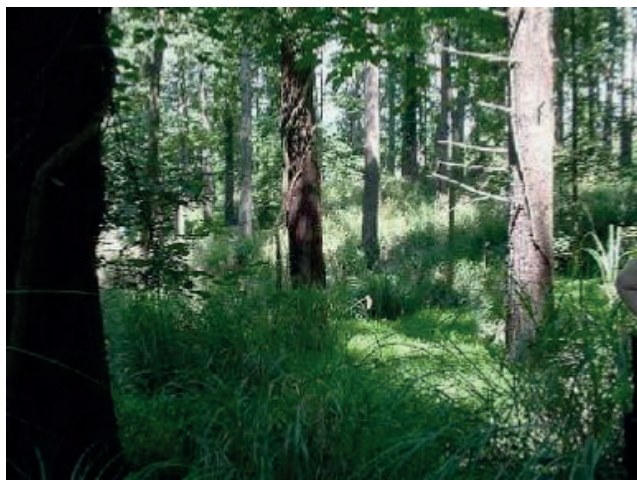
Typical of this unassuming, old-fashioned romance, some of the most passionate dialogue in the film ensues. With touching musical back-drop, one can't help but to be moved.

### A wooded knoll on the Biltmore Estate in Asheville, Bun- combe County

I was told, by Estate personnel, that the Burial Ground, or glade, was about a quarter mile from the entrance gate, but I was told no more. I looked all over the area finding all sorts of places that looked like they might fit the bill, or maybe where we see the Ottawa war party ap-

proach and then depart. I actually bought a season's pass to the Estate for the 1993 visitor year just to find the Burial Ground.

On one visit, I parked the car right where the present Welcome Center now stands ... it wasn't there back then. Just behind this new facility is a knoll. I dashed up there, remarkably not being seen by the usually diligent security force, and was free to roam about in the forest up there. At my leisure, it wasn't very hard. The grass was unmistakable. Had I known, I could have accessed this location via a back road, created by the film crew and dubbed "Mohican Road," but I did not then know of its existence.



It wasn't until the 2000 Great Mohican Gathering, when we were led there by Estate personnel and locations manager, Michael Bigham, that I learned of this "road." At that time, Bigham explained to us how Michael Mann had low wooden platforms built over the

unique grass so as not to disturb it before the actual film takes.

This was fun, and certainly enjoyable, but there's something to be said for sneaking in and hiding out. I felt I had a lot in common with Hawkeye, and Chingachgook, and Heyward and the rest when they had visited this place last!

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This portion of the Biltmore Estate is not part of the usual area open to visitation. You can see the wooded knoll from the Welcome Center, however you cannot view the actual location. I have found the Estate personnel to be most accommodating. If you'd really like to visit, ask them. You just might find yourself traveling down Mohican Road.

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The Indian Protest affair has been difficult for us to put our finger on, yet it is something that always seems to pop up in Mohican Lore. Some kind of strike did take place, organized by someone, occurring somewhere, by some group of people ... we won't attempt to chronicle the event definitively - not yet, anyway - but will put some information before you. What do you think?

The strike took place during the third week of July. By its end, on July 24, the production was Union. Though dubbed by most media as an Indian Protest, it really began as a strike by the technicians - wardrobe, camera-men, props, grips, makeup ... over 100 in all - and certainly most of the lost time was caused by this group. Why?

Michael Mann said, "They work very hard. They work long hours. Some of the problems we have stem from what we are trying to capture. We have a number of extras who have never been extras before. They may feel it's a little rough on them as a group." An unidentified crew member had this to say regarding the reasons for striking, "... the long hours with bad food and not the best pay, waiting in the wet, cold mountains for the constant drizzle to stop." Russell Means, who downplays his role in the affair, says, "They [the Indian extras] were quartered at an abandoned Scout camp. It was known as Camp Mohican, and it resembled a concentration camp ... they were stuck out there in the summer heat and 90% humidity ... they spent the hottest part of the day in these hellholes ..." Bryan Unger, a representative of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees says, "The working conditions the crew was put under were very difficult."

It appears unanimous that the working conditions were perceived as poor. The work stoppage, though during a time when the Fort William Henry scenes were being filmed, actually appears to have had the most impact on a night scene which was filmed at the Biltmore Estate (the Burial Ground?). On that night, according to the October, 1992 issue of Premiere magazine, "The first pickets, who set up around 2 PM, were IA members from out of town, so none of the Mohicans crew would be singled out as strike ringleaders. When the first van bearing crew members for the 5 o'clock call arrived, their Teamster drivers simply pulled over short of the picket line and cut their engines. The crew piled out, joining the pickets just as the previous few days' quiet strike call had prearranged."

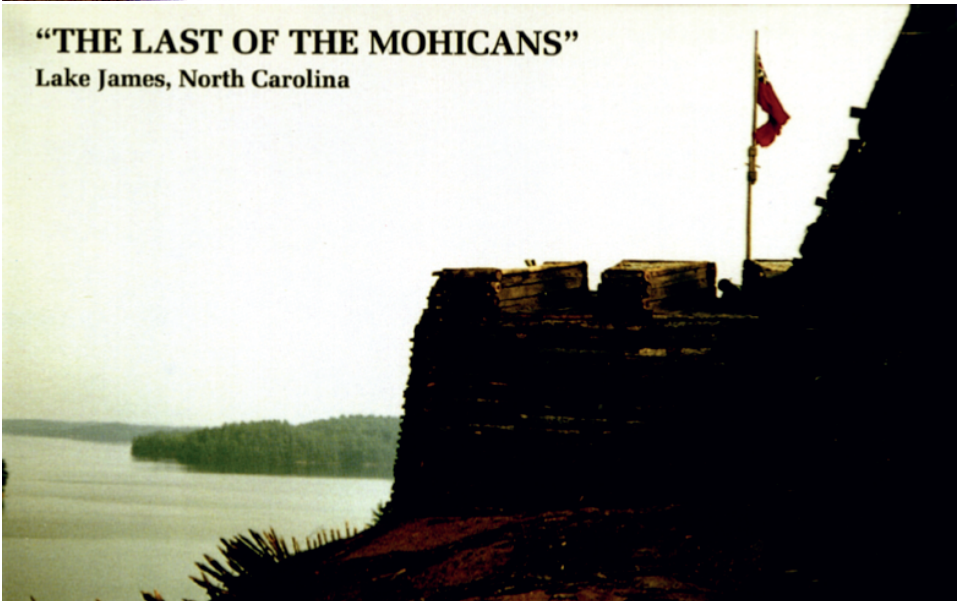
Though in the media, Russell Means received all the "blame" for organizing this affair, it appears it was a Union call, and would have happened with or without the Indian extras. There at Lake James, Indians did gather in protest, for all of 4 hours, apparently. Negotiations went on between Union reps and Hunt Lowery & Michael Mann. It seems the matter was settled in a very short time. In the end, it all had very little real impact on the production, despite all the publicity ... it seems it was much ado about nothing. ... From *On the Trail of the Last of the Mohicans*, the web site

Set of  
**"THE LAST OF THE MOHICANS"**  
near Marion, North Carolina



*The Fort, interior (L) and exterior (below), as it existed during filming in the summer of 1991. Residing on a bluff at the Linville Access Area in Burke County, the site commands Lake James. (photos courtesy of the McDowell Tourism Development Authority)*

**"THE LAST OF THE MOHICANS"**  
Lake James, North Carolina



*"The whole world's on fire, isn't it?"*

## LAKE GEORGE & FORT WILLIAM HENRY

**I**t has been a long, arduous trek, but the promise of the comforts of the fort uplift the spirits of all. Even Alice shows signs of life at the thought of seeing her father once more. As the fort is approached, strange sounds can be heard not far off, popping sounds, and then flashes of light. Fort William Henry is under French siege. Before anyone can speak, an enemy war party is spotted. Action must be taken. A cached canoe is used to cross the lake, Lake George, unnoticed by the French troops on the other side.

We are now at beautiful Lake James. The fort stood on the bluff in front of you across the road as you stand at the Linville Access Area with your back to the lake. Built on a grand scale with local timber, the construction was based on the actual plans of the real fort, at a cost of over 2 million board feet of lumber. The finished fort measured 400 x 300 feet. For nine weeks, the road in front of you was closed off and covered with dirt, the power lines were taken down, and 1757 came to life. As you look at the site, to the left is where the fort stood. You can still see the abatis - wooden stakes driven into the ground with pointed ends protruding - which ringed it for added defense. At the center are the remains of the support for the roadbed, and over to the far right are the French artillery positions. Nearby, on the road, was the French encampment. The bluff across the lake, Haney's Bluff, is the site from which the Mohicans' party first views the Fort. Nearly one third of the movie was shot here at this location so quite a bit happens. We'll rejoin the story.

Colonel George Munro (*Maurice Roeves*), father of Alice and Cora, is shocked to see his daughters arrive. He had sent a message warning of the danger and asking for reinforcements, but Magua had seen to it that it had never been delivered.

Lieutenant Colonel George *Monro* was another of the true historical figures in this tale. He was experienced and considered a steady officer in command of his troops. Considering the circumstances, he made a creditable defense of Fort William Henry and probably would have risen in rank, but his career was cut short the following November when he died. The daughters appear to have been in



Cooper's imagination.

Here, safely, for the time, in the fort, the romantic aspects of the story can be more fully developed. It becomes apparent that Cora has fallen for the direct and strong, yet gentle, manner of this product of the wilderness. She is moved by his experiences, and he senses, and appreciates, that. The two fall in love. Cora, partly because of disgust at his version of what happened at Cameron's cabin, finally rejects Duncan Heyward.

Meanwhile, a courier is sent to Fort Edward asking General Webb for reinforcements. Jack and many of the other members of the colonial militia are becoming increasingly concerned over the prospect of attacks on their now largely undefended homesteads. Bitterness increases between the loyal British, led by Munro and Heyward, and the colonials, for whom Jack, Uncas, and especially, Hawkeye have become spokesmen. The issue is whether or not it was a true war party who committed the atrocity, and consequently if that would be grounds for the militia to evacuate to return to the defense of their families. Hawkeye and Heyward, already at odds, and competing for the same woman, have strong words. The situation escalates.

The militia have no choice. Jack and many of the others sneak out of the fort, with Hawkeye's assistance, knowing that they will be shot or hanged if caught. Hawkeye is arrested for his participation in the desertion, and will be hanged, despite the emotional pleas for his release by Cora.

Things completely deteriorate. The love Cora and Hawkeye share appears to be on the verge of being snatched from their hearts. The fort is minus many of its defenders. Reinforcements have not arrived. Now, the French mortars are in place and a devastating bombardment begins. The great British might appears to be ready to cave in, at least here on the banks of Lake George.

With victory at hand, the French initiate a truce. The meeting which ensues, between French General Montcalm (*Patrice Chereau*), along with his aid, Captain Bougainville, and the British officers, Munro, Heyward, and Captain Beams (*Pete Postlethwaite*) is taken, at least in spirit, largely from the pages of history. As the united Indian tribes, led by Magua, look on, the British learn of the interception of the return message from Webb. There will be no aid forthcoming. The situation is hopeless. Montcalm, in the tradition of gentlemanly European warfare, decrees extremely fair terms; the British must only evacuate



the fort. They may keep their arms - though not mentioned is the fact that they must leave behind the ammunition - and fly their colors. Knowing full well they will not keep it, Montcalm includes a promise that they will not fight the French again.

Lieutenant General Louis-Joseph Marquis de Montcalm had a solid reputation as a trustworthy and religious man. He was an outstanding military man. Thus, it is surprising to learn of his probable duplicity in events which were to follow. In common with his counterpart, Colonel Monro, he did not live to see the end of the war, being killed at the Battle of Quebec in 1759.

The British have no choice, they surrender and accept the terms. To Magua, as it was to the Indians of the true story, this is to be cheated out of the status and plunder that was to be theirs if the issue was settled in battle. After all, they were not paid soldiers in the European sense. Their reward was the rise in societal stature when their deeds of bravery were recounted. We learn more of the character and rationale motivating Magua; why he seeks vengeance, particularly upon Munro and his family. He wants more out of this situation than the burned rubble of a fort. The serene sight of Burke and McDowell counties' Lake James provides the backdrop for all this drama. The British evacuate. A long line of forlorn and beaten troops, with whatever baggage they may carry, winds its way out of the fort, down the slope, and on towards Fort Edward. Hawkeye is in shackles near the end of the column. From near the head, Cora, mounted on horseback with Alice, peers back seeking the whereabouts of her loved one. The fort has fallen.

### Linville Access Area on Lake James, Burke County

Heat, humidity, thunderstorms, a strike, long, long night shoots ... all marked the filming at this location. For the locals, it was a treat, though an inconvenience (road closed). Fireworks every night in the form of cannonades & musket volleys; boat rides on the lake to watch the fort take shape. It was such a well-known location that I had no trouble at all locating it. Practically everyone knew where this one was, and consequently, it was the second location I was able to pinpoint and photograph.

*The one day that all explosions were going off, everything is coming down to the wire ... the one filming scene, "Alice! Cora! Why are you here?" That took all night long! ... Eric Hurley*

Today, all the abatis, all the cannon, the noise & smoke, the fortress itself, are long gone. Standing there near the road, you'd be hard pressed to identify the bluff before you as having had Fort William Henry upon it at one time. Nature has reclaimed this site. The pine trees are tall now, there is no clearing. Up on top, on the fort site itself, you can still locate the foundations, and perhaps a scrap of wood here and there. That's about it. No views, of any consequence, can be had. The forest is that dense today.

Your best bet, if visiting this location, is to park at the Access Area's parking lot. Walk the road, guide book in hand. You should be able to determine, from the photos, where the fort was; where the French artillery had been placed. As you look at the fort site, the road to your right was the location of the French encampment. Go back down to the parking area. Looking at the lake, before you is the island. To your left, about 1000 yards or so, is the canoe launch, identified by the red clay. You can walk over to it. Beyond that, perhaps another 250 yards, or so, is the place where Duncan, during the Massacre Valley sequence, falls down and finds himself with the lake at his back. Across the cove (a part of the Canoes sequence) is the Magua/Montcalm meeting place, right there at the point. Filmed here, too, was the burial scaffold seen during the Burial Ground scene. But, did it make the final cut? Or was a scaffold at the Biltmore used? It's but one of the enduring little mysteries of the quest for the locations!

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This area is a public access. However, gun clubs lease the land from a subsidiary of the Duke Power Company. Please use caution & courtesy!

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*It boiled down to one man, Maurice Reeves, another man we met at the boot camp ... very nice fella! You could meet him at the pubs in Asheville on any night. He'd talk to you, drunk as the rest of them were, and have a good time. He was one of the few men that actually gave me a contact number to get a hold of him. He took us under his wing, became our father, practically. Our loving father, not our scolding father like Capt. Dye had. [laughs] ... He could NOT get that right! Every other person in that WHOLE fort scene knew those words by heart, and exactly how they went. This man could not get them right, for that one night. Who knows why?! He could not get them right. So, we did it over, and over, and over ... I, with a couple of other Cadre members, were pulling and pushing this wagon that you see going up the access ramp to the second level of the Fort. In one particular shot, the camera is set up so that you see this thing coming up the ramp. That is me that you see coming straight up. When you've got seven men pushing something like that, you got men in back, with their heads down, pushing with all they got to get it up this thing. VERY heavy, it was real, all wood. This ramp was very steep. They're giving it all. All this commotion is going on, you can't hear nothing. This camera man is sitting square in front of me. I cannot do anything but run all over him. He's on the edge of the Fort, and I ran all over him. The only thing I could do was grab a hold of him and take him with me. Here we are, we're setting, and we've got inches when the wheel of this thing comes by us ... he's darn near hanging off of this thing, ready to fall off ... If I'm not mistaken, he dropped the camera at one point in time, and I've got a hold of him and there we are ... it was unreal. That night, we were all dead tired.*

*The trench scene was another hair-brainer. We had this huge trench, all three ranks down in this trench. You couldn't see over it. It was over our heads. We had this home-made wooden ladder, made of old tree limbs, that we used to climb out. The first rank had to come out as one line. If we came out erratically, we had to do it over. "Cut!" Do it again. Here we had maybe 75 or 80 men doing this thing, coming out. We get out, take position. The second rank comes out, everybody steps up together, third rank comes up, all three of us step up again. We had to wheel on the center. You had this long line, 30, 40 men long, we have to spin from the center, which means the guys on the right side have to walk backwards, the guys on the left side have to march forward, staying in step, maintaining a straight line. When they cut all this forest down, they just went through there, chop, chop, chop. The French, they're running towards us and all these little stubs, probably 4-5 inches tall with slants on them where somebody went through with a hatchet and cut these things down, are sticking up. These guys are tripping over them, falling on them. It was very dangerous. We're coming up out of the trenches, doing our little thing, everybody's tripping and falling ... you can imagine, it just took all night.*

*... Eric Hurley, Soldier #2*







*OPPOSITE: Views of Lake James about halfway between Marion & Morganton at the Linville Access Area in Burke County Top; View of fort site from Haney's Bluff across lake Middle; Island, seen as background during the Parlay between Montcalm & Monro Bottom; Lake view from base of fort site*

*ABOVE: clockwise from upper left; view of fort site, close up of fort abatis, road embankment, French artillery position*

*BELOW: view from the fort site looking north towards Linville Gorge - Mountain in middle distance is Shortoff Mountain, clearly seen in the film on at least two occasions.*







*Massacre Valley is located on private property in the North Cove area of McDowell County.*

*Below right is the small clump of trees in front of which Magua cuts out the heart of Colonel Munro.*

*Photo below left features tree prominently seen during the battle.*





*"Grey Hair ... know that I will put under the knife your children and wipe your seed from this earth forever ..."*

## MASSACRE VALLEY

Once again, back into the wilderness. This time we are in the North Cove area of McDowell County, adjacent to Pisgah National Forest, on private land. Really a perfect setting for the scene which is to ensue.

Weary and beaten, the column marches on, almost silently. They are completely unaware that hundreds of pairs of eyes are watching them, following them, from the dark forest which flanks the peaceful greenery of the meadow they traverse. Magua is at the head of this large gathering of the tribes, about to exact his revenge.

Although this film deals mainly with Huron and Ottawa (and Abenaki if you read the credits) as the components of the French allied tribes, in actuality, many more comprised the pan-Indian force. Tribes ranging from New England all the way to what we refer to now as the Old Northwest, largely Ohio on through Michigan. In addition to those mentioned, Ojibwa, Potawatomi, Fox, Menominee, even some elements of the Iroquois Confederacy, all donated warriors to this 1600 man force.

Jonathan Carver, a volunteer in a Massachusetts regiment serving at Fort William Henry, had this to say about what happened next.

Compare his words to what you see in the film.

After remembering hearing a war whoop, he says, "men, women, and children were dispatched in the most wanton and cruel manner, and immediately scalped. Many of the savages drank the blood of their victims, as it flowed warm from the fatal wound." He estimated white casualties at about 1500, describing the scene as "horrid".

Unfortunately, for history, Carver was one of the first to leave the scene and arrive at Fort Edward. He was terror stricken, and his garbled, exaggerated account was one of the first published. He stated what he thought had happened based on what he saw in the first minutes. This account became imbedded in the American consciousness, and Cooper, believing it to be the truth, borrowed heavily from it when writing this story. Thus, that is what we see,

though it probably more closely resembles Braddock's defeat earlier in the war than what really happened at Fort William Henry.

A single warrior breaks the stillness by rushing out of the woods, striking down a soldier, and disappearing without breaking stride. Another duplicates this feat of bravery. The column is stunned. The silence is deafening. The fear builds.

Magua leads the bloodcurdling war cry. He can sense victory and knows he will atone for his personal losses. Panic begins to swell in the ranks. Women scream. Soldiers realize they have no ammunition to fend off the impending attack. Cora's eyes frantically search for Hawkeye. Even he shows signs of fear. Or is it concern for her safety? Colonel Munro tries to maintain some semblance of order. He is still in control. A veteran soldier.

Sporadic flashes of musket fire quickly turn to a hail of lead. The Indian assault begins in earnest. A contingent of soldiers under Heyward, and a few militia, have managed to smuggle out some ammunition and return fire. Hordes of warriors pour out of the forest. It is an overwhelming onslaught. It is *The Ambush* on a much larger scale. Cora again protects a terrified Alice. The soldier guard is killed and Hawkeye is able to get the key to release himself from the shackles. As Heyward bravely tries to mount an organized resistance, the Mohicans try to regain their bearings and rescue the sisters. Smoke rises everywhere. Muskets rattle, women and children scream - somehow, the deathly dull thud of tomahawks ripping into flesh manages to be heard above it all. It is mass chaos. Bodies fall mangled. The scene breaks up into little isolated pockets of action. Magua finds Colonel Munro and dismounts him by shooting his horse. In a scene right out of Carver's eyes, he cuts into his still living flesh and rips out Munro's warm heart. Death is everywhere.

But they are 18th century Rambos, the Mohicans are ... and so all is not lost. They skirt the perimeter of the melee, slashing, shooting, stabbing all who oppose them. There is no stopping their mission, for it is one of passion. It all builds to an exciting climax, the music shifting with the action ... Cora is about to have her throat cut by a large, muscular Indian ... things evolve in slow motion ... Hawkeye will have none of it and arrives in the nick of time. It is truly heroic. And an embrace in the midst of all this!

Chingachgook lifts Alice off the ground. The quintet scurries off towards the lake, leaving the battle raging behind them.

### A few words about this scene:

*Please remember that it was shot on private property, as several other scenes were, so respect that fact and do not trespass without permission. With persistence, it is likely you can locate these scenes, as I did, but there are so many places in the movie that you can explore that perhaps you won't find it necessary. Some of the close-ups (Heyward falling down, for example - see note at the end of the **How To Get There** section) were done in the vicinity of the Corner Rock Picnic area in Pisgah National Forest near Barnardsville (The Elk Hunt). You can visit there.*

*The historical record indicates that probably only as many as 50 British/Americans were killed in the battle depicted, though several hundred more were hauled off as prisoners (later paroled). It actually occurred in and near the entrenched camp which occupied a site not far from the fort, not in the middle of isolated wilderness. True to the film's implications, Montcalm, quite likely, allowed this to happen, probably to pacify his allies.*

### Goode Farm, North Cove (north of Marion), McDowell County

More so than any other, partially due to the difficulty in finding it, this site brought immense pleasure in its discovery. I was at a newspaper office, that of *The Morganton News Herald*, looking for clippings related to the filming process. I found a little article mentioning the fact that the battle scene was filmed in McDowell County's North Cove. I voiced this out loud. There were several newspaper people in the room, busy with their work. One, Mike Conley, happened to be the fellow who had written the story. Bingo, again!

It was off to North Cove. I actually passed the site the first time I ventured up there. Stopped in at a little antiques place [now gone - a victim of road widening!] up the road to inquire of the whereabouts. The proprietress, as was customary by this time, was thrilled to provide the info. She sketched out a little map. I thanked her and rushed off. I can't tell you how excited I was!

I reached the site, parked my car, which, if it could speak, would probably have pleaded, "OK! Enough already!" Not quite, but we were close to being done now. I believe only the River Walk and Vistas remained to be seen ... oh, Cameron's Cabin, as well. Anyway, I ventured in. A fallen tree lay in my path. After skirting that, I found myself in the crew parking area, a fairly large, tree surrounded field, the parking gravel now all but hidden by grass. I wandered along the grassy way, winding to the left and then to the right. My heart was beating rapidly. I felt like I was on the verge of some great discovery. I felt like I was discovering a long lost historical site of some importance.

Of course, I was not. I was simply locating a film location that was once but a swamp. Yes, this beautiful meadow was, prior to the filming in 1991, a wasted, mosquito-infested, swampland. Michael Mann had it drained, graded, and seeded, and now it was this! The sound of a passing train in the distance could be heard. Somehow, that didn't seem to belong!

I passed over some flat, wooden, boardwalk-like bridges, that took me over still wet areas. I tramped through the high, green grass towards the far end. I turned to look back. There, behind me, was the view seen in the movie. Another surreal moment in my search. This was wonderful. I thought that perhaps I might never be standing here, but here I was! My guide booklet was coming closer to being a reality!

I looked around. I discovered a stand of trees, towards the far end, that resembled, oh so closely, the backdrop for the scene where Magua cuts out the heart of one Colonel Munro. This couldn't be. I had been told that the scene had been filmed at the Corner Rock Picnic area, where the Elk Hunt scenes had been shot, and it probably was. But, that particular shoot was not what they used in the film. This was. The twisted trunks I saw before me matched up perfectly with those on the video, I discovered upon my return home. Well after the book was completed, I met the veterinarian who had been on-site to sedate the real horse before they switched to the fake. Curtis Gaston says this of the scene:

*... regarding Col. Munro's withdrawn heart, it was filmed right there in*

*Massacre Valley. I should know, see, i was Munro's stand in for that, or lay in. whatever. so, next time you watch, just remember it was me on the ground with my leg under a fake horse and a bucket of red karo syrup next to my head.*

~~~~~

This location is private property. The nearby home (nearby to the now nearly indistinguishable entrance) houses the owners. Ask! As per the directions in *On The Trail Of The Last Of The Mohicans*, use your odometer to find this place! This is particularly true today - the "wooded & winding" road, described in *On The Trail ...* is now a mostly open 4-lane. It is quite different!

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The most interesting landscaping challenge was probably Massacre Valley. Before filming was scheduled to begin, the "valley", which was at the time a swamp, had to be drained. After that overhaul, the entire area had to be seeded. Grass had to be planted well in advance, with time enough to allow it to grow to an appreciable height. That's not all. Apparently Michael Mann's eye, ever searching for perfection in his creations, foresaw the effect he wanted and it was more precise, more natural than merely tall grasses. He wanted the "valley" to realistically depict a wild meadow; and that meant wild flowers. Thus the site not only required draining, prepping, and grass seed, it had to also be seeded with wildflowers. The real task, however, was not in the sowing, but in the stepping. Within all those lush grasses were thousands and thousands of beautiful, glorious wildflowers. And these were no ordinary wildflowers. These were Michael Mann Prop Wildflowers and no one steps on flowers such as these. No one.

During rehearsals and final shooting, while hundreds of people were trampling through the "valley" grounds, the one pressing thought that had been drilled into their heads, more pressing than "Action!", was "DO NOT STEP ON THE FLOWERS!" Imagine the armies of feet marching along in the vanquished column, dashing suddenly from the adjacent wood, tangling, running, kicking, and stepping ... but always those feet must tread lightly near the flowers. How insane it must have seemed under the circumstances. How does one avoid crushing flora whilst engaged in mortal combat? According to Eric Hurley (Soldier #2), that's exactly what all were asked to accomplish. Attack. Kill. Flip. Run. Jump. Die. But whatever you do, DO NOT STEP ON THE FLOWERS! One must wonder whether Nureyev himself could have perfected such choreography and precision battle steps without crushing Mann's bouquets. Alas! Somehow, with very little loss of petals, the magnificent feat was accomplished. It gives a new twist to the words "stop and smell the roses!" - *From On the Trail of the Last of the Mohicans*, the web site







*"Nothin' better to do on the lake today, Major?"*

## CANOES

**B**ursting out into a clearing by Lake George, the fighting isn't yet over. In one of the more complex scenes, Hawkeye, Chingachgook, Uncas, Alice, and Cora, along with a wounded British trooper, commandeer a canoe and race for their lives as Hurons paddle furiously in their wake. Heyward, with another soldier, meets them on the lake.

The locations shift from the Linville Access Area, to Linville Falls, to private property, and back - Shortoff Mountain being prominently seen beyond the shoreline of Lake James. Included in the film shoot were scenes up in Mitchell County on the Nolichucky River. These, except possibly some unidentifiable close-ups, were not used.

The group goes over a small waterfall (Linville/Hooker Mills) and approaches a second, much larger waterfall. Although the possibility of plunging over these huge falls seems very real indeed, in reality, they do not exist. They do not exist.



*OPPOSITE: Top; The canoe launch adjacent to the Linville Access Area on Lake James in Burke County Middle; Hooker Mills Falls on private property in Transylvania County Bottom &*

*ABOVE: Upper Linville Falls in Burke County*

*Film cuts make it appear that Hooker & Linville Falls are one and the same.*

## Lake James, Linville Falls, & Dupont State Forest - Burke & Transylvania Counties

Without question, this is the most complex scene - locations-wise - in the film. It is a heavily edited sequence, with much physical, shall we say, "discomfort" for the actors, and some of that becomes apparent on screen - minor continuity errors.

*... you can see an inkling of maybe his foot [Eric Schweig's], or something, going over the side of it. [laughs] These things still are pretty easy to turn over. Any canoe, but these things ... a unique canoe! I wish I could take a sledge hammer to one! [laughs] So, he falls out ... anyway ... we're still doing this in and out thing, together/far apart thing ... Eric Schweig, he jumps out. I mean, we're BOOKING, we're flying. We've got this paddling thing down, we're going. As soon as Eric Schweig hits the water, the canoes are gone. There he is. So, we try it again. He gets back into his canoe, and we're paddling on down through there. He jumps out and the wind hits us at the wrong time. Phhoof! There we go. There he's left again. Well, last and final shot ... I don't know how many times we done this. Wait a minute, I'm sorry [laughs] ... there's one time in particular, the boats actually collide. Well, Eric gets smart, I'll be darned. He steps out of one right into the other! [laughs] THAT didn't work. NO! He's got to hit the water! ... Finally, the last shot, the canoes are about two or three feet apart, and he gets in. You see him jump in on one of those times when it's real far away that didn't work, but, then of course, they jump to him ... he and I changed positions ... Eric Hurley*

It was difficult to piece together, until I discovered that the huge falls existed only in the recesses of the Director's mind. Once that became known, the rest was easy. Discussing this sequence to groups at our Mohican Gatherings has always been somewhat special to me as I watch the looks of, "So THAT'S how ..." appear on folks' faces. Here is the sequence, broken down, step-by-step:

- Exiting Massacre Valley, our heroes emerge many miles away at the red clay shore of Lake James near the Fort site.

- After commandeering the canoe, they meet Major Heyward on the lake, in the cove between the canoe "launch" and the Magua/Montcalm meeting place across the way.
- Scenes are then shot out on the lake, with views of Shortoff Mountain, the southern terminus of Linville Gorge, visible in the background.
- Hawkeye shouts, "head for the river!" Well, the "river" is simply the cove they had previously come from!
- We then find ourselves at Linville, in the real river, just upstream from the upper falls.
- The canoes then approach, and then go over, the falls. Before and after, they are at Linville's upper falls. The shots of canoes laden with stuntmen are done at Dupont's Hooker falls.
- As they exit the canoes and push them, empty, over the falls, we're back at Linville, just downstream of the upper falls.

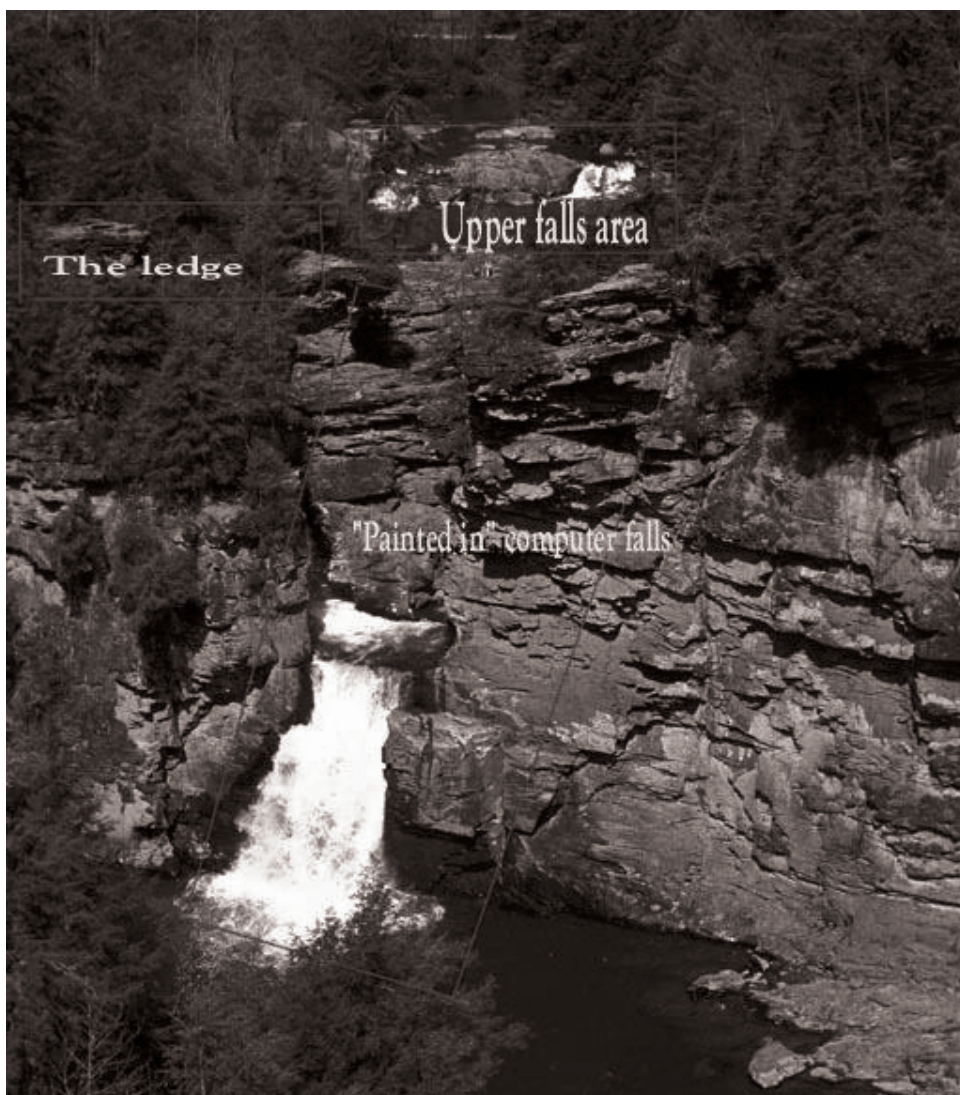
But, what of the second falls? The big ones that caused them to jump ship. Where are those? Well, the lower falls at Linville, of course, right? Wrong! Sort of. Computer imagery accounts for these. They simply don't exist! More on this as the scene segues to Under the Falls.

It should be noted here that the script called for a whitewater chase, not over-the-falls sequences as were eventually filmed. To that original end, the gorge up on the Nolichucky River was selected for this scene. Film crews, stuntmen, canoes, all went up there, in Mitchell County, to shoot. It is not known, to me or anyone I've spoken to on this, whether any of that footage made it into the film, or even exists at all.

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All these locations, as discussed elsewhere, are readily accessible and free ... with the possible exception of those in Michael Mann's creative imagination!

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### *Upper & Lower Linville Falls*

*Although this view is not seen in the film, one gets the impression that it is. View is from Chimney View Overlook, about one mile from Visitors' Center. One obtains a fine view of Linville Gorge from this place as well. The computer imagery filled in this scene ...*

*We see our heroes walk along "The Ledge" as they appear to be on the verge of entering the cave behind the huge waterfall which is, in reality a computer enhanced composite (and more) of the Upper & Lower falls at Linville!*



*"What the bloody hell plan is this?"*

## UNDER the FALLS

Narrowly avoiding the plunge over the falls, the exhausted party follows Hawkeye's lead and ditch the canoes before heading for safety. Behind New York's Glens Falls - actually a constructed set in an Asheville warehouse across from the River Ridge Market - they await their fate. It is here the real passion Hawkeye and Cora have developed is exposed. The thunder of the huge falls, the eerie light, the music, the cinematography, the tension, all make this a powerful scene. A nearly catatonic Alice, hovering dangerously close to the torrent, is saved and consoled by Uncas. There is no powder - Magua's Hurons approach the cave. Disaster seems to be following quickly behind.

Risking being branded as cowards, the Mohicans realize the only solution is to flee - abandon the English - and live to fight another day. The dialogue is gut-wrenching, and as the glow of the Huron torches comes nearer, the three leap through the falls, the only hope being that they can then return to save the captives. And captives they become, as Magua's war party binds them and leads them off.





## The Upper & Lower Falls at Linville Falls, Blue Ridge Parkway and Bridal Veil Falls, Dupont State Forest .... Burke & Transylvania Counties

At our annual Great Mohican Gatherings, it has become a staple for me to describe the filming of this scene using the photos on display at the Linville Falls Visitor Center. Many people have an expression of sheer amazement as the process unfolds ... they, like me back in 1993, are seriously surprised at what they learn ...

Ok, now this was tough. Where in the world were these huge, thunderous waterfalls? Not in any of the six filming counties, I can tell you that. It took me some time to figure that out, and I wasn't really sure till a locations scout tipped me off, but, in reality, I eventually discovered that these falls existed on celluloid only. A bit of a letdown, I suppose, but I was intrigued with the ingenuity of the filmmakers! Using both the Upper & Lower Linville Falls as its foundation, these falls are the product of computer imagery.

So, we go from Linville to Bridal Veil Falls (in Dupont State Forest), where we see the cast, and later Magua & his Hurons, walk behind the falls [and you can, too!], and finally end up in an empty Asheville warehouse where recycled river water and an interior set (the one & only in the film) form the backdrop for the rest of this scene.

This entire hodgepodge of a sequence was learned of not on the scene, as was just about everything else, but by word of mouth ... as mentioned, from a locations scout, and through our Soldier friends' tantalizing tales! The Under the Falls scene was the last sequence shot ... in October, 1991.

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You can visit both Linville & Bridal Veil falls ... both are free and accessible.

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*ABOVE: After seemingly about to enter the cave from the ledge, the scene switches to Bridal Veil Falls in Dupont State Forest [not to be confused with another falls of the same name much further west on Highway 64!] for a behind the falls shot that transitions to the Asheville cave set, BELOW (photo by Curtis Gaston).*





*The Nolichucky River near Poplar in Mitchell County, scene of the river rescue.*

*"I will find you."*

## RESCUE

The falls through which Hawkeye jumps do not exist. The film shots were created by filming the top of Linville Falls and then "painting" in the rest.

The terrified Munro sisters - though Cora makes a brave front - and the banged-up Heyward are escorted northward to a Huron village. The two soldiers are left behind. The scene shifts.

It is night. The swirling waters of a rushing river carry along a human form tumbling in its rapids. It is Chingachgook. From a rock, Uncas and Hawkeye manage to pull him from the current as he passes by. The three are exhausted.

We are in Mitchell County in a section of the Toecane District of Pisgah National Forest near Poplar. The river is the Nolichucky.

As the dazed Mohicans gather all their strength for the journey north, the haunting strains of Clannad, an Irish traditional/pop band, subtly intrude upon the scene. Spurred on by love, the Mohicans hurry on. They know only that they must find the sisters as quickly as possible. As Cora, Alice, and Heyward are dragged along to Huron Land, the Mohicans race up steep hills and through the wilderness. We feel the urgency. The film is nearing its dramatic climax.

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*Notes on this scene:*

*Filmed in the vicinity of The River Walk in Transylvania County is the scramble-up-the-rock slope. Again, on private property.*

*In Buncombe County, in the area of The Elk Hunt, is a granite rock outcropping where Hawkeye et al run along just after pulling Chingachgook from the water. This is further up FS Road #74.*

*Neither of these 2 mini-locations is definitive, though they come on fairly good authority & on-site inspection seems to verify both!*



Poplar Boat Launch, Pisgah National Forest (Toecane District), Mitchell County and High Falls, Dupont State Forest, Transylvania County



Talk about off the beaten path ... I had no idea. The Linville River? Maybe. The French Broad? Maybe. But, the Nolichucky??? Who'd a-thunk! Without the assistance of the fine folks at the now defunct Carolina Wilderness outfit, it might as well as been the Yellowstone!

"Past the dumpster, right at the crossroad ..." - the directions sound like you are heading off into deep Appalachia. This place is WAY apart from the other locations and requires a separate trip,

for sure. Why?

Well, in the beginning, Michael Mann wanted a whitewater chase. One of the most spectacular gorges in this part of the country is that formed by the Nolichucky in North Carolina and Tennessee. And so it was ...



sort of. Despite the scripted whitewater, Mann eventually opted for "over the falls" ... the Linville River ... Lake James ... Hooker & Linville Falls. Before that, however, footage was shot on the Nolichucky River - evidently without the cast & extras, as neither of our Soldier correspondents has any recollection of such a shoot - test footage, it must be assumed. So, the plans were for extensive shooting in this area, justifying using this remote location.

In the end, all that appears, is the segment of Hawkeye & Uncas pulling a tumbling Chingachgook from the rapids. As the strains of Clan-nad's *I Will Find You* rise above the scene, the three Mohicans are later seen running, in slow motion, up the slope to the left of Dupont's High Falls [see photo left opposite].

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Various outfitters offer whitewater raft trips through this area of the scenic Nolichucky River Gorge. The National Forest Service owns the Poplar boat launch. There is an outhouse in the parking area.

High Falls is open to the public - and best viewed from the pavilion nearby - as part of the newly expanded Dupont State Forest.

**2016 Note:** Visitor Center with rest rooms has now opened at the High Falls Access area.

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*ABOVE: The Huron Village, constructed just for the filming of “The Last of the Mohicans”, as viewed from the top of the chimney at Chimney Rock Park near Lake Lure in Rutherford County. Visible from several points along the Cliff & Skyline Trails, the village is inaccessible to the public.*



*LEFT: Hickory Nut Falls, in the Park, are seen behind the Huron Sachem during the village scene.*

*"I am La Longue Carabine! My death is a great honor to the  
Huron.  
Take me!"*

## The HURON VILLAGE

Through the magic of movies, the Mohicans, racing through Mitchell, Buncombe, & Transylvania Counties, end up in the same place, Rutherford County, that the Munro sisters and Heyward, who were hauled off from Burke County, do. That's a lot of territory. This place, Chimney Rock Park, probably earns its distinction of having the most dramatic scenery and impact of the film. Quite an honor considering it's a movie filled with beautiful places and dramatic moments.

Magua and Hawkeye engage in some political debate to decide the future of the prisoners, presided over by the wise, and elder, Huron Great Sachem (*Mike Phillips*). Magua boasts of his exploits, Hawkeye ridicules the direction he is taking his people. Tempers flare and tension mounts. All the while Hickory Nut Falls tumbles its 400-plus feet in the background. Impressive.

Although Heyward serves as a French interpreter - French being a common language to the English and the Huron - the Sachem delivers the verdicts in Huron, confounding Hawkeye and everyone else. Their faces vividly portray this bewilderment at what is to happen next. Like so many other scenes in this movie, all the pieces fit just right to create a flawless segment.

In a great, virtuous twist of irony, Hawkeye - the survivalist, accused of cowardice by Heyward - offers his life to save Cora, who will burn in the Huron fire. Heyward refuses to translate, sacrificing himself instead. He has realized the love Cora has for Hawkeye; "My compliments, sir. Take her and get out."

So, he is burned at the stake. To end his misery, Hawkeye shoots him. It seems all involved come to terms in the end.

Alice is taken by a disgruntled Magua and his most loyal warriors off towards another village. This is too much for Uncas who leaves alone to rescue her. Hawkeye, Chingachgook, and Cora are on his trail. High above the village, on a steep cliff line, they will all meet one last time.

## Adjacent to Chimney Rock Park, Hickory Nut Gorge, Rutherford County

I sat for a good two hours with the owner of Chimney Rock Park. I explained my vision and purpose. I displayed photos, described the forthcoming book. I left with doubts, but an overall good feeling. In the end, though, it was not to be. I would not be allowed access to the site of the Huron Village. Reason? Well, the primary one given was because of safety concerns. The road leading up to the remote setting was subject to washouts. In addition, there was a concern that directing folks' attention to the site might result in looting. Valid reasons, I'd think, yet the very literature distributed to visitors of the Park - by the Park - draws their attention to the wigwams and long houses, barely discernable during the summer months, nestled among the dense green foliage of the steep mountain side across from Hickory Nut Falls.

To top it all off, and I didn't know it at the time, others had been allowed up there to photograph - see our pictorial on the Village in the *Mohican Musings* section of our web site. Consequently, when all was said and done, the Huron Village ended up being the only site used in the movie that I wasn't able to get my hands on. An early spring photo from afar, taken on my first trip up to Chimney Rock Park, before the book was really conceived, graces a page in *On the Trail of the Last of the Mohicans*.

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This site, owned by the proprietors of Chimney Rock Park, is closed to the public. It can be viewed from across the road on the cliffs of the Park. Only a [increasingly] small mountain side clearing exists to mark the spot today. Inclined to visit? Ask them about Hickory Nut Flats and Carson City.

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*Driving through Chimney Rock Village these days, it's hard to imagine that just a few months ago the village was buzzing with movie stars, writers, producers, directors, and others involved in making a Hollywood film. Hidden securely behind a mountain of homes and forest on Chimney Rock Park-owned property is the real life Indian village constructed for filming parts of *The Last of the Mohicans* ... Rutherford County Times (February 19, 1992)*

The Huron Village ... built on the slopes of a mountain opposite the Chimney that gives Chimney Rock Park its name, the village, consisting of several longhouses, wigwams, and other structures, was constructed solely for the filming of *The Last of the Mohicans*. Unlike the other specially built sets - Fort William Henry, severely damaged during filming and burned to the ground in December, 1991 & Cameron's Cabin, destroyed during the filming process - the Huron Village stood still, and was clearly visible to visitors, for several years after filming was completed. (Note: The buildings seen in the shooting of the Albany segments were previously existing Asheville, North Carolina structures, though some were re-faced for the filming, and still stand today.)

Slated for a one week shoot in Rutherford County, filming of the Cliff & Huron Village scenes soon spread to five weeks, and generated at least \$300,000 worth of revenue to local merchants, whose shops were under siege by hordes of "Huron" warriors ... extras in the movie. The following August (1992) just before the film's October release, crews descended to the area again for a re-shoot of one short segment.

Exact in nearly every detail, the Huron Village was a realistic replica of an eastern woodland Indian village ... Mike Phillips, the Huron Sachem, expressed great satisfaction in the village itself and of the scene shot there. Tourists to the Park strained their eyes during the summer months, when the village was mostly obscured by foliage, to catch a glimpse of this set. The scene's complex & dynamic tapestry had an enduring appeal!

The Village stood, unattended, for years. Gradually, vandalism, erosion, and lack of care took the Village, bit by bit. Today, sadly, as you stand on the Chimney, gazing across the gorge, a slight clearing in the forested slope is the only reminder of the existence of this set, a prime component of this compelling bit of film making. Like the trailer that was once parked next to the Rocky River Fudge Shop, housing Daniel Day-Lewis during the filming there, the Huron Village is now but a memory. ... From *On the Trail of the Last of the Mohicans*, the web site





*LEFT: Groundhog Slide  
at Chimney Rock Park  
in Rutherford County -  
Hawkeye, Uncas, and  
Chingachgook are seen  
scrambling up this slope  
in pursuit of Magua's  
party and their captives.*

*BELOW: Hickory Nut  
Falls & Gorge as seen  
from Inspiration Point in  
Chimney Rock Park*



" ... a man must ask himself, in this wilderness, how many lives he can spare." James Fenimore Cooper

## The CLIFFS

With a desperate confidence, Uncas scales the incline of Chimney Rock Park's *Groundhog Slide* to confront the Hurons. At *Nature's Showerbath* he battles several warriors, working his way to Magua. The two become embroiled in a bitter struggle among the boulders of the cliffs. From back at *Inspiration Point* the hurrying Chingachgook and Hawkeye can plainly see the events, but they are too distant to help. Magua's experience is too much for the young Uncas, and the Mohican is brutally killed and tossed from the cliff.

Magua moves towards Alice. This long ordeal has left her shaken, barely functional, but now she can think clearly. There is no point in going on. Backing towards the cliff edge, she gazes into Magua's eyes. This appears to change Magua. He sees something he hadn't before. The knife lowers, he extends his hand. Alice simply cannot reach for the hand, the blood soaked hand, that has just killed the man she cares for. She lets herself fall off the cliff to her death. She has joined Uncas.

Cora has seen this, also from back at *Inspiration Point*, and she falls into a heap, sobbing. The war party moves on, but are overtaken by the two surviving Mohicans. Warriors are cut down one by one. The Mohicans are fueled by rage. It is at the *Top of the Falls* that Chingachgook vents all the fury of this rage on Magua. Magua does not stand a chance. He is broken into bits by Chingachgook's massive war club.

A weary Hawkeye returns to find his love, Cora, at *Inspiration Point*. They embrace. The ordeal is over.

You can explore the locale of this exciting finale by walking the path of the *Cliff Trail* at the park.



*Nature's Showerbath  
at Chimney Rock  
Park*

*LEFT: view  
depicting scene of  
Magua/Uncas hand-  
to-hand fight*

*BELOW: point  
where Alice leaps to  
her death*







*ABOVE: Top of Hickory Nut Falls at Chimney Rock Park, where Magua meets his brutal demise. Inspiration Point is along cliff line in the distance.*

*BELOW: Rock face at Inspiration Point where Hawkeye & Cora embrace before the switch to the final scene. This was actually re-shot, nearly a year after the final shoot, in August 1992. Interestingly, this was deleted in the DVD edition!*



## Chimney Rock Park, Hickory Nut Gorge, Rutherford County

It was Easter Sunday, 1993 and I was unknowingly beginning what would soon become a nearly all summer long quest for the sites used as film locations in *The Last of the Mohicans*. Even before beginning, I was acutely aware that Chimney Rock Park was one of them. Upon

viewing the film, I was able to tell which portion of the movie was actually shot there. Fittingly then, CRP was the first place I set out for - simply because it was the easiest.

To my surprise, and delight, Park personnel handed me a little two-sided brochure - and still do to this day to all visitors! - which pointed out the key shooting locales on the Park property on one side and a few nifty photos of Daniel Day-Lewis & Madeleine Stowe, on-set, on the other. Perhaps, right then and there, the idea was sub-consciously planted in my brain to enlarge that to create a full color photographic guide booklet to all the sites.



*On the Cliff Trail - place from behind which Uncas hides to "whack" the first approaching Huron Warrior.*

I'll never know for sure, but upon seeking out one or two other locations early on during that month of April, it had become apparent that such a project could, and should, be undertaken. Folks were indeed out there searching for the film's locations, and even with Park brochure in hand, most didn't have a clue!



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This site is now a *State* owned public park, and includes all the amenities associated with such - rest rooms, souvenirs, food, and more. Allow 2 hours for a full exploration of the upper trails. Admission fee is charged. 2016 Note: Upper trails are undergoing changes. *Cliff Trail* is closed. You may not be able to fully explore this area any longer. Check with the Park.

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MP: What was your favorite scene in the movie?

ES: I liked killing all those guys on the side of the cliff. That was fun. What else? ..... Yeah, probably the Magua scrap was my favorite.

MP: Was it a pleasant experience then, to be filming in the area?

ES: Oh yeah!

MP: Do any of the locations stick out in your mind as a favorite place?

ES: I liked the ledge we were shooting on. Not Chimney Rock ... was that Chimney Rock? With the village?

MP: Yeah, Chimney Rock. The Cliff Trails. It's everybody's favorite spot.

ES: It's really nice up there.

MP: Well, having been here already, would you ever want to revisit western North Carolina, the scene of the crime?

ES: Yes, I would.

- From *On the Trail of the Last of the Mohicans*, the web site [Interview with Eric Schweig]



*The last scene was shot at a formation known as The Chimneys near the summit of Table Rock Mountain in Pisgah National Forest's Grandfather District north of Morganton in Burke County. Spectacular views of Linville Gorge and vicinity.*



*"Tell them to be patient and ask death for speed; for they are all there but one - I, Chingachgook ..."*

## The LAST of the MOHICANS

Almost imperceptibly, the scene shifts to the next day. We are viewing Linville Gorge from the Chimneys, high atop Table Rock Mountain. The long tribulation comprising the story of *The Last of the Mohicans* has ended. Here, the surviving characters find peace in prayer for their lost loved ones.

Questions abound.

Will there be a place for people like Hawkeye in the future?

What will become of the Native peoples of this land?

We now know the answer to these, but directly related to the story we are left to wonder where these characters go from here. Perhaps Cora will return to England. Will Hawkeye and Chingachgook, adopted son and father, remain inseparable? The film leaves us in doubt, and perhaps that is as it should be. The script gives us some answers though, and for those of you who would like to know, continue to read on.

It seems Hawkeye and Cora will marry, and all three characters will finally head west ... to a place called Can - tuck - ee. We are left gazing back into that wilderness from which this story arose. In countless other places, countless other stories are playing out. That is the nature of this land. That is how we came to be.

*Note: The descendants of the Mohican people still do exist today, most commonly known as Stockbridge Indians.*

### The Chimneys of Table Rock, Linville Gorge Wilderness Area, Pisgah National Forest (Grandfather District), Burke County

Magua's head hits the rock, blood gurgling from his mouth. Hawkeye & Cora embrace. At this point, the scene shifts away from Chimney Rock Park, though most will never notice. A geologist friend once told

me that she could immediately tell that the scene changed locations. She could see the change in the rocks. She's about the only one.

I had heard a part of the film was shot at Table Rock, so naturally I headed for the summit. Beautiful, but not the right place. After speaking with the appropriate Forest Ranger, I learned the filming actually took place at some rock formations known as The Chimneys, about a half-mile south along the ridge from the parking area. The Ranger told me simply, "keep feeling to your left." Well, I "felt," many times, and did find the place, but it wasn't until more than a dozen sojourns, and well after the book was done, that I found the "easy way." To that point, I'd scrambled over rocks, leaped over deep chasms, and "felt" everything there possibly was to "feel" to my left! It's really not that hard, once you know the way. Follow the trail for about a half mile, enter the tunnel-like canopy of rhododendron that continues the trail, and head off-trail, to your left, in a sweeping arc once you feel that you have passed the heights. It's only a 20-30 minute, or so, walk, with some splendid vistas to be enjoyed along the way.

By the time we arrive at Table Rock - and the film takes us there a heck of a lot easier than it will be for you without it - you'll have traveled 13 miles of winding, dusty, dirt road and hiked along a trail that is barely marked in areas. When the film crew did it - crew AND cast - lugging cameras and lights and other necessities, one of them broke his ankle. But, all that behind you [and, hopefully, no broken bones], you will be forever grateful that you made the journey. It is a beautiful place. More so in person than it is even on film. There is unspoiled solitude and stellar scenery in all directions. I have been there in the spring, when the air is clear and you have an unimpeded view for miles & miles. I have been there in the heat of summer, totally enshrouded by dense fog. I have been there to enjoy the emblazoned hills in the glory of autumn, facing the breeze that literally took my breath away. I have been there in the dead of winter with snow swirling in all directions, causing directions to blend into one. There is no best time. It is gorgeous, and almost mystical, always.

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This site is freely accessible, a part of the National Forest system. There is no water on-site. There is a picnic area and out house at the trail

head. The area is a designated wilderness area, bear sanctuary, and home to some endangered species of flora and fauna.

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MP: Let's move to the very last scene. Here you come to the forefront, finally. Chingachgook, Cora, and Hawkeye are offering prayers for Uncas and Alice. There's this beautiful view. It's an emotional point of the film. What did you experience?

RM: Well, it was in October. We were two weeks over the scheduled end of the shoot. It went two weeks over. It was cold and it was very windy. And it was a biting cold. Even though it was sunny out, it was October in North Carolina and a front had just moved in the day before. A cold front from Canada... It was really cold, so it was very difficult in that wind, in that biting cold, to concentrate. They shot it, and the first couple of times ... they only shot it, I think, four times. The first two times they shot it I could manage to cry. The second two times I couldn't bring it up. It was just too cold. It was one of those scenes they put in.

MP: How did you guys get up there?

RM: It was a long trail. In fact, one of the ADs, a real racist AD, broke his ankle. It was like poetic justice.

MP: So, everyone walked in?

RM: Yep.

MP: Wow! We've been up there. It's not easy!

RM: Oh, especially the crew carrying all that stuff up. That's how that AD broke his ankle.

- From *On the Trail of the Last of the Mohicans*, the web site [Chat With Chingachgook]





*The view of Linville Gorge as seen from Wiseman's View. Much of *The Last Of The Mohicans* was filmed in this area.*



*Photos depicting Fort William Henry under construction (LEFT) and ready for filming (RIGHT). Courtesy of Susan V. Houck*

*"We were headed to Fort William Henry. ..."*

## HOW To Get THERE

### *The Biltmore Estate, Asheville, Buncombe County*

To get to the *Biltmore Estate* from Interstate 40, take exit 50, travel 3 blocks and follow signs for Biltmore House. From the Blue Ridge Parkway, take the exit marked "North US 25" and travel 4 miles to Biltmore. Once there - and there is a pretty steep admission fee, although well worth it if you plan to tour the House - the area of the *Burial Ground* will be on your left about .4 miles (**NOT A VISITOR AREA**). It is directly behind the new Visitors' Center. Continue on towards the Winery for approximately another .5 miles to view the Guesthouse/Courtyard/Field - part of *Albany* - just off the road on your left. To explore the Bass Pond Bridge - also part of *Albany* - bear left past the *Burial Ground* and on to the front of the House. Continue past the House and through the Gardens, continuing on as if you were going to Deerpark. You'll drive right over the Bridge. There is a foot-path that will take you around the Pond for a more relaxed view.

### *The Blue Ridge Parkway, Burke & McDowell Counties*

You can access the *Blue Ridge Parkway* from any number of highways, including 321 out of Hickory, 221 or 226 out of Marion, or 74 near Asheville.

To get to *Linville Falls*, drive to milepost 316.5 - one mile north of the junction with 221 - and follow the access road to the parking lot at the small Visitors' Center. From there it's an easy .5 mile hike to the Upper Falls, where portions of *Canoes* were filmed. Along the way, you'll pass the site of *The Ambush*. Another .5 mile hike past the turnoff for the Falls is Erwin's View, where you can look back at an impressive view of the Upper & Lower Falls. As you journey this gently curving portion of the trail, you will pass through an inclined section, traversing an area of tall, well spaced, older timber, near the turnoff for the

Chimney View (another fine vista). This is the location of *The Escort*, though the troops were headed back in the other direction. Though not seen in the film, an excellent view of *Linville Gorge* can be had nearby from *Wiseman's View*.

Should you wish to view the location of The Opening & Closing Vistas, travel the Parkway to milepost 350, the Greenknob Overlook. At milepost 349.2 is the View from the Head of Licking Ridge (recently changed to *Lick Log Ridge Overlook*), another fine view where you can see Table Rock Mountain.

### *Chimney Rock Park, near Lake Lure, Rutherford County*

**C**himney Rock Park is located on U.S. 64/74 just west of Lake Lure, about 25 miles southeast of Asheville. The entrance gate is on the south side of the road in the town of Chimney Rock.

You drive up the mountain to the parking lot, and from there can either hike up to the top or ride the elevator up the 26 stories.

To see the locations in the approximate order of the film, hike the *Cliff Trail* to the *Top of the Falls*, where Magua meets his death. Along the way, you'll pass the *Groundhog Slide*, *Inspiration Point*, and *Nature's Showerbath*, other key filming locations. You can also obtain several nice views by hiking the *Skyline Trail*. I suggest you make a loop by hiking them both. The *Huron Village*, mostly obscured by foliage in season, can be viewed from many points along the trails.

Chimney Rock Park actively promotes its relationship with *The Last of the Mohicans*, selling videos, soundtrack cassettes & CDs, and other promotional items. On loan from 20th Century Fox is a display of costumes and props from the film. Publicity photos adorn the walls. If you love the movie, you'll love *Chimney Rock Park*.

### *Dupont State Forest, Transylvania County*

**F**rom Chimney Rock Village ... take 64 west to Hendersonville. Make a left on Church Street in downtown. Go 6-8 blocks & make a right on Kanuga Street (which, in turn, becomes Kanuga ROAD outside of town, and finally Crab Creek Road - don't ask me why they constantly change names, it's NC!) Travel 4 or 5 miles, then

another mile & a half past the Holmes State Forest sign on the left. Make a left on Dupont Road (which then becomes Staton Road) Hooker Falls parking lot is about 3.1 miles ahead, on the right, just before the bridge.

A short trail takes you right to Hooker Falls, the first of the 4 to make the State Forest, and a part of *Canoes*. To get to Triple and High Falls:

Drive to the new Hooker Falls parking lot on Staton Road (called Dupont Road in Henderson County). Cross over Staton Road, carefully watching for traffic. Walk along shoulder of road towards bridge and cross bridge. Find stepping stones and descend to the Little River on the opposite side of the bridge from parking area. Find the trail running parallel to the river and hike upstream about 1000' on level ground. Trail then bends to the right and ascends another 1000' feet up a steep slope. Find view of Triple Falls on your left [opening of *The River Walk* sequence]. There is a trail down to the falls further up on the left. If continuing to High Falls, continue up the same trail until it ends at an intersection. Take the left turn and walk about 2000' parallel to the Little River. Turn right at the next intersection, and follow the trail up a moderately steep slope (about 900') to views of High Falls [*Rescue*]. There is a trail to the bottom of the falls further up on the left (warning: slippery rocks!). Also, steps to the right take you to the High Falls shelter, with excellent views.

Finally, the last of the 4 to actually open to the public, Bridal Veil Falls.

#### From the High Falls Bridge (about 1.5 miles to Falls)

From High Falls: Access the High Falls Bridge by continuing past the overlook on High Falls Trail until it intersects Pipeline Trail. Bear left and continue until it intersects with Conservation Road right at the High Falls Bridge. A more direct, though less scenic alternative would be to begin at the Main Gate on Staton Rd. and take Conservation Road directly to High Falls Bridge. Cross over the High Falls Bridge, and bear right to continue on Conservation Road. Continue parallel to the Little River until it crosses over the Reasonover Creek spillway below Lake Julia Dam. Once past the openings below the dam, take Bridal Veil Road on your right. Continue on Bridal Veil Road until it

terminates near the base of the Falls [dialog portion of *The River Walk*].

From Reasonover Road (nearly 2 miles to Falls)

Park at the gated entrance on Reasonover Rd. which is just underneath the power lines. Take Conservation Road north until it reaches the airport runway. Continue on Conservation Road parallel to runway and as it bears right down the grade toward Lake Julia. After passing the horse barn on left, take Bridal Veil Road on left until it terminates near base of falls.

Lake James, between Marion & Morganton, Burke County

To arrive at the location of *Lake George & Fort William Henry*, as well as a part of *Canoes* (the canoe launch), take U.S. 70 east out of Marion, or west out of Morganton, to highway 126 (you can also take highway 126 directly out of Morganton, heading west). Follow to the *Linville Access Area* on *Lake James*, approximately 8 miles east of Lake James State Park.

Once parked, you'll immediately recognize the island just off shore. The fort was situated on the bluff to the north. From the fort site itself - accessed from a dirt right of way just west of this spot - *Shortoff Mountain* can be seen. This long, low ridge is noticeable during *Canoes* and over Hawkeye's shoulder during the courier scene. As you walk over the fort site, cement foundations mark its perimeter. If you stand in the parking lot, facing the lake, the canoe launch is visible a short distance to the east. Walking the footpath will take you right to it. From this point, the scene of the Magua/Montcalm meeting is nearly directly across the cove.



*The Manor Inn, Asheville, Buncombe County*

**T**he Manor Inn, scene of Albany, part one, is located at 265 Charlotte Street in Asheville. Take the Charlotte Street exit on I - 240 and head in a northerly direction (towards the Grove Park Inn) approximately .6 miles. The complex sits on the right hand side, marked by a gate house.

Now an apartment complex, the Inn was built in 1899. Re-faced to pass for 1757 Albany, NY, you'll still be able to recognize the buildings. The lobby served as General Webb's HQ's.

*Pisgah National Forest, Grandfather District, Burke  
County*

**H**ighway 181 out Morganton takes you to the final scene, *The Last of the Mohicans*. Take it northward until you see the Forest Service sign for Table Rock Picnic Area on the right. Make a left and carefully travel the winding, uphill, 13 miles of mostly dirt road to the parking area near the summit of *Table Rock Mountain*. Once there, notice the sign pointing you towards the trail to the summit. *Go the other way*, through the picnic area, following the trail along the main ridge for a half mile or so to the formation known as *The Chimneys*. It becomes rather arduous, and you'll have to scramble over some rocks, but the view is well worth it. It is difficult to exactly point you to the spot, but having seen the movie, the scene should be recognizable to you once you're there. You'll probably have to poke around a bit. Keep checking to your right (west) and compare to the photos.

Should you decide to go after visiting *Linville Falls*, travel east on NC 183 for 4 miles (passing the turnoff for *Wiseman's View* - a spectacular view of Table Rock and Linville Gorge - on the way.) Go south on NC 181 and turn right on Forest Service Road #210. After traveling 4.9 miles, make a right on Forest Service Road #210-B. It's 1.6 miles further to the area.

Pisgah National Forest, Joecane District, Buncombe  
County

In this section of *Pisgah National Forest*, you can explore sets out of *The Elk Hunt* and *Tracking the War Party* scenes, as well as a small portion of *Massacre Valley*. Take I - 240 out of Asheville to the Highway 19/23 exit. Get off at the Barnardsville/Jupiter exit and travel Route 197 to Dillingham Road (just past the Post Office). Make a right and travel about 5 miles to Forest Service Road #74. Along the way, you'll pass the Misty Mountain Riding Center stables on your right. There is the fence seen in *Cameron's Cabin*. The Center offers horse-back tours of the area, including the *Mohicans* locations. All scenes were shot along, or just off of, a 4.6 mile stretch of FS #74. Beginning where the road becomes dirt, it is .4 miles to the *Picnic Area*, where some close-up shots during the massacre were taken. If you park in the parking lot and walk up the incline to the right of the picnic tables, you'll enter the woods near the spot the "elk" was "killed". Keep bearing to the right slightly after entering the woods, and you'll find the large rock - actually two - that comprised this scene. About another .2 miles up FS #74, on the right, is the creek crossing. Continue on another .2 miles and you'll see, also on the right, the wooded flat where Hawkeye is seen running. Between mile 4.4 & 4.6, shortly past Walker Falls, is a large stand of old timber, largely hemlock, on both sides of the road. Filming took place here as well. At mile 2.2, on the way up, you passed a narrow dirt turnoff on the left. Park your vehicle there and walk the couple of hundred yards to *Corner Rock*, scene of *Tracking the War Party*. Pass the rock and then walk around it, and you'll be at the exact location. Instantly recognizable are the cave, the creek, and the stand of trees.

Pisgah National Forest, Joecane District, Mitchell County

In relation to all other sites, this location is the most off the beaten path. From Asheville, take I - 240 north to U.S. 19/23. Three miles past Mars Hill, exit on U.S. 19 towards Burnsville. Approximately

12 miles, turn left on U.S. 19W, headed north. Continue on 19W for 14 miles or so, and then make a right towards Hunt Dale. Spot this turn by the dumpsters on the right. Stay on the paved road and make a left at the narrow bridge crossing the Toe River. Continue on the paved road to one mile past the Carolina Wilderness Adopt-a-Highway sign, where you'll make another left and cross the RR tracks. Stay on 197N for about 3 1/2 miles - you'll see the Carolina Wilderness Outpost on the right (they offer white water raft trips through the area) - and continue a short distance until you see the Forest Service boat launch sign. Make a left to the launch. You are at the *Nolichucky River*. Here, at the launch, were filmed shots during *Canoes*. Follow the footpath upstream to the RR trestle, about a 1/4 mile. You can view the rushing white water that comprised *Rescue*.

### *A Few Last Words On "How To Get There"*

The other sites, *Cameron's Cabin* and *Massacre Valley*, are on private property. Please respect that. There are some notes regarding these places that I feel are worth mentioning.

In Reem's Creek, near Weaverville in Buncombe County, is the Zeb Vance Birthplace Historic Site. Here are 19th century cabins and out-buildings for public viewing. Take I - 240 to the 19/23N exit. Travel to Newstock Road exit. Bear right at light. Turn left at 2nd light and then right at next light (Reem's Creek Road). This road will take you to the site.

### *Cameron's Cabin*

Remember, PRIVATE PROPERTY! For the adventurous ... Follow the directions above to get to the Zeb Vance site in Reem's Creek. 1.3 miles further up the road you'll come to the end of the road. Bear left and then make the first right. This is Blackberry Inn Road. Continue for .75 miles where you will make a right on a road that almost ap-

pears to be a driveway. This will take you between two brick homes and will then begin to climb a winding, narrow roadway. In .9 miles you'll reach a gate. You are at the Sawyer Cove Tree Farm. Beyond the gate, .4 miles, is a clearing ... The site of *Cameron's Cabin*. 2016 Note: Now completely overgrown.

If you travel Highway 221 north out of Marion on your way to the *Blue Ridge Parkway*, you'll pass through the North Cove area, home of *Massacre Valley*. It makes for some nice scenery. You can check out Linville Caverns as well.

### *Massacre Valley*

**A**gain, PRIVATE PROPERTY ... Take Highway 221 north out of Marion. The site is 2 miles past the point where Highway 226 turns off well north of town. Past this junction, you'll traverse a winding, wooded section of road (stay on 221). Before long, everything will open up and there will be fields on either side of the road. Around a slight bend is a white house on the left. JUST past this house is an overgrown gravel drive, also on the left. Remember, it's 2 miles from that junction to this driveway. Park in the driveway and walk on in. There were no visible "No Trespassing" signs. There's a clearly defined drive shortly past this, so if you see that, you've gone a bit too far. If you hit the Baxter's Plant, you're way too far. As you stroll in, you'll come to a clearing. Check the ground. It's covered, under the growth, with large-sized gravel. This was the crew parking area. Continue on, winding left and then right. It'll hit you all of a sudden. You'll almost hear the war whoops. You're in *Massacre Valley*.

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One more point ... The discovery of the locations is ongoing. At times, scenes were filmed in one place, then re-shot elsewhere and used in the film. One such scene (Heyward falling down or Duncan's Last Stand) was filmed in the vicinity of *Canoes*, as well as at the location mentioned elsewhere.

*"... and, Magua will show you the way ..."*

### *GPS Coordinates*

Please Note: GPS coordinates are provided to assist you in locating the locations. They are not fool-proof, as I, the author, have never used them. They were provided, as is, by a reliable & good friend. [A few I added via Google Earth] In conjunction with the written directions, they ought to be a valuable aid, especially considering that the passage of time has changed some of the landmarks. As described elsewhere, some locations are shot in various locations in the same area. Be cautioned!

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- Opening & Closing Vistas: 35°43'3.92"N 82°13'21.56"W
- Elk Hunt : 35°45'32.36"N 82°22'44.72"W
- Cameron's Cabin: 35°41'45.85"N 82°27'32.03"W
- Albany: 35°33'49.48"N 82°33'52.36"W
- Webb's Headquarters: 35°36'31.67"N 82°32'42.52"W
- The Escort: 35°56'54.41"N 81°55'33.33"W
- Tracking the War Party: 35°46'17.33"N 82°21'48.19"W
- The Ambush: 35°57'0.18"N 81°55'45.64"W
- The River Walk: 35°12'0.98"N 82°37'3.11"W
- The Burial Ground: 35°31'.41.05"N 82°33'05.28"W



- Lake George & Fort William Henry:  
35°47'36.01"N 81°52'6.27"W
- Massacre Valley: 35°49'12.17"N 82°01'07.22"W
- Canoes: Launch: 35°47'39.72"N 81°51'57.77"W  
Hooker Falls: 35°12'7.28"N 82°37'23.39"W  
Linville Falls [parking]: 35°12'7.28"N 82°37'23.39"W
- Under the Falls: 35°10'38.51"N 82°37'8.84"W
- Rescue: Nolichucky: 36°05'00.61"N 82°21'02.06"W - and  
points downstream  
High Falls: 35°11'37.20"N 82°36'54.12"W  
High Falls Access (formerly Buck Forest  
parking): 35°11'28.72"N 82°37'21.72"W
- Huron Village & Cliffs: 35.43902° N, -82.24657° E
- The Last of the Mohicans [final scene]:  
Parking: 35°53'11.32"N 81°53'4.46"W  
Turn Off-Trail: 35°52'37.72"N 81°53'20.10"W  
Top of the World: 35°52'39.58"N 81°53'18.95"W

*Many, many thanks to Stephanie Morrow!*

*"The men of the regiment will fetch water from the lake, build fires, and provide every comfort you desire."*

## Accommodations

*Please note that this is a partial listing only, taken from information supplied to me by the various Chamber of Commerce agencies involved. The intent is to give the reader a sense of what is available in the area. Please contact the Chamber in question for more information. All Chamber of Commerce information is up-to-date as of this printing [April, 2016]. The motels, campgrounds and eateries may not be. Best bet, if planning an On the Trail vacation, would be to search online by visiting the Chambers' very comprehensive web-sites!*

**BUNCOMBE & MITCHELL COUNTIES ...** *Albany, Cameron's Cabin, The Elk Hunt, Tracking The War Party, Rescue*

**BUNCOMBE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE:**

<http://www.ashevillechamber.org/> – 36 Montford Ave, Asheville, NC 28801 - (828) 258-6101

**MITCHELL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE:** <http://mitchellcountychamber.org/>  
– 11 Crystal St, Spruce Pine, NC 28777 - (828) 765-9033

### **BUNCOMBE:**

*Resting Your Bones ...*

### **In The Rough ...**

Coleman Boundary Wilderness (Toecane District, Pisgah National Forest) ... Forest Service Road 74, off of Dillingham Road, Barnardsville ... (828) 682-6146

### Motels & Bed & Breakfasts ...

Biltmore Quality Inn ... 115 Hendersonville Road, Asheville ... 828-274-1800

Inn On Montford ... 296 Montford Avenue, Asheville ... 1-800-254-9569

Super 8 Biltmore East ... 1329 Tunnel Road, Asheville ... 828-298-7952

Mountain Springs Cabins ... Highway 151 @ Emma's Cove Road, Candler ... 828-665-1004

### And Something REALLY Nice ...

The Grove Park Inn ... 290 Macon Avenue, Asheville ... 1-800-438-5800 or 828-252-2711

### *Filling Your Belly ...*

Cafe On The Square ... 1 Biltmore Avenue, Asheville ... 828-251-5565

The Greenery Restaurant ... 148 Tunnel Road, Asheville ... 828-2532809

The Market Place ... 20 Wall Street, Asheville ... 828-252-4162

Red Rocker Inn ... 136 North Dougherty Street, Black Mountain ... 828-669-5991

*The Asheville area of Buncombe County is loaded with restaurants of a wide variety of cuisines. Poke around, you'll find it!*

## MITCHELL:

### *Resting Your Bones ...*

### In The Rough ...

Bear Den Campground & Cabins ... Bear Den Mountain Road (Milepost 324.8, Blue Ridge Parkway) - 828-765-2888

### Motels & Bed & Breakfasts ...

Doanie Mama's Guest House ... 309 North Mitchell Avenue, Bakersville ... 828-688-3456

The Morse's Little South-Toe-Hold ... Milepost 344.1 on Blue Ridge Parkway, Burnsville ... 828-675-5036

Springmaid Mountain ... Route 3, Box 376, Spruce Pine ... 828-765-2353 or 803-547-1006

### *Filling Your Belly ...*

Crabtree Meadows Coffee Shop ... Milepost 340, Blue Ridge Parkway ... 828-675-4236

High Country Steak & Seafood House ... Highway 226 South, Spruce Pine ... 828-765-8000

**BURKE & MCDOWELL COUNTIES ...** *The Opening & Closing Vistas, Lake George & Fort William Henry, Massacre Valley, The George Road, parts of Canoes, The Final Scene*

**BURKE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE** <http://burkecountychamber.org/> – 110 East Meeting Street, Morganton, NC 28655 - (828) 437-3021

**MCDOWELL COUNTY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY:**  
<http://www.mcdowellchamber.com/> – 1170 W. Tate St., Marion, NC 28752 - (828)-652-4240

## BURKE:

### *Resting Your Bones ...*

### In The Rough ...

Linville Gorge Wilderness (Grandfather Ranger District, Pisgah National Forest) ... Highway 183, Linville Falls ... 828-652-2144

Daniel Boone Family Campground ... Highway 181 North, Morganton ... 828-433-1200

### Motels & Bed & Breakfasts ...

BJ's Bed & Breakfast ... 7348 Joe Johnson Road, Jonas Ridge ... 828-433-0342

Robardajen Woods Bed & Breakfast Cabins ... 5640 Robardajen Woods, Lakes James ... 828-584-3191

Holiday Inn ... 2400 S. Sterling Street, Morganton ... 1-800-HOLIDAY or 828-437-0171

Rainbow Inn ... 1301 Bethel Road, Morganton ... 828-437-7811

### *Filling Your Belly ...*

Shoney's ... 2156 S. Sterling Street, Morganton ... 828-433-5400

Mountain View BBQ ... 2101 S. Sterling Street, Morganton ... 828-438-8444

Sagebrush Steakhouse & Saloon ... 101 Steakhouse Road, Morganton ... 828-437-2242

Uptown Restaurant ... 202 N. Green Street, Morganton ... 828-438-1133



*The community of Linville Falls, approx. 2 miles from the Falls, offers a selection of motels and campgrounds as well. You can also camp in the National Park Service campground at the Falls for a nominal fee.*

### McDOWELL:

#### *Resting Your Bones ...*

#### In The Rough ...

Lake James State Park ... Highway 126, Nebo ... 828-652-5407

Linville Falls NPS Campground ... Milepost 316.5, Blue Ridge Parkway ... 828-298-0398

#### Motels & Bed & Breakfasts ...

Park Inn International ... I-40 @ Exit 85, Marion ... 828-659-2567

Woodlawn Motel ... US 221 and Huskins Branch Road, Marion (North Cove area) ... 828-756-0070

Big Lynn Lodge ... Milepost 332 of the Blue Ridge Parkway, Little Switzerland ... 828-765-5380

#### *Filling Your Belly ...*

Famous Louise's Rockhouse Restaurant (A Great Mohican Gathering Staple!) ... US 221 & Highway 183, Linville Falls ... 828-765-2702

Countryside BBQ ... Rutherford Road (US 221), Marion ... 828-652-4885

Skyline Restaurant ... Highways 226 & 226A Junction, near Blue Ridge Parkway, Little Switzerland ... 828-765-9394

*A variety of restaurants and camping facilities are available in the area. One good bet for camping is at Lake James State Park located 5 miles NE of Marion on NC 126.*

RUTHERFORD & TRANSYLVANIA COUNTIES ... *The River Walk, parts of Canoes, a snippet of Under The Falls, The Cliffs, The Huron Village*

RUTHERFORD CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (Hickory Nut Gorge):  
<http://hickorynutchamber.org/> – P.O. Box 32, Chimney Rock, NC  
28720 - (828) 625-2725

TRANSYLVANIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE:  
<http://www.visitwaterfalls.com/chamber-of-commerce/> – 175 East Main  
Street, Brevard, NC 28712 - (828) 883-3700

## RUTHERFORD:

*Resting Your Bones ...*

### In The Rough ...

Hickory Nut Falls Family Campground ... Highway 64/74, Chimney  
Rock ... 828-625-4014

River Creek Campground ... 217 River Creek Drive, Rutherfordton ...  
828-287-3915

### Motels & Bed & Breakfasts ...

The Lodge On Lake Lure ... Charlotte Drive, Lake Lure ... 1-800-733-  
2785 or 828-625-2789

Chimney Rock Inn ... Highway 64/74A, Chimney Rock ... 1-800-625-  
2003 or 828-625-1429

The Geneva ... 4137 Memorial Hwy., Lake Lure, NC - Hwy. 64/74A  
between Chimney Rock and Lake Lure ... 828-625-4121

Mountain Village Chalets ... Off of Highway 64/74A, Chimney Rock ...  
828-625-9783

Esmeralda Inn ... Highway 64/74A, Chimney Rock ... 828-625-9105

Linne Ardan ... 294 Tryon Bay Circle, Lake Lure ... 828-625-8182

*Filling Your Belly ...*

Duncan's BBQ ... Highway 64/74A, Chimney Rock ... 828-625-1578

Point of View Restaurant ... Highway 64/74A, Lake Lure ... 828-625-4380

The Olde Rock Cafe ... Highway 64/74A, Chimney Rock (next to the  
Park entrance) ... 828-625-2329

Rocky River Ice Cream & Fudge ... Highway 64/74A, Chimney Rock  
... 828-625-9534

## TRANSYLVANIA:

*Resting Your Bones ...*

In The Rough ...

Davidson River Campground (Toecane Ranger District, Pisgah National  
Forest) ... US 276, Brevard ... 1-877-444-6777

Little River Camping Resort, Little River ... 828-877-4475

Motels & Bed & Breakfasts ...

Little River Lodge ... 333 Hart Road, Pisgah Forest ... 828-877-5233

Twin Streams Bed & Breakfast ... Twin Ponds Lane, Lake Toxaway ...  
828-883-3007

Forest Gate Motel ... 50 New Hendersonville Highway, Pisgah Forest ... 828-877-3201

The Inn at Brevard ... 410 East Main Street, Brevard ... 828-884-2105

The Cabins at Seven Foxes ... On Slick Fisher Road off Highway 281 North, Lake Toxaway ... 828-877-6333

*Filling Your Belly ...*

Falls Landing Restaurant ... 23 E Main Street, Brevard ... 828-884-2835

Pisgah Fish Camp ... Highway 64 East, Pisgah Forest ... 828-877-3129

Becky's Restaurant ... Old Highway 64, Rosman ... 828-862-4223

Hawg Wild Barbecue ... Highway 276, National Forest Entrance, Pisgah Forest ... 828-877-4404

*In addition, though not in a county in which filming occurred, there is The Marshall House, 5 Hill Street, Marshall, NC 28753 (1-800-562-9258) in Madison County. Not only is it a nice place, but you can hear a good "Mohicans" story or two from the proprietors, who worked on props and as extras in the film. Happy traveling!*

## *Some Final Notes To The First Edition*

There are a few points I'd like to touch on, and much thanks I need to extend, before closing.

First of all, in case you haven't noticed, I love this movie. I feel the actors & actresses did a brilliant job portraying the character and feel of the day. Of course the director/producer must be given much of the credit in that regard. The cinematography captivated me. The music was enthralling. The film never bogs down, it moves right along with nary a wasted scene or, even, line. The romance, the action, all so well done. And, the end is actually climactic!

In locating all these sites, I was steered wrong quite frequently. Although it might appear simple in perusing this book, it was actually quite difficult. Many times, people thought they knew where scenes were filmed, but when I got there, it just wasn't the place. Many of the general locations had to be revisited time and again before I was able to pinpoint the exact spot.

And so, I'd like to thank the many people who helped me get to the bottom of it all. My wife, Elaine, deserves special mention for her patience and understanding while all else seemed to be put on hold as I was all consumed by this project at times. (She also sketched the maps.) And of course, my children who were dragged along on many excursions to the sites. In addition, great thanks go to Larry Freeman, Howard Barr, and Russ Whitlock of the National Park Service, Mike Conley of the *Morganton News Herald*, Cindy McPeters and the McDowell Tourism Development Authority, Suzanne McCullough of Biltmore Estate, Lee Thompson and Phil Kromer of the National Forest Service, Glenn Goodrich of Carolina Wilderness, Mary Nell Webb of Western NC Film Commission, Jim & Ruth Boylan of Marshall House, Stefanie Thielemann of 20th Century Fox, Marcia Kummerle of Misty Mt. Riding Center, Todd Morse of Chimney Rock



Park, and Bob Spencer, Jim Hill, Doug MacKenzie, & Michael Bigham. Thanks, too, to Ed Kucharczyk, of EK Electronic Publishing, for printing the proofs, & to the people who've seen them & encouraged me to forge on. A special thank you to Michael Masotti & to Zip Printing in Albia, Iowa (who literally saved the day!).

Finally, a couple of books worth reading if you're interested in the subject (in addition to *The Last of the Mohicans* itself) : *Betrayals* (by Ian K. Steele/Oxford U. Press) and *Adventure in the Wilderness* (the journal of Louis Antoine de Bougainville/U. of Oklahoma Press).

Don't forget, the mesmerizing soundtrack by Trevor Jones & Randy Edelman is available for your enjoyment. And, Thank You!

And so, I hope these few little morsels help to make the booklet just that much more complete. I have loved putting it together for you, have enjoyed the contacts - and encouragement - I've had with many of you via AOL and the Internet, and feel that now, finally, I can put it to rest. Be sure to re-visit the web site ([www.mohicanpress.com](http://www.mohicanpress.com)) for future updates & more photos. It has been fun. Yours in MOHICAN MAD-NESS ...

*Aids to following & understanding the Trail ...*

## Addendums to the Expanded Edition

### IN THE BEGINNING ... HOW IT ALL BEGAN ...

**T**hough Elaine was born in Pennsylvania and Rich in Brooklyn, we both grew up, and met, just outside of New York City in the suburbs of Long Island. Married, and with 2 young sons, we moved up to Dutchess County, in the beautiful historic Hudson River Valley in 1983. We settled in a wilderness ... we had one neighbor within a mile. Deer roamed freely in the mixed hardwood and ever-green forest, stepping softly through the fern covered forest floor. Mountain laurel and rhododendron were abundant, as were wild berries. Groves of hemlock stood out in snow-covered splendor during the sometimes harsh winters. In the spring, one could frequently hear the unique sound of grouse beating their wings, perched upon their fallen "drummer logs," in their most unusual mating routine. In the summer evenings, as the sunlight was filtered through the forest canopy, the pennywhistle-like sound of the wood thrush filled the air. The crystal-clear, spring-fed streams were dammed by beaver, forming beautiful ponds here and there where the otter could play. In the fall, the wood pile was a source of satisfaction as locust, cherry, oak, maple, and ash were split, and the old axiom, "Wood warms you twice ... once as you split it, once as you burn it," rang true. The smell of wood smoke in the cool, crisp autumn air, streaming through the huge, stone chimney, was one of our favorite sensations. Winter was a wonderland. Throughout the year, the woods were filled with wildlife of every type. Hawks, vultures, owls, wood ducks, turkeys ... songbirds of EVERY description, including the striking scarlet tanager ... snakes, turtles, tree frogs, newts and salamanders ... rabbits, flying squirrels, raccoon, bobcats, fox, and coyote. All were ever-present. HOW was this possible, just 80 miles north of NYC?

Our 18th century home was situated at the end of a dirt road up on a ridge called East Mountain, practically straddling the New

York/Connecticut line near Wingdale, NY and Kent, CT. It was the southernmost piece of a series of ridges that ran all the way into Vermont. Thus, it was a natural barrier against most civilization and a virtual runway for wildlife. It was not uncommon for bear, cougar, or even MOOSE to be seen along this animal highway.

It was possible, almost inescapable, to imagine you were in another time. Old stone fences crisscrossed the land ... back from the days when settlers divided their fields in this manner. Why up on the high ground? Because in these early days, native Indian tribes occupied the valleys below. A walk through these isolated woods would almost invariably bring you upon the rubble of a stone foundation of some earlier, pioneer home or stage stop, even a small schoolhouse. The sunken road bed of an old stage line that ran through this "living history" location was still visible in many places. If you got lucky, you'd stumble upon the old, abandoned cemetery ... 31 or 33 tombstones, some still legible, bearing the family names of Preston, Patchin, and even Kenne-dy. One, located in the obscure northwest corner, bore the inscription, "Free Black Man". It was a remarkable place, this East Mountain!

The house, situated in the midst of this near-wilderness wonderland, was a marvel unto itself. Simple by today's standards, it was actually a somewhat luxurious abode for the time and place. Centerpiece of the place was the massive, center chimney. Everything revolved around this structure, as it provided the only source of warmth through sub-freezing (and often sub-ZERO) winter temperatures. In the living room, kitchen and dining room ... the three ground-level rooms ... were fireplaces, but the huge one in the living room stood apart from the others. Gazing into it, with the antique-style Jotul wood stove blazing away - casting its warm, orange glow through its front, glass door, brought you back to the colonial era. The brick-lined Dutch oven, the cast iron swivel (the proper name escapes us) mounted pot hanger ... above, on the low ceilings, huge hand-hewn chestnut beams ... below, wide, wooden plank floor ... a winding, narrow staircase led upstairs, where that massive, stone chimney was again ever present. You could not escape the history while living in this place. It was all around you, always gnawing at you to learn more. You could not escape its pull. It could not be ignored ... so, learn we did.

The colonial era, the French and Indian War, the Revolutionary era, the history and lore of the local Native peoples ... it all engulfed you. Historic Albany was not very far to the north, and beyond lay Fort William Henry, Glens Falls, Fort Ticonderoga and all of Iroquoia. But, just below our home and the ridge, in the valleys formed by the Hudson (to the west) and the Housatonic (to the east) lay the land of the Mohicans.

Adjacent to this village site is the present day home of an off-shoot of the Mohican people on the Schaghticoke Indian Reservation. Remnants of semi-destroyed tribes gathered here and called themselves Scaticooks (meaning scattered). Only four families occupy the small reservation today. It is a gentle, if somewhat sad, reminder of the proud peoples who once lived in the area.

Living in the seclusion of semi-wilderness, in the southern foothills of the Berkshires, it was easy to believe time had stood still. There were no passing cars, no mail delivery; no plows, school buses, or peddlers. No street noise, no lights. There were woods and ponds, meadows and streams, birds and raccoons, coyote and fox, overgrown fields and neglected graves. There was solitude. There was quiet. There was history ... unbroken, unavoidable, enticing history. Here we lived, in a pre-Revolutionary War house on the outskirts of the original old Dover settlement, in a wildlife haven, literally in the middle of Mohican homelands. East, west, and north of us were principal Mohican villages. The rivers and streams, all Mohican names. This old house, the abandoned cemetery, the old foundations; this mountain, the nearby rivers, and the surrounding valleys begged one's attention. We HAD to explore legend and lore, fact and fiction, of these river valleys. Like accidental tourists, we commenced our historic 'travel' with the many regional names.

Mohican, Mohegan, Housatonic, Hoosic, Schaghticoke, and Scaticook. Translation of such words was like shining a light on the historic past; illuminating bits of stories, catching a brief glimpse of lives. The names revealed geographical and personal importance of the many rivers, lakes, mountains, valleys, and forests; where game was hunted, where geese were plenty, or which rocky mountainside was a favorite bear den. We could, through these names, discover where a village was situated, where an important council was held, or the site of a battle.

Through this rich historical road map, a sketch of the people of these woods emerges. Living, as we did, in Mohican country enabled us to learn, understand, and appreciate the richness of cultures that had preceded our own era. Living, as we did, in the semi-wilderness, compelled us to acquaint ourselves with the settlers who built new lives in this fertile region, and the Indian people who hunted our woods, drank from our creek, and whose feet left a sunken trail before our front door. Who were these people whose trails we unavoidably followed? Who were these woodland people?

The Northeast Woodland culture was comprised of two distinctively different linguistic groups; Algonquian and Iroquoian. Within these two were many subdivisions. The vast territory of these 'forest' peoples encompassed the northern Great Lakes southward to North Carolina, the Atlantic seaboard westward to the Mississippi Valley. Though the central region of the Northeast Culture area, New York and the eastern Great Lakes, is known as Iroquoia, it once was solely, totally home to the Algonquians. The Iroquois (Algonquian for "adder" with a French suffix), some evidence suggests, once inhabited the southern country that straddled the Northeast and Southeast Cultures, south of the Tidewater region. At some point, they began a northward migration, pressing forward until they came to the valleys of the great river (Hudson). Here, they must have thought, was a beautiful country, for their journey ended. These strangers were no rag-tag band of refugees and though they were not yet at their peak, they were strong enough to invade enemy Algonquian territory, take land they desired, and set down their own roots. With the formation of a powerful confederacy and a political shrewdness unparalleled among the native peoples, they eventually dominated the people of the northern woodlands. They came, they saw, they conquered. Yet, despite subjugation or aggressive warfare by the people of the longhouse, the Algonquians wrote their own subtle reminder of whose country it was. Rivers, streams, creeks, and lakes; mountains, valleys, towns, cities, counties, and states; Algonquian names saturate regional geography and history, a permanent legacy bequeathed to all.

Despite the clashes of these two peoples, there was a common bond shared by all Northeastern Woodland people; the forest. Beautiful mixed woods flourished in this country of valleys, mountains, rivers, and lakes. Trees; the cultural identity mark .... a source of shelter, fuel,



tools, food, medicine, utensils, baskets, ropes, and ceremonial items. Ash, chestnut, cherry, walnut, alders, willows, and elm; oak, maple, birch, beechnut, pine, cedar, hemlock, ... the list goes on and on. Such was it still in 1742, in the valleys between the great rivers, in the "Taghonic" (forests),.... in Mohican country.

Our time capsule home (circa 1760) was situated in a hollow between two ridges of the mountain. Behind the house, beyond the eastern ridge that merges with a portion of the Appalachian Trail, at the New York/Connecticut border, is the Schaghticoke Reservation. (Scaticook and Schaghticoke mean the same. Connecticut is Mohican for "the long river". Originally quonehtacut, quinnehtukguet, or connittetuck.) Created in 1742 on a 2000 acre parcel, the drastically reduced 400 acre tract extends from the eastern slopes of the mountain to the Housatonic (at the place beyond the mountains ) River. There was, in 1740, a mixed population of 600 "scattered" Connecticut Indians, mostly from the eastern side of the Housatonic River, who resettled at this Mohican hunting camp. Regularly joined by other Housatonic Indians, the camp was often large. From the river bank encampment below, the hunters watched as deer browsed on mountain vegetation above in plain view. The Indians of these valleys frequently burned the mountain woods to better spot game. Burnt forest lands brought forth lush, tender flora that attracted wildlife in abundance. From Schaghticoke, the hunters followed along the Weebutook River (beautiful hunting grounds), later known as Ten Mile River, and ascended the mountain in search of game, following the aged cliff trails that wound their way upward to the crest. These semi-cleared mountain tracts, like manna from Heaven, would later become planting fields for white settlers searching for farmland. They remain, even today, divided and marked by acres and acres of crisscrossed stone wall fences.

How did Schaghticoke, a seasonal hunting camp, become a permanent village, and then a reservation? It was a consequence of colonial attitudes, more than colonial settlement needs. The Connecticut English pressured the Indian population, even though many villages were entirely Christian, to move westward simply because they would not abide ANY Indians, or for that matter, ANY "foreigners" (German Moravians or French Jesuits) in their midst. They were fearful, it would seem, of anything non-English and non-Calvinist. Surrendering to the pressure, the tribes of the Connecticut River Valley began moving

westward. In 1731, chief Gideon Mauwee and his people left their Naugatuck village on the east bank of the Housatonic and headed for the "hunting camp" at Schaghticoke. The settlement became a magnet, a refuge for Christian Indians who were being exiled from their homes all across the long river country. From Schaghticoke (Scaticook), large numbers continued west, first crossing into New York at the base of East Mountain, then turning northward in the valley to the Mohican village at Shekemeko. Some journeyed further north, past Albany, to another Mohican town named Schaghticoke at the confluence of the Hudson and Hoosic Rivers.

In 1740, Moravian missionaries came to Scaticook, which they called "Pachgatoek". During the next three years, unwilling to live with continued Connecticut colonial hostility, many more Scaticooks traveled north along the Housatonic. Believing the grass to be greener in Massachusetts, they headed for the village of Gideon Mauwee's cousin, Mohican sachem Aaron Umpachenee; Stockbridge was their destination. Schaghticoke's population fell into steady decline. There was a slow, steady exodus from Schaghticoke that marked these people as truly "scattered". In later years, it was not colonial pressure that reduced their numbers, but the allure of the world. For the few remaining families, it is a great effort to hold on to what little there is left.

Returning to East Mountain ... the western ridge, which rose in the front of the house, overlooked the valley. To the north, west of the Taconic Mountains, was Shekemeko (Chicomico, "the big house", near present day Pine Plains). This was the village of the Mohican sachems Shahash and Tschoop. Having sold most of their land in 1724 to New York, the Shekemeko Mohicans had but a square mile left. It was a beautiful, pine tree rich, fertile square mile. In 1740, after a previous meeting in New York City, these chiefs invited the Moravian missionary Christian Henry Rauch to Shekemeko. The Mohicans were not won over easily, and Rauch's mettle, patience, and Christian love was severely tested. The object of barbs, ridicule, and hatred, Rauch proved sincere and pious. Though he was at first ill treated, and once nearly axed to death, the Moravian persevered. In the end, he won the admiration, respect, and friendship of the Shekemeko Mohicans, particularly Tschoop and Shahash, who took the Christian names Johannes and Abraham. In two years, there would be 32 Moravian settlements, including Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, the central mission,

among the Mohicans and Delaware. The Moravians were very successful, which didn't please the Calvinist ministers of Stockbridge or the newly established Sharon township. They too courted the Hudson Valley Mohicans, hoping to persuade them to join the Stockbridge community. In the end, the Stockbridge Mohicans remained in the Calvinist fold, while their brethren at Shekemeko, Wechquadenach, and Schaghticoke followed the Moravian path.

The decision had ramifications. Friendship with the Moravians drew suspicion and Shekemeko was targeted by New York colonials and officials for harassment. At one point, the Moravian missionaries were ordered to swear two oaths; one to King George, the other against Catholicism. Diplomatically, the Moravians explained that though their sentiments echoed the spirit of the oaths, their consciences forbade them to swear to it. They were permitted to return to their villages, oaths unsworn, but it was only a matter of time before they, and their Mohican congregations would be forced out of New York. Threats, harassment, and constant suspicion took their toll. By 1746, the Moravians closed the Shekemeko mission and most of the Mohicans resettled at the newly built Gnadenhutten settlement, 30 miles from Bethlehem. Within 10 years, Shahash, or Abraham, removed himself and his family to Gnadenhutten also. Shekemeko was over, a faded memory. This pretty little village of the big house, nestled among pine covered hills, had seen its last of the Mohicans.

Once again, continuing along the mountain trail in a northeasterly direction, one travels through heavily wooded, game laden Berkshire Mountain foothills. Crossing into Massachusetts (massawachusett, "great hill"), and descending to lower ground, the trail intersects the Housatonic River, which now winds east to west. At this junction, where the river wraps around the base of a small mountain on its way southward, is Stockbridge, the Calvinist settlement of Mohicans from the Hudson and Connecticut Valleys. Though they were often embroiled in colonial family feuds and religious conflicts, the Stockbridge Mohicans remained loyal to the English and constant in their adherence to Calvinist beliefs. In a few years, 1751, the Great Awakening would stir their spirits and incite their revivalist passions. Jonathan Edwards, the theologian giant of 18th century New England was coming to Stockbridge.

What has become of the "River Indians" who once dwelt in the valleys of the Hudson and Connecticut? Those who followed the Moravians passed into obscurity. Many of these "praying Indians", along with the Delaware, were victims of massacres by angry settlers or hostile Indians. Some went to Canada, joining the "French" Indians; many died during the French and Indian War fighting for the English cause, and during the American Revolution fighting for the colonial cause. The Stockbridge Mohicans, as history has shown, fared the best, if not fare thee well. Their descendants now live in Wisconsin on the Stockbridge Reservation, named for their former Massachusetts settlement. Rarely spoken of as Mohicans anymore, they are known simply as "Stockbridge Indians".

To REALLY find the Mohicans, as they were, travel to these valley homelands. Drive along the beautiful Taconic Parkway that winds its way through Mohican lands. Look deep within the adjacent woods as you pass through. If the imagination is alive, if the heart is inspired, you can almost see the Mohican people moving beyond the forests..... among the sugar maples in early spring, fishing the clear waters in summer suns, harvesting corn in the autumn moons, tracking deer in the mountains' winter snow. Though it is true that you can never really go home again, trying is every bit worth the trip. Nostalgia is a wonderful place!

And so it was, until we inexplicably were drawn to the very center of the filming of *The Last of the Mohicans*, as it was being filmed, in July 1991. Embarking upon our own migration, leaving behind the river valley country that was Mohican land, we journeyed to the mountains of western North Carolina. It's a long story, but there we were, practically immune from the actual presence of the filmmakers, having traveled from the historic lands of the Mohicans from the past to the soon to be celluloid MohicanLands of our favorite film. As it once was with the historic sites of the real life Mohicans, now, at nearly every turn, we are reminded of the filming which once took place here ... and, if you look REALLY hard, you might just catch a glimpse of a long-haired DDL or Eric Schweig running through the forests ... here, in western North Carolina!

- Richard & Elaine Federici, from *On the Trail of the Last of the Mohicans*, the web site [*From the Mohicans' Lands to Mohicanland*]

## ITINERARIES ...

**O**NE DAY: Start at the location of The Opening & Closing Vistas. Be there at dawn for a spectacular view of a mountain sunrise (as you see on the front cover of the book). Next, explore the location of The Ambush, with its accompanying sites - this will include a pocket of Carolina virgin forest, as well as waterfalls and rugged gorge country. Move on to The Final Scene. A true adventure awaits you at this particular place, as you scramble over rocks, crawl through crevices, and gaze out at a truly awesome panorama. NOT recommended for small children. Then, you'll be able to make it to the site of Lake George & Fort William Henry in time for a soothing sunset over the lake. Watch, as Nature reclaims the area. It'll pretty much exhaust you - even though all these places are relatively close to one another - but it's a really fun day trip!

**T**WO-THREE DAY: You can begin up at The Elk Hunt ... this wilderness area can take a while to explore, especially if you take in the Tracking The War Party location. There's quite a bit of the movie you can see here. Take your time. Then, as you drive towards Albany ... err, I mean Asheville ... and if you're feeling really adventurous, drop by on the Camerons' and see what's cookin' at the old homestead. You should probably allow a full day in Asheville for the locales that comprise Albany, parts 1 & 2. There is an admission fee at part 2, so you may as well get your money's worth! Webb's HQ's won't take you long - you'll be amazed at how small the area of filming is - but the effect it should have on you will be everlasting! Then, head the 25 miles or so southeast to The Cliffs. If you haven't ever been there, or even if you have, this place will amaze. Probably the most powerful moments of LOTM occur here, and you can explore them all. [2016 Note: Check with Park. Cliff Trail Has been closed!!] Wear your hiking boots! If you've got an extra day, combine this tour with the first one described above and you'll have followed a large part of the trail of *The Last Of The Mohicans*!

Many other possibilities exist. Be creative! Just keep in mind, there is a lot of territory within the 6 counties. Allow time.



## A BREED APART ...

## REAL & VIRTUAL MELD

'Real life' can be pretty tough at times - we all know that. We've all experienced its bumps and knocks at some point. And sometimes we really need a place to escape to, where 'they' can't get us! My place, I'm happy, thankful and indeed proud to say, is 'Mohicanland', a community formed round a mutual love of the film LOTM, it's emotive characters, a most stirring and inspiring musical score, and truly magnificent scenery.

In Mohicanland, I can find a wealth of information about people, customs, survival, a history of nations in the 18th century. There are articles there that will make me cry with laughter - or cry with sadness. I can 'talk' to people having specialist knowledge and skills of which I knew little or nothing and of which I now know much more! I can indulge my passion for 'learning' or I can simply browse and skim as the spirit takes me.

One of the most enjoyable aspects of 'living' in Mohicanland has been the communicating and interacting of like minded people - folks who have the same inclination to share their love of the film, this era - and themselves. Each person who enters Mohicanland is treated like a long lost friend, friendship is assured and unconditional and no one judges. Each person has an opinion and is allowed, indeed encouraged, to express it, though it is understood that each opinion should not contain malice. However, like ANY family, there are occasional 'ruckus' and like most families, if one member is 'attacked', all feel the hurt. However, 'Give and Take' usually prevails and compromises are made. 'Mohicanland' has become SO important to each of its citizens that real efforts are made to 'heal' the wound, not just stick a bandage on it that will fall off ten minutes later. Each member is highly valued, therefore, Mohicanland is a great place to hone skills such as tolerance and patience!

But, Mohicanland is also about FUN!! It is humour, a sense of irony, dry wit, at times totally outrageous and often totally mad!! Some days you'd swear there wasn't a sane or responsible person in the place! You could be forgiven for suspecting someone/something has been tainting the community's water supply!

And of course, each town has its 'honourable' citizens, i.e.. mayor, provost, call them what you will. 'Mohicanland' has Rich and Elaine Federici, web masters, site builders, Mohicanland Town Planners extraordinaire! This truly amazing couple will modestly tell you 'it wasn't planned to become what it has. It has almost taken on a life of its own!' Well, perhaps. But as my mama always said 'you reap what you sow!' With diligence, intelligence, patience and a lot of humour, this wonderful couple have constructed a website that is the envy of many another.

'Mohicanland' is a 'community' that opens its doors - and its heart, to all. My humble and very grateful thanks to all who invited me in, welcomed me so warmly and allowed me to 'build my cabin' in Mohicanland! ... K. (*aptbka Miss Katie, of Miss Kate's Quiltshoppe, Mohicanland*)

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Let me get this straight... you want me to explain what this site and all the Mohicanlanders mean to me. In words. I don't know if a relationship like this can be explained in mere words.

I came upon this site about three years ago as a long-time lover of the movie (all right, fanatic fan of the movie). I found all the information I could ever want on the movie itself, the area where it was filmed, the process of filming it, the script, the cast, the crew. I discovered the message board. I'd never posted on one before and I lurked a long time before posting. When I finally showed myself, I was welcomed into a group of intelligent, interesting, informative, imaginative, wacky, insane individuals. Without ever having met, this group could play off one another in a most delightful and entertaining way. How could anyone explain the insanity that broke loose in December of 1997? The posts from those few days should definitely be included in your book with a short explanation of GGGGs, SYMTs and what caused

the war to break out. My whole family sat in front of the computer laughing until the tears ran down our cheeks, and we had to order in more Depends.

Then Eric Hurley suggested we get together the following summer. Somehow the idea snowballed, and before we knew it we had a Gathering planned. Even though I was new to the board, you planned it so I would be able to come. Wow! I sure appreciated that! OOOOH-but a scary thought! I was actually going to travel to North Carolina to meet, in the flesh, all these different people from all over the world. What if they weren't just insane, but were really INSANE? Well, I was driving my own car. If they were too bad, I'd just bail out and go home. One of the ones I was most worried about meeting was you, Rich. The mental picture was a short, stocky Italian fellow with a sharp tongue, a relatively short fuse, and a man who absolutely could not let an argument lie still. Hmmm. Not exactly the kind of fellow I thought I would pick for a friend.

After driving seven hours or so down from Can-tuck-ee, I was so glad to see Eric Hurley in his red uniform standing at the entrance to Chimney Rock Park, I could have kissed him. However, Sharon was with him, so I simply got directions to the bunkhouse. Several others had arrived before me, and we tentatively introduced ourselves. Hey, these were pretty cool people, and with a common love of LOTM, we were soon chatting away like old friends. Putting faces with the names that we knew so well from the board was great entertainment. We got some big laughs out of that.

Saturday morning we met at the pavilion. Rich, I must say I was totally unprepared for the way-cool pony-tailed dude. Meeting and getting to know you and Elaine was one of the highlights of my weekend. You are great people. The glue that holds us all together. The surrogate parents of the site. What can I say? The weekend was a huge success, way beyond my wildest dreams. We could act like silly teenagers, climb all over Chimney Rock Park and Table Rock, drive who knows how far on those little windy NC roads to a theater where we saw the film backwards, ate great meals, and talked and talked and talked... A little more sleep would have been helpful. I don't think I've functioned on so little sleep since I was a teenager, but no one wanted to waste a

minute of the time we had together. Carol and Ilse. Roz. Eric and Sharon. Susan Houck. Jo and her Sisters, Marcia. What great memories!

I just went back and looked at what I posted after I got home:

... What a treat to be able to put faces with the posts now. Rich, I can't believe you told Elaine she had to behave herself at the gathering ... especially when it became obvious none of the rest of us were! Shame on you!! Isn't it amazing to think that 38 (or thereabouts) of us could get together and get along so well, even though none of us had ever met before (excluding Jo and her sisters). Not a nut case in the bunch (at least not out of the norm for the group). Rich, Elaine, Marcia, Myrrh, Eric, Susan all did a wonderful job in putting the weekend together for us. Thank you so much. It was one of the coolest experiences I've ever had. For those of you who missed this year's celebration, start saving money and making your plans now. It was well worth any trouble any of us took to make it there ... Chris

So, now I'm back on the board. I missed the Gathering last year and I'll miss it again this year. Maybe next year. We are like family. We get along with some better than others. Sometimes fights break out. We get mad at each other. But someone from the outside comes in and attacks, and we jump together to defend the one attacked.

Rich and Elaine, you are amazing people. Parenting, whether it be a family or an Internet community, isn't easy. In both cases, you have done an exemplary job. Without you, none of us would be here, and we'd all be the poorer for missing it.

Love to you both,

*Chris*

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Where do I start on my involvement with Mohicanpress, Rich and Elaine, Last of the Mohicans and the WWW Board? Most would say "start at the beginning fool" but unlike most, I

did not see the movie until perhaps 1997 when I finally rented it on video. I had planned on going to see it in the theatre when it first came out, but the woman I was dating didn't think she would like that movie and chose "Dr Giggles" for us to see. Big mistake. Huge. We don't see each other anymore. The thing is, I never went back and corrected the mistake while the film was still in the theatre. However, I have always had an interest in the Colonial period, and in period movies. My earlier favorites had been such movies as the original Last of the Mohicans, Northwest Passage, The Unconquered (Gary Cooper as the hero, and Boris Karlof as an Indian Chief GUYASUTA - now THERE was an improbable casting! I kept seeing Boris wrapped in linen instead of a loin-cloth!). I had first gone to Colonial Williamsburg when I was 12 years old and have visited many times since then. In fact, I had my honeymoon there.

So, to make a long beginning shorter, finally I rented Michael Mann's version of Last of the Mohicans, watched it, and loved it. Being computer literate, I was browsing the Internet and came across Rich and Elaine's web pages. These pages had only gone up that year, but already they were taking on a life of their own. Interesting book he had compiled, interesting people posting thoughts on the movie, and the clincher - what sucked me in for good - the Board. Ah, the Board! So many diverse people posting about the movie, relevant history, poking fun at each other, swooning over one actor or another.....I quickly became almost a daily poster myself. One of the biggest attractions were Rich and Elaine themselves. You could see their intellect and their personalities shining through their website, and I enjoyed their posts, thoughts, comments and good natured ribbing. Both struck me as very intelligent folks, deeply immersed in the movie and the history of the period, and very well rounded. How they ever found the time to do all they did and still manage a large family is still beyond me.

Their site became a favorite place for me, I was welcomed as if one of the family - as is everyone who encounters the site even today - and it was a constant source of new information and contacts concerning a period of history I had always been interested in.

What has it done for my life, you ask? For me, it's done more than just broaden my interests. It's done more than just give me entertainment and great knowledge on a variety of subjects. It has even done more in



my life than result in new, lifelong friendships. It has become, for me, a new path in my life. It was with Rich that I first entertained the idea of going into the making of period rifles as a vocation. I had been making rifles off and on for some time, and had toyed with the idea of doing it part time, but I have to credit (or blame!) Rich in large part for making this vocation a reality. It was Rich and Elaine who had the contacts which led me to Wayne Watson - the maker of Killdeer - and resulted in my obtaining the patterns and sketches necessary to make a copy of the movie rifle. We talked about my doing this rifle for his website. That conversation grew into my desire to make rifles for a living. And that is what I do today. I make more than just Killdeer of course, and have a website of my own advertising my craft. But, what I do today - what I earn my living at - grew out of my accidental discovery of Rich and Elaine's website.

I must also give major credit to my life-mate Betty for tolerating and encouraging my ambition to become a longrifle craftsman. She is an angel and very supportive of my ambitions and happiness. With another woman I may not have been able to follow through on an ambition I had secretly held in my heart since the early 1970's. So there you have it. Rich and Elaine are a major factor in giving me the idea to become what I am. Betty is the main factor in encouraging me to carry through with that idea. Without the three of them - there likely would not be Pennsylvania Longrifles Inc., Gnome Dome and BillyGnome would not exist, I would not have made friends with folks I expect to have as friends for however much time remains in my earthly existence, and I would not be doing what I am happily doing with my life.

Put simply, Rich and Elaine and their website have enriched my life and helped turn it to a new and happy direction.

*Bill Rooks  
GnomeDome  
BillyGnome  
Pennsylvania Longrifles Inc.  
April 2000*



In a word: friends! First and foremost, there's my wonderful MentorMan, Rich Federici, the first person I met in cyberspace who shared a love of 1992's *The Last of the Mohicans*. I'll never forget our early correspondence about the movie, the film sites, and the possibility of publishing *On The Trail of the Last of the Mohicans*. I remember how excited I felt to know that a booklet was coming out that would guide me to each and every film location from this lovely movie. Once the website was up, and the bulletin board established, it only got better. Every day there was someone new and interesting posting comments and questions on the Board. Slowly, but very surely, a family of friends from around the world became a reality, and checking the board became the first thing I do every morning.

I can't begin to express how much my daily chats with these people mean to me. And once the idea of actually getting together in North Carolina and MEETING each other in person was implemented, it all meant even more. I feel I have a bond with friends in places I may never even visit in this lifetime...an international family, indeed! Many of these friends not only interact with me on the bulletin board in our imaginary Mohicanland, but write me daily or weekly on a personal level. I have never felt more "connected" to the Family of Man!

There are so many other wonderful things on the MohicanPress website that it would be impossible to list them all here, including, but not limited to, a wealth of historical information, interesting and informative cast interviews, and storefronts for purchasing all manner of goodies. It's possible to spend hours there, looking around and reading and learning. And all of this is thanks to a website that evolved from a booklet that evolved from one man's love of a movie! Incredible! But for me, the biggest draw will always be friends, and for that, I say thank-you, MohicanPress, from the bottom of my heart!

Love to you all,

*Marcia, alias MMMM, alias Miss Marcia, alias Sassy Soothsayer, alias Miss Paddletale, alias G2K Bug, alias Birdie T. Bird, alias WhoKnow-sWHATNext!*

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When Forward Pass Productions started clearing land for the huge set "Fort William Henry" in April 1991, I felt more anxiety than excitement. I love the natural look of Lake James in Burke County, N.C., and even a temporary movie set made us locals uneasy. Little did I know that the huge log fort erected on the scar of red clay would bring me many adventures off screen as well as on.

Thinking back to the summer of '91 is like playing a slide show in my head with the predominate colors of pine, rock, and tanned leather. I remember the delight of coming across Native American extras tramping through the fields adjoining my family's lakeside RV. I remember the smell of oil and burning pine that stayed in the air long after the film crew had left. I remember the sight of a hundred soldiers marching and the tall thin man with tangled black hair leaning on a long rifle waiting for a ride up the hill to the fort. Then there's the mental snapshot of a lean young Uncas jogging along the highway. There were woods filled with plastic tape and little plastic flags and "Keep Out" signs. Traffic on Highway 126 changed from boat trailers to ox carts.

After the film crew left and the fort was burned and bulldozed into a gully in the woods, there were still reminders of the great battle at Fort William Henry. I would meet curious folk staring at the battlefield road. Sometimes I would find a pewter button on my walks along the edge of the battlefield. I began to meet more people who were involved as extras or crew during the filming; at least five people at my place of work had left their mark on LOTM.

When the movie came out, seeing the scenes of my summers "on the big screen" sent chills down my spine. The glorious views of Hickory Nut Falls, Shortoff Mountain at Lake James, Linville Falls and other places that have been part of my life since I arrived on this Earth was an emotional experience beyond the impact of the movie itself. Some

of my friends have always teased me that my favorite character in the movie was the scenery!

It was not until I hooked up my little laptop to the Internet some time after the film was released that LOTM really began to have an impact on my life. There was at that time a group on the old Prodigy service who called themselves “Moheckies”. There were daily messages and even chat times set up on another service. The group was predominantly female, and although Daniel Day-Lewis was their main focus, they were organized to the degree that several had traveled to North Carolina to see what they could of the film sites.

In the summer of 1994, I met my first Moheckie face-to-face. Her screen name was SoCal Sue and we had corresponded for about two years and agreed to meet with other Moheckies in Gettysburg, PA. She then drove down to NC with me and we toured the sites. Thus began several summers of what I refer to as Susan’s Moheckie B & B, as many of my acquaintances came to this fair state to “see the sites”. A couple of years later, RichFed and I made contact, and he told me about the book he was working on. [RichFed Note: Actually, this WAS in 1994!] I was so impressed that he had tracked down all those sites and gotten access to them! I am a wimp about such things, and though I knew approximately where most of the sites were, there were many I had never tried to visit. There were only a few scenes that Rich had not pinned down precisely, and I was able to fill in the blanks on a couple of the Lake James ones.

I got to see the rough draft of the book, and it seemed to me that there was certainly an audience for it.

What fun my Mohican friendships were! I even had the privilege of a pontoon ride with a real major, and having the opportunity to utter those unforgettable words: “Got nothing better to do on the lake today, Major?” I gathered nails, wood, and half-disintegrated cannon balls as mementos for my friends. I even filmed an LOTM parody starring my dog Agnes. I met other teachers, nurses, Irish DDL fans, reenactors, artists, and even dancers. Liz Langrall, a co-worker at that time, was one of the dancing laundresses in the famous fort scene. She and her husband were contra dancers, and that is how they learned of the need for extras. I met yet another dancer, Emily

McGowan, who also stopped by on a summer trip for the pontoon ride and Mohican fun tour. Emily does Scottish Country dancing, and yes, she encouraged me to try it.

I'll admit I was pretty much a spectator to Scottish and Irish culture until LOTM and the Moheckies came along. There must have been something in "The Gael" that was stirring to my blood, though. Finally I decided I had to tap this part of my own heritage and try it. I signed up for Irish dancing just about the time the whole world became aware of it via Riverdance and Lord of the Dance. It has become my passion, and is the only exercise I have "stuck with".

LOTM expanded my cultural awareness in many ways. I met many of Native American heritage, attended a pow wow and was inspired to learn more about colonial history than I ever knew even as a social studies teacher.

Meanwhile, Rich's book had been published and had its own website, and from that point on, a whole new doorway opened not only into the lore of the movie Mohicans, but into related subjects as well. I finally got to meet Soldier #2, who really lived just a holler down the road from me all along. Over the past few years the Mohican memories have grown: A snowy trek up Table Rock; a climb in costume up Cliff Trail; the MMM in repose where DDL once lay; an up close and personal evening with Eric Schweig.

In the last century, our lives began to be shaped more by the media than by tradition. I am just thankful that in such creations as *The Last of the Mohicans*, a product of modern technological society can spark an interest in things past. For me, it has been a means of getting in touch with who my ancestors were, and how I might apply some of their culture and tradition to enrich my own life.

*-Susan V. Houck-*  
04-27-00



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## HOW I SPENT MY SUMMER VACATION

Well, Mom and Dad and me and our dog Mr. Whiffles got in the car to go to Disneyland, and on the way Dad got reeeeeeally mad and tried to throw Mr. Whiffles out the window because he got carsick ALL OVER, and Mom said... Oops! Wrong essay! My apologies. \*hem! hem!\*

## WHAT MOHICANLAND MEANS TO ME

Now as I was saying before I so rudely interrupted myself, long long ago when the world was new and dinosaurs ruled the earth, there was a comely maiden who didn't know what she wanted. She sat day after day in a lonely tower of her own making, until one day she happened to whang a video in her VCR and beheld a ripply-muscled, bare-chested primo specimen running hell-for-leather through an untrammelled wilderness, long black hair flying out behind him. Hour after hour she watched and rewound, watched and rewound, a tiny thread of drool falling unheeded out of her open mouth. The only words anyone could get out of her for the next three days were, "Mommy, buy me dat!" At last, the maiden knew what she wanted. Later, as the fair maiden was being shamefully berated by her then-husband for leaving kissy lip prints and claw marks all over the television screen, the Master of Life took pity on her plight, and sent her two messages.

- 1) Thou shalt get rid of that clunkhead thee art married to, and
- 2) Seek others as wacko as thyself. Climb down from thy tower and findest them, and live in peace among the others of your kind.

So I (the maiden) accomplished the first task, and thanks to a hint from a friend I came upon the Land of the Famiglia Federici, where was being peddled a location guide to LOTM. Now I could walk in the very footsteps of my beloved Hawkie-poo, and I could roll to my heart's content in any of his leftover DNA molecules on rocks and tree trunks and so forth. And then to stumble upon the LOTM website where

there were photos that made my little heart go pitty pat! And a bulletin board, where questions of vital import were grappled with ... such as, did Hawkeye's bikini line seem to need a waxing when he fell down and went whoopsie in the Huron Camp??

Yes, I had found the elusive "others" of my kind. The Master of Life was good, indeed. As I have often told the Fabulous Federicis, if I hadn't found this outlet I would now be chained to the walls somewhere, being fed with a forked stick. Where else could you find a group of historians, expert reenactors, gunsmiths, woodsmen, movie buffs, craftspeople, artists, authors, and those who might be kindly termed wingnuts (myself among them!) all gathered in one place, exchanging information, good will, and flights of good-humored lunacy? We've seen those "not of the body" come and go. We've been merciless with troublemakers, and we've all had our snitfits when we've gone stomping off and then sheepishly returned, to be enveloped in Mohican Madness once more. We've all supported each other in times of real pain and need. \*sniff! sniff!\* Awww, hell! GROUP HUG!! GROUP HUG!!

So for all of us who've been told time and time again, "Geez, get a life, weirdo!" I like to say, "We have. Oh yes...we have."

XXXXX  
*Mary*

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The first time that I saw the movie "The Last of the Mohicans" was in the Summer of 1997. It blew me away. Immediately I started searching the net for more information and quickly landed at a site called "On the Trail of the Last of the Mohicans". The site blew me away too. I couldn't believe the wealth I found and spent hours and hours exploring it. The Musings, the Script and everything else.... Finally I got to the message board and spent some more hours there to check out every thread that was posted. I loved the discussions, the exchanges, the joking, and the wit of those participating. From then on, I became a daily visitor, always enjoying Mohicanland, but still lurking until at last I worked up the nerve to get involved early '98. Since then my life has changed. I made many friends in faraway places. However,

those places don't feel that faraway anymore because I made friends there. I've already crossed the ocean twice to meet them, and will do so again. Mohicanland has greatly enriched and expanded my world. I have met interesting people with interesting thoughts and a great sense of humour, people I would have never met without this site. Coming to the board and reading the threads, chatting with the Mohicanlanders, feels much the same as going to my favorite hangout over here to meet with my Dutch friends. Mohicanland is, in this way, a real place to me; and a special place.

Thank you, Elaine and Rich, for building it.

*June 4, Rotterdam, The Netherlands ... Ilse*

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My Journey to MohicanLand

“And what he greatly thought, he nobly dared.”

[Homer: The Odyssey II. (trans. Alexander Pope)]

I would NEVER, in a million years, have dared to write a book about location sites, for crying out loud, of a movie. Where does an idea like that come from? I don't know. I don't care. I'm just glad that the idea did come, and that it came to a person who has persevered in carrying the magic torch that continues, eight years now since the release of the movie, to touch so many folks around the globe.

I was blind-sided by the movie *The Last of the Mohicans* about six months after it had appeared in theaters. I say blind-sided, because one weekend my then husband had picked up a few movies at the local video rental store, and past experience catapulted my anticipation of the evening's fare back into the realm of last week's "Terrrrr-ific Movie" *Eraserhead*. Needless to say, my husband's tastes in movies NEVER paralleled mine. I remember saying, "A cowboy and Indian movie? What, no WWII airplanes or subs, no social deviants made out to be heroes?" so I dove into a book as the movie started. But shortly after the PLAY button had been selected, some captivating music

yanked my head up from my book, my eyes fixed on two gorgeous men running through the woods, and I don't think my mouth closed for the next, what, 114 minutes. WOW, who was that Daniel Day-Lewis guy? Never heard of him. Where on earth was this Shangri-La that this movie was filmed in? Why hadn't I heard about this movie from my friends? Surely everyone else was as blown away with it as I was. Oh, I almost forgot... my husband hated it, so I divorced him. Okay, there were a few other little reasons too, but THAT was the main one.

Over the course of that same weekend, I watched the movie several more times and even invited a few of my friends, with the same impeccable taste as my own, to join me. My friend Cecelia, who always likes what I tell her to like (just kidding), was aptly impressed and we talked about it for days. Then the conversations moved on to other things and LOTM was a memory...UNTIL ...one day while visiting my brother in Newland, NC, the family decided to pop over to Linville Falls for a hike. My brother said, "You know, part of that Last of the Mohicans movie was filmed on this trail," and I turned around to see the leaning tree over the trail out to the falls and my eyes about bugged outta my head! "Oh my God", I turned and tackled my brother and beckoned "What else do you know, tell me everything or I'll...I'll...". Naw, I didn't really do that (yeah, right). So he proceeded to tell me "Oh yeah, and that island in the lake near the fort scenes, that was filmed at Lake James. It's the same island as seen in the closing scene from the Hunt for Red October, too. And the cliff scenes were filmed at Chimney Rock Park and so were the Indian village scenes." Well, I couldn't get home fast enough to call Cecelia and make plans to go on our own search and discover mission of the movie location sites. I told her, "Hey, just tell people we're going camping, 'cause they'd think we'd lost our ever-lovin' minds if they knew what our real intentions were."

That was in 1993, and Cecelia and I had one of the most fun weekends of our lives. We got out the map, and circled all the places in the movie that we had been told about. We spent the first afternoon in Chimney Rock Park and then later that evening we kidnapped Bubba's Dad (of Bubba's General Store fame), the then current Chairman of the Chimney Rock Chamber of Commerce, and demanded directions to the Indian Village in exchange for his release. Actually, we just asked him politely, and he told us "Just follow the road behind the

store up the mountain...Oh heck, it's almost closing time. If you can wait a minute or two, I'll get you started, 'cause it's a little tricky at first. The land belongs to the Park, but folks go up there all the time." We waited outside for, uh, Bubba's Dad (Bubba is a dog by the way), and then headed up the hill. After a few turns, Bubba's Dad bid us farewell, and we continued up the hill, STRAIGHT up the hill. My God, what a climb! AT LEAST a sixty-degree grade. Did I mention I fish also? Anyway, we'd stop about every fifty feet to catch our breath (and have a cigarette) until finally Cecelia (not having been bitten "quite" so hard as I by the Mohican bug) said, "Okay, that's it for me," and plopped down on a rock (and lit another cigarette). The steep incline would not deter me however, so I continued on and agreed to signal if I found anything. I wouldn't have to wait long. Around the next bend in the road, I stepped into another world it seemed. There I was at precisely the point where Hawkeye and Cora turn to look back as they exit the Huron village. I just stood there for a long time as my eyes danced over the longhouses. I broke the sweet silence of that moment and whistled to my friend. We walked through the village, straight past the fire pit of Duncan's demise, and took a slight left turn to see Hickory Nut Falls across the gorge as it appeared over the Sachem's shoulder. We didn't talk for a long time. The feeling of that village is something I'll never forget.

We each took turns doing the obligatory "Duncan, being burned at the stake" pose for a picture. He had seemed so high up in the movie, yet the fire pit stakes seemed so short. We were able to enter the longhouses, only to be brought back to reality by the blue Lowe's stamp on the modern two-by-fours inside. We gathered some of the burnt wood from the stakes and each took a pole that leaned against the longhouses (I know, we were bad, bad, girls for doing that). We used what little bit of light was left and took a few more pictures and headed back down the mountain...in the dark. Coming off that mountain at night was a bit scary, but the hum in our heads from the day's adven-cha was well worth it.

Day two found us back at Linville Falls, where we took lots of pictures, and then on to Lake James, where we took lots and lots of pictures, and laughed when we realized the sequence and directions of the shots on the river (ahem...lake). They head toward the cove and then are paddling for their lives out on the lake, and then from the oth-



er side of the island, head for the same cove again, “Head for the river” Hawkeye cries. Oh well, works for me. Yep, we took some more pictures!

That was a great weekend and I tried to think of ways to find out about other locations in the movie (i.e., Cameron’s cabin, Massacre valley) but had no idea how to go about that, so I filed those thoughts away for another time.

In 1995, I purchased my first computer (I was a MAJOR newbie), got online via AOL and s-l-o-w-l-y taught myself the ins and outs of the Internet. Sometime later, while doing a search looking for more information on DDL, I came across the On the Trail of the Last of the Mohicans site. WOW, it was a Close Encounters of the Third Kind moment “We are not alone!” I enjoyed the site every chance I got, but was never brave enough to even visit the message board until much later. In the fall of 1997, I moved to Greenville, North Carolina to join the faculty of East Carolina University and had Internet access at my desk, not to mention a much faster machine and connection. I quickly added the site to my bookmarks, purchased the guidebook, and perused the multitude of offerings on the site whenever time permitted. In the summer of 1998, I timidly popped over to the message board. I was so totally depressed to find a “Gathering” of folks, just like me, taking place at that very moment. Talk about feeling like you’d missed the boat! Well, I couldn’t wait for everyone to get back to the board to hear how things went. I was even more depressed to hear what a wonderful time all had had. When mention of a second Gathering came to light, well...wild horses couldn’t keep me away.

### The MohicanLand Experience

“A principle fruit of friendship is the ease and discharge of the fullness and swellings of the heart which passions of all kinds do cause and induce.”

- Francis Bacon: Of Friendship

I visited the board almost everyday (usually just lurking), as I still do, and Cecelia and I made plans to attend the Second Annual Great Mohican Gathering. The anticipation was almost too much to bear. We

were finally going to meet all the neat folks on the board. There was not one ounce of hesitation about meeting “strangers from the Internet”, because things had gone so well the previous year and you just knew from “meeting” these folks on the board that it would be a memorable time. We had one of the best weekends of our lives. We concluded a chapter in 1999, which saw the addition of many very special new friends that continue to enrich our lives daily.

The personalities and characters that inhabit MohicanLand are such a diverse group of individuals who each bring their own important interests (for some passions), talents, and much loved qualities to what I think is the most congenial and unique cyber-community in the world. This is a place where you never have to worry about being scammed or “spammed” or “flamed” for having visited here. All visitors are treated with the utmost respect and dignity not only by the proprietors of the site, but by each other as well. The worst one can expect to encounter is a difference of opinion, which intelligent, mature people should welcome in broadening our understanding of the world’s history and thus ourselves and our future.

Some of the folks in MohicanLand are some of the funniest, sweetest, caring, giving, kindest, big-hearted folks I have had the privilege of knowing! Doctor Mary never fails to provide a chuckle, if not sidesplitting laughter, during times of intense discussion or times of merriment. Marcia Meara (MMMMarcia) and Eric Hurley (Soldier #2) are two of the sweetest, most giving individuals on this planet for their contributions to the annual assemblage of this international group of movie fans. Throughout the year, a lot of folks try to get together also for short visits, when geography permits, for strong lasting friendships are cultivated in this MohicanLand.

In the fall of 1999, the area where I live encountered the worst natural disaster in North Carolina history with the flooding from hurricanes Dennis and Floyd. I didn’t suffer any personal lasting damage, but many of my friends, family and co-workers did. It was a very sad time for us, but the outpouring of concern and well wishes from my MohicanLand friends was so uplifting and something I will never forget and I could never express how thankful I am for them. I received a call from Canada from Bea and Michael, on a particularly rough day during the flooding, and was so touched to think people from that far away,

whom I'd never met in person, would care enough to just say "How's it going?" It made the rest of that day much brighter.

## The Center of the MohicanLand Universe

"The price of greatness is responsibility"

- Winston Churchill

At the center of the MohicanLand universe I have found two of the most occultly intelligent, talented, and generous people I've ever met. Rich and Elaine Federici have regular busy lives, just like the rest of us, but never wane in their care and attentiveness of their website and thus the MohicanLand citizenry. I am constantly in awe of their tenacity and unflinching dedication to an endeavor that at times has been a source of heartache, a source of disappointment, and has led them to question whether or not the trials incurred in sustaining the site were worth moving forward. Thank God, for one reason or another, they have spurned on. All of us who frequent this site receive so much more than we are able to give back. Rich & Elaine have created an extensive masterpiece of a website which has grown from an homage to a great film into an honorarium to the time period surrounding the French and Indian War and Early America. So, in answering Churchill's charge, I am thankful to the Federicis for their great accomplishment and for accepting the responsibility of nurturing, entertaining, teaching, leading, and loving all of us Mohican Maniacs. We love you right back! ... *D.S.*

~~~~ Thanks for the contributions, folks! ~~~~

## MOHICAN GATHERINGS

... Note: 2004 was the last officially Mohican Press-sponsored Gathering. Stephanie "Smurf" Morrow has taken over the reigns in fine fashion. For more current Gathering rosters and info., please see: <http://www.mohicanpress.com/mo02000.html>

## 1998

**W**e came from Indiana & Illinois. We came from Florida, Texas, California and Oregon. We came from North Carolina and the Alaskan frontier. We came from across the Atlantic.

Some came only in Spirit. It didn't matter, for WE came, and we could almost FEEL the presence of those who had wanted to. We came together without anyone making a profit. We came without really knowing WHO it was we were coming to meet. We came to the unknown. Why? Why would virtual strangers, most of whom knew each other ONLY through that intangible realm known as Cyberspace, send their money to who-knows-where for T-Shirts, CRP Packages & movie tickets, pack their bags, and drive, or FLY, to some nonexistent place called MohicanLand? This is a question to ponder, much like "The meaning of life," but we'll save that for another time. We imagined a dream. We trusted one another. We put a plan together. We MADE it happen! The lure, the one common thread we knew we all shared, was "The Last of the Mohicans", in its broadest sense. The mystique of that film, of that cast, of those mountains, of even the novel, and certainly, the history was strong enough to make us put aside any fears and turn an unruly mob of merry Posters into an Event we will long remember. So many, though, who helped to foster that dream, and many others who will stumble upon it after the fact, were not able to attend. And so, as the ever-diligent Program Guide Editors pointed out in the GREAT Program Guide (and, it WAS!), we remember you, and dedicate this page to you (along with, of course, those who actually attended). It probably would never have happened without you! A mighty thanks to Rebecca, Victoria, Lynne, Joy, Neuromancer, Bill, Petra, Heather, Joe, She-Who-Tracks ..., Norm, Carmen, Katja, Major Bray, Mike, Gretchen, Kathy, Georgette, Kiki, Juanita, Morwenna, and, of course, the illustrious Dr. Mary! (Did I forget anyone?) This Gathering is behind us now ... It was a glorious time, but bittersweet, for it was SAD to have to say good-bye. You know?

1999

"D id you ever imagine this when you first started?" That question has been asked of us many times, regarding many different situations. The answer is always, "No." From gaining inspiration from a movie, to tracking down the film's locations, to laying out a guide booklet, to finally having it printed, to creating a web site through which to sell it, to seeing that web site expand far beyond our wildest dreams, to all the cast contacts, to all the fine contributions

from people we had never before known, to watching as a real live virtual community sprung up before our eyes and called itself Mohican-Land - the combined personality of which extends to The Gathering - to seeing the interactive part result, spontaneously, in a Great Mohican Gathering last year that was to become a lifelong memory for 38 lucky people ... An amazing odyssey. It's been creative, fun, challenging ... and endearing. We have, with the love and support of so many of you, overcome huge obstacles placed in our path. We have laughed till we've cried & cried till we laughed. How could another Great Mohican Gathering, in 1999, be anything but a disappointment, a letdown ... With the spontaneity gone, would it, COULD it, ever be a success? Or would the Trail finally run out?

The answer, as 52-some odd folks can readily attest to, is that the Trail can be seen disappearing well into the horizon. We have gathered again, we have trekked the trails that crisscross the beautiful greenery, the blue-tinted mountains, the rushing rivers, that make up Mohican-Land. We have had, for the SECOND time, a GREAT Mohican Gathering. All the camaraderie, the joking, the poking & retorts ... all the shared love of a movie and time ... all the creative juices that we can proudly say makes our Board a most very special place ... the joy, the scenery, the calm, the music, the wonderful personalities ... the totally incongruous mix of people that SOMEHOW fits together to make it all click ... it all came together a second time, and it worked! There is a magic about these Gatherings that comes from within each and every individual that attends. That's what truly makes it all viable. From the bottom of our hearts, we thank you all for making the 1999 Great Mohican Gathering such a grand success ...

It was nearly a year in the making. Almost immediately, following the '98 event, the planning began. The Gathering is NOT a one man, or woman, show. Ilse Maan, our Dutch Trader, took on the work of designing & producing a unique T-shirt to help commemorate the event. Jo Tishler, a hold over from last year's 3 Little Piggies, teamed with a fourth, Sarah Zentner, to create a beautiful & informative Program Guide to help to orient everyone to the proceedings. The Mighty Mohican Mama, Marcia Meara, set up our splendid Chimney Rock deal, including the infamous Bunkhouse, put together the welcome packets, and handled the organizing of the raffles, among other things. We heartily thank you all for making our job so much easier. It wouldn't have happened without you. [continued on page 224]



## 2000 ... A GATHERING OF SPIRITS

We could begin the telling of this tale in very much the same way the past two Gathering events were recounted. In fact, we could probably get away with using the same WORDS, practically verbatim ... Ahhh, but that would be cheating! And, in fact, this Gathering, in the year 2000, was very much different from previous events. It would seem, that all three Gatherings to date have had their own unique personalities, despite the obvious similarities. The first one was new ... and short. The second time around, we expanded to a third day, visited The River Walk, and had a very special guest in Eric Schweig. Then, the third rolled around. The second had been pulled off to near perfection. Could it be matched? Well, the sign up list grew ... and grew ... and despite a last week shuffling of attendees due to cancellations, near cancellations, and last-minute sign-ons, the roster was at an all-time high. Amongst those putting The Gathering together, this was a cause of some trepidation. How in the world would we handle a group of 80, far surpassing either of the past two Gatherings - in fact, nearly equaling both of them COMBINED - on the trails that lead through Mohicanland? How would a 30 or 40 vehicle caravan ever stay together through the twists & turns of Mohicanland's back roads? And then, even though there were many returnees from the previous groups, there were even MORE newcomers! Would we jell? Would the camaraderie & friendships; the good-humor & good-will still be center stage? Or, instead, would it simply deteriorate into a "tour" of film locations?

We're glad you asked!

So, we gathered. Most folks began congregating in the vicinity of Bear Den Campground, on the Blue Ridge Parkway, late Thursday afternoon ... there were some who couldn't make it till late Friday, or early Saturday, and so joined up with us at Biltmore Estate in Asheville. It was great to see the early arrivals. Great to have a chance to once again say a warm hello as we exchanged hugs. There's a magical sense of anticipation as these things come together ... a journey into MohicanLand comes to life! No WWWBoard this; it's the real thing! Real people with real faces, bearing real smiles ... real voices ... real sites, even a REAL Trading Post!

It was a bizarre beginning ... for us ... Two days before The Gathering was to begin, hackers struck the Web Site rendering the Board useless. No time to worry or fix ... for a baby was soon to enter the world. At 4AM on the 22nd, the day BEFORE the Gathering was to begin, Elaine gave birth to a baby boy, Michael Andre, thus dashing her hopes of attending the bash at Biltmore. Amidst the frustration & anger brought on by Internet terrorism, intermingled with the sheer euphoria of having brought a new spirit into the world, overcome with the punchiness derived from sleep deprivation, all joining the usual pre-Gathering anxiety & jitters, I sped along the backwoods roads of western North Carolina ... desperately racing dawn's approach to the Greenknob on Friday morning. Ever so slightly, the eastern horizon was beginning to glow as I pulled into the parking area where only Sarah & Mark Zentner had yet arrived. It was perhaps 5:40AM, barely light enough to see one another ... the 2000 Gathering was underway. Came to find that we weren't the only ones to experience setbacks prior to the beginning. Gatherer after Gatherer told their tale of misstep & mishap as they prepared or were en route. The sun rose. The masterpiece was painted in the morning sky. We prepared to leave. Alas, the mayhem continued. Miss Marcia had locked the keys in her rented pick-up!

## 2001 ... A MOHICANS ODYSSEY

In a darkened theater, some 90, or more, pairs of eyes are fixed on their duty ... the screen in front of them. On the horizon, for the tomorrow, is a hike along the Cliff Trail of Chimney Rock Park, but there it is, larger than life, before us right now. Uncas has been killed. One of the most poignant moments of a stirring film is unfolding. A lifeless lover has been tossed from the cliff by a ruthless villain. The remaining partner, dazed and confused by the horrors of frontier warfare, has come to grips with her ever downward spiraling situation and has, finally, taken control. She will plunge over the cliff to join Uncas. That villain, Magua, startled by this development, beckons Alice to come back ...

[voice from the theater] "I'm coming honey!"

Funny, I don't remember THAT particular line ... I'll have to go back and check the script.

The film rolls on ... a father violently reaps his revenge. Yes, Chingachgook, father of Uncas, has caught up with the Huron war party and stands face to face with his adversary ... Magua. A brief, but brutal, struggle ensues and Magua collapses, broken & dead, on the rock, as Hickory Nut Falls gushes by. His head smashes to the ground, blood gurgling at his mouth. The audience cheers. After all, he IS the villain!

"Thank you, very much!"

Huh? Surely, THAT line's not in the film! No, it's not. But on this night, it is there, clear as day. It is the voice of "Magua," emanating from right there in the center of the theater, come to life. We found we really were watching the film with Wes Studi ...

... And that's the kind of Gathering this was!

## 2002 ... 10 YEARS OF MOHICANS

**I** imagine ... imagine you are in a company of perhaps 80-100 soldiers. You are sent into battle with comrades you have trained with, laughed with, cried with. Your company suffers very heavy casualties. The next time you muster up, there are perhaps only 50% of you left. You look around. Many friends are gone. Imagine ...

I felt very much like that as I planned & prepared for this Gathering. I wasn't sure I was doing the right thing; wasn't sure I even wanted to proceed. Yet, something kept driving me, and though I was looking forward to "getting it over with" more than anything else, I proceeded forward into what I felt was the unknown. Certainly, I was looking forward to seeing some of the familiar faces I've come to know & love, and I definitely felt that I owed it to the "newbies" to show them a good time, but other parts of me felt it probably would have been better to just let it lay, with the Wes Studi-themed Gathering 4 the Grand Finale of it all! The events of September 11, 2001 also played a part ... a large part ... in the dismal outlook. It took months for me to somewhat shake the horrible feelings of that day and begin to feel like a Mohican Gathering might even remotely seem appropriate. Those feelings aside, I believe that once committed, stay the course ... and so the Great Mo-

hican Gathering of 2002, with much assistance from fellow Mohican-ites, was allowed to be born.

As the time drew nearer, I had flashes of excitement, periods of the blahs ... no matter how hard I tried to just go with the flow & let it be whatever it would turn out to be, it kept coming back to, "well, maybe I shouldn't be doing this." It seemed, too, that Murphy's Law was settling in, and just about everything that could go wrong did - delays, unexpected expenses, key cancellations - and all that compounded the gloomy feelings. In one way, it all very much felt like the first Gathering in 1998 - so much was unknown - yet for me it was lacking in that overall sense of euphoric excitement. And it all - or, mostly all - boiled down to so many missing faces as the root cause! It would have been oh-so-very-easy to allow the past dispute & ugliness to pervade & let the Great Mohican Gatherings die a rather unseemly death ... tombstone & all ... ala the old Mohican WWW Board. But like the old Mohican WWW Board, which has found rejuvenating life & exuberance in a new, revamped format ... well, I'll let the Gathering of 2002 tell its own story ... but, before I do, some key moments & unknowing inspirers:

Diane Bunch writing an innocent E-mail to me where the unspoiled excitement of a soon-to-be new Gatherer allowed the freshness & enthusiasm of the Gatherings to once again seem possible to attain

Jayne Langan stepping forward as a worthy successor to head up Ariel's Auction, allowing the Gathering to remain something more than simply a good time

Ann Colby & her never-dying positive outlook

Kate Penman rejoining the cause & helping to push for participation in Ariel's Auction with an impassioned plea

So, I went on down to the Geneva, in Chimney Rock Village, on Wednesday evening, June 19, carrying with me much consternation, trepidation, a little hope, and a brand-new Gatherer, Ariel Segal who I had just picked up at the Greyhound terminal in Asheville. The hope began to swell, and the fears to subside, as we pulled into Hickory Nut Gorge on a early summer's late afternoon. The sun drenched cliffs were a welcome, and invigorating sight, the familiar feel of The Gather-

ing Place at the Geneva, filling with raffle items of all descriptions, not to mention folks I really cared about, all began to jell, beginning to create that special mix of Gathering magic that has been the Gathering's trademark.

I returned home that night feeling a lot better about things, and then ..

Well, we'll see ...

## LIST OF SOME WHO HAVE GATHERED - 1998 - 2002:

*Mary Bjork*  
*Chris Boone*  
*Bertha Boucher*  
*Martha Boucher*  
*Kathie Branson*  
*Adrienne Brown*  
*Kathleen Broderick*  
*Diane Bunch*  
*Dar Burns*  
*Caitlin Capps*  
*Jeff Capps*  
*Dan Carroll*  
*Rita Carroll*  
*Gayle Clark*  
*Chris Cline*  
*Ann Colby*  
*Glenn Daniel*  
*Lynn Daniel*  
*Donna Deslauriers*  
*Amanda Doyle*  
*Barbara Doyle*  
*Claudia Doorak*



Woody Dvorack  
Laura Egnert  
John Evans  
Kelli Evans  
Linda Evans  
Ariana Farfan  
Melody Farfan  
Elaine Federici  
Rich Federici  
Mike Fitzgerald  
Mary Garland  
Jill Gibbs  
Stan Golden  
Teri Golden  
Adele Grandon  
Ros Haddon  
Dave Hagenbuch  
Mark Hagenbuch  
Cherie Harbison  
Marc Harbison  
John Harkins  
Debbie Ho  
Barby Holder  
Debra Holland  
Susan Housck  
Jennifer Huey  
Dan Huffman  
Yolanda Huffman  
Eric Hurley

Sharon Cagle Hurley  
Christina Knauss  
Karen Kohles  
Vincent Kong  
Rob Kruijs  
Patty Kuipers  
Joan Lambert  
John Lambert  
Jayne Langan  
William MacLeod  
Ilse Maan  
Karin McCormack  
Stephanie McCulloch  
Emily McGowan  
Kevin McGowan  
Marcia Meara  
Sarah Melcher  
Cassidy Menard  
Cindy Menard  
Clabert Menard  
Nancy Michaelssen  
Dane Miller  
Maile Miller  
Jack Minchey  
Stacia Minchey  
Dennis Morgan  
Eileen Morgan  
Rachel Morgan  
Scott Morgan  
Betty Nichols  
Sandy Noykoff

Carol O'Conner  
Joyce Outlaw  
Ellen Parker  
Alma Parrish  
Penny Parrish  
Tabitha Pate  
Kate Penman  
Jay Propst  
Sherry Probst  
Beth Pukanecz  
Darla Purcel  
Dave Purcel  
Patrick Quinn  
Steve Ray  
Candice Rease  
Libby Rease  
Ayesha Rognlie  
Collin Rognlie  
Summer Rognlie  
Bill Rooks  
Myrth Sagrada  
Jo Sampson  
Stephanie Sampson  
Mac Schaeffer  
Cecelia Scott  
Connie Scott  
Ariel Segal  
Gwen Shipley  
Len Shipley  
Mike Slease  
Bryony Smith

*Karen Stangler  
Phil Stangler  
Belinda Starnes  
Joe Starnes  
Dana Steckler  
Diana Strickland  
Jordan Strickland  
Christie Sylvester  
Barrett Taylor  
Jo Tishler  
Dale Wasson  
Ann Weldon  
Kathy Whitney  
Mark Whitney  
Nathan Whitney  
Cindy Williams  
Claude Williams  
Fitz Williams  
Theresa Williams  
Karen Williamson  
Scottie Willis  
Mark Zentner  
Sarah Zentner*

Others - Sherry & Doug, Steve, Jeanette, Natasha & her friends - all from '98. In '99 there were Don & Cherie; in '01, there was the guy who had the FWH bricks ... And so on! Dang!

There were more in 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010 - will there be more still? - and to those whose names I have forgotten, however temporarily, my sincere apologies. You all made it happen!

## *Fort William Henry, the Siege & Massacre*

Lake George was wilderness. It was the void between two encroaching European frontiers. Just a few miles north of the lake, stood Fort Carillon, the French fortress, designed to guard the area north from any English advance into Canada. Several miles south and east of the lake stood Fort Edward, on the Hudson, the northern terminus of the English foray into this forested area. Between the two stood the 26 mile long Lake George.

Named Lac Du St. Sacrement by the French, the place was renamed Lake George by William Johnson in 1755, shortly before he had defeated a French force there in the Battle of Lake George, to leave no doubt as to English sovereignty in the area. A road, constructed to link Fort Edward to the lake, now needed protection. In addition, a fort at this site could prove to be a launching and resupplying point for assaults against the French outposts and beyond. Thus was born Fort William Henry, designed and situated by Captain William Eyre along with Johnson.

On June 7, 1756 General Daniel Webb arrived to assume command of the fort and lead the upcoming planned offensive. At both ends of the lake, French and English garrisons were increased, entrenchments built, and preparations undergone. Over the course of the next year, a series of raids, counter-raids, and scouting missions occurred leading to some casualties and gathered intelligence.

It soon became apparent that Fort William Henry was becoming a thorn in the side of New France. General Marquis de Montcalm, in command at Fort Carillon, decided to invest and reduce the log structure at the south end of the Lake. Departing from his post on Lake Champlain, Montcalm led a force of 6 French Regular battalions consisting of 2570 soldiers. Augmented by an almost equal number of Canadian militia, 300 volunteers, along with a large contingent of



invaluable Indian allies - between 1500 & 1800 from a large number of tribes - this French force became almost invincible, in this situation, by the presence of 200 men of the artillery units firing their 36 cannon and four mortars.

By contrast, the garrison at Fort William Henry, under the able leadership of Lt. Colonel George Monro - once General Webb decided to turn tail and survey matters from Fort Edward - had a total, as the siege began, of 2372 men. Only a maximum of 500 could man the fort. The remainder settled into an entrenched camp just east of the fort. No preparations were undertaken to resist French attempts to make landings on the shore. The English merely waited. Expecting the attack to come from the west - the east side being swampy and fortified by the camp - Monro had the heaviest of the artillery pieces along the west wall. And so it was to be ...

Montcalm chose the northwest bastion to bear the brunt of the artillery barrage he planned. Arriving during the night of August 2-3, 1757, he immediately set to work building a road and then a series of entrenchments to inch ever-closer to the fort walls. Meanwhile, Indian and militia marksmen positioned themselves between the entrenched camp and Fort Edward, straddling the road, and harassed the beleaguered British.

As the days went on, the French artillery moved closer, the British casualties mounted, and hope of reinforcement continued to dwindle. Couriers were routinely dispatched between the British forts, often times being intercepted by the French or their Indian allies. One such message, from Webb, encouraged surrender, as at the time, he felt he could not aid Monro. On August 7, Montcalm ordered his aid-de-camp, Captain Bougainville, forward under a flag of truce to make this intercepted letter known to the garrison. By the next morning, the French trenches were a mere 250 yards outside the fort wall. Within the fort, ammunition was low, spirits were lower. There was little hope.

And so, just after dawn on the 9th of August, following a conference of the fort's officers, a flag of truce was visible flying over Fort William Henry. Montcalm offered generous terms, even for the typically gentlemanly terms of the day ... the entire garrison would be allowed to march off in military parade, colors flying, to Fort Edward. A cannon

would even be allowed to accompany the procession. In return, the English would not bear arms against France for the next 18 months. No ammunition would be granted, and the sick and wounded would be returned when well. One British officer would remain as hostage, until the French escort attached to the retreating column, returned safely from Fort Edward. In European terms, all was well. The paid French soldiers had earned their victory. Once burned, there would no longer be a British post on the shores of Lake George. The British, though defeated, had retained their honor. The siege of Fort William Henry was over.

The British evacuated the fort, leaving about 70 sick and wounded to the care of the French. Almost immediately, Indians entered to plunder - their form of payment - what baggage the British had left behind. Cries and screams for help were heard outside the fort. A missionary, Pere Roubaud says of one particular warrior, "[he] carried in his hand a human head, from which trickled streams of blood, and which he displayed as the most splendid prize that he could have secured." Accounts vary, but somewhere between four and seventeen were killed within the fort. In light of upcoming events, it is reasonable to assume that they perhaps resisted. French troops soon restored order.

The tribes were restless. They wanted booty. It was their only reward. Clothing, arms, ammunition, supplies, rum ... many felt deprived. They lingered. Tensions mounted. A proposed march from the entrenched camp to Fort Edward was postponed, at Montcalm's suggestion, until the following morning, as hostile Indians gathered in the vicinity. They pestered the soldiers, wanting their baggage. Montcalm posted French guards. It was a long, tension-filled day and night. Two-thirds of the Indians were not in their camps.

At dawn's light on August 10th, the English assembled by companies, Monro on horseback, and attempted to leave from the entrenched camp. A French escort of 200 was on the scene. When the last British regiment had left, Indians fell upon 17 helpless wounded left behind in huts. They were scalped and killed. At the rear of the column was a Massachusetts regiment, some New Hampshire militia, and camp followers. The Indians next fell upon them. "... than the savages fell upon

the rear killing and scalping." A "hell whoop" was heard. " ... the Indians pursued tearing the Children from their Mothers Bosoms and their mothers from their Husbands, then Singling out the men and Carrying them in the woods and killing a great many whom we say lying on the road side." Not surprisingly, despite a halt being ordered, many fled, these images indelibly stamped upon their minds. Hundreds, up to 1500, were reported killed by those panic-stricken souls arriving at Fort Edward. It is easy to imagine it as so. The column was unarmed. The Indians fully armed. Eyewitnesses claimed this "slaughter" went on for "three hours". Accounts were typified by this:

*this Day when they Came to march the Savage Indians Came upon them and Stript them of their Packs and Cloths and the most of their Arms then they Pickt out the negrows Melatows and Indians and Dragd them Away and we Know not what is Become of them then they fell to killing of our men At A most Dredfull manner they Ravesht the women and then Put them to the Slaughter young Children of the Regular forces had their Brains Dasht out Against the Stones and trees*

It is easy to visualize nearly the entire column being slaughtered under these circumstances, much like what one sees in the movie, *The Last of the Mohicans*. How could it be otherwise? 1600 armed, frenzied warriors falling upon a defenseless, panicked column of some 2400 (including women & children) for nearly three hours. It certainly is very easy to imagine. In reality, however, it just didn't happen. Col. Monro, speaking of his regular troops, gave 129 killed and wounded - including the siege - as his estimates. Regarding the militia, he says, "No Regular Accot Could be got from the Provincials but their Numbers Kill'd Could not be Less than Four Officers & about 40 Men. And very near as many Men Wounded." Roubard stated killed could number "hardly more than forty or fifty." Another man stated, "Near Thirty Carcasses, however, were actually seen ..." There is no doubt some killing occurred, but, by and large, the picture was one of Indians taking, from terrified soldiers, baggage and clothing they felt was due them. It was a scene of pawing, grabbing, poking & touching. When a soldier resisted stiffly, he may have been knocked down, beaten, scalped or killed. Indians had learned from Oswego that a soldier was worth more alive than dead. The French would pay handsomely for the return of prisoners. So, as the soldiers broke and ran, the Indians pursued. They gathered booty, and collected prisoners. It was undoubtedly a scene of

utter pandemonium and terror, but the "massacre" as film and some historians have presented it, just never did occur. At some point, the French did help restore some semblance of order. Though hundreds streamed in well before, the remnants of the column, including Col. George Monro, did arrive at Fort Edward, under French guard, on August 14.

According to Ian K. Steele's *Betrayals*, the most recent and exhaustive study on the subject, of the 2308 soldiers who left Fort William Henry on August 9, 1783 had shown up at Fort Edward by August 31, an additional 217 appearing by year's end. Considering the fact that only 500, including "wives, servants, & sutlers" arrived with Monro, it is obvious that many fled into the woods to make their way alone or in parties over the next weeks. Among those captured, most were paroled at some point. By the new year, only 308 were considered killed or missing. It seems reasonable to assume that of these, many were those who fled but never, for one reason or another, went to Fort Edward. Again, according to Steele's study, the maximum number killed on August 10 "including those who happily or unhappily lived the rest of their lives in the villages and forests of New France's Indian allies, could not have numbered more than 184." His minimum figure is 69.

Fort William Henry's impact on history had been accomplished. The French burned the fort. Today, a reconstruction stands where the original once stood. There is a marker on the site of the entrenched camp, and several other markers and monuments nearby. The ruins of a portion of Fort George, built a couple of years later near where Fort William Henry stood, can still be found. Fort Edward is marked merely by a couple of blue signs. Fortunately, there is excavation work being done in the vicinity, and this may someday change. Fort Carillon (Ticonderoga) stands proudly today, as it did nearly 250 years ago, as a silent reminder to all that once took place.

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<http://www.fwhmuseum.com/>

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*"In time Magua became blood-brother to Mohawk to become free. In his heart he always was Huron. And his heart will be whole again on the day when the Grey Hair and all his seed are dead!"*

## The Wes Studi Interview

**T**his interview with Wes Studi was conducted on May 8, 1999. We've always felt that Wes' performance in *The Last of the Mohicans* was one of the very strongest, if not THE strongest, of the film. After interviewing the man, we now know why. He has a very firm grasp on what it is he is trying to accomplish, whether it be the depth of emotions his character feels, or the overall story a film is seeking to put forth. He understands and incorporates the complete picture and has the ability to empathize with and project the complexities of the human condition. Talented on so many levels, Wes Studi is as personable as he is gifted.

We wish to thank Mr. Studi for his time and for freely offering his insights on many, many issues. He is a well-balanced, reasonable, farsighted individual. For us it was a pleasure. He is a pleasant, gracious, fascinating person.

Mohican Press: Hello, Wes. How are you?

Wes Studi: I'm good! And yourself?

MP: Fine, thank you. Are you ready?

WS: Yeah.

MP: Let's start with your background. Where and when were you born? Could you tell us a little about that?

WS: Okay. Well, I was born in northeastern Oklahoma, to a totally Cherokee family ... that would be the language of the day, first lan-

guage .... my first language is Cherokee. I was born in what is called a hollow in Oklahoma. I don't know if you're familiar with ... where are you from?

MP: New York.

WS: Oh, you're from New York! Okay, they're like more like arroyos ... valleys. In any case, this one just happened to be called Nofire Hollow, just for the fact that the larger part of the area was made up of my mother's family ... which is NOFIRE ... northeastern Oklahoma. Between Tahlequah, which is the capitol of the Cherokee Nation, and Stilwell. It's an area that's populated by Cherokees. That was in 1946.

MP: Oh, we had you down as being born in 1947.

WS: Well, we're not really sure. {Laughs}

MP: Cherokee was your first language & English came along later. Is that correct?

WS: That's right.

MP: Would that have been when you went to school?

WS: Yeah.

MP: Do you have brothers or sisters?

WS: I have three ... had three brothers. I have two brothers now.

MP: You attended the Chilocco Boarding school?

WS: Yes. I only attended High School there.

MP: At the Red Earth Festival in '98 you related a story about your vocational teacher's advice. "One man who was my vocational teacher told me and the whole class, 'When you leave this school, you'll go out into the world, and you might as well settle with the idea that you're going to be some kind of worker, and a low-paid one at that. This is



about all you can expect out there in life, so get good at this.” You added, “I think I lived in the shadow of that statement for years.”

WS: Yeah. I think that stayed with me for years. Sure. He was an influential part of ... you know, older people there ... whether we liked what we heard or not ... and yeah, I think that he was probably right. This was 1960 somewhat and I think it was probably true at that time. So ... luckily, things change.

MP: So, his statement would have been representative of the expectations, especially for Indian youth, at that time and place? An honest statement?

WS: Yes, I think so. It was expectations that were grounded in reality.

MP: How did you take that statement and turn it into something positive? You obviously climbed far above that.

WS: Well, no, I more or less thought this was the case and that’s the kind of things that I did for a large part of my younger life. It wasn’t until a number of years later ... I was late thirties or thereabouts before I even attempted anything that was ... something I was capable of.

MP: You said you attended Chilocco only for High School. During the grade school years, did you attend a local school?

WS: Actually I went to a number of local schools. My father had also gone to Chilocco and that was one of the reasons I wanted to go to school there ... was that he had gone there ... You know, that was part of it, like ‘my son’ ... it was a big part of wanting to go ... He had worked ... well, he had learned ... what he studied there was agriculture. He came out of high school there and about the best type of job he could find was as a hand. Not even a foreman, maybe a foreman’s assistant. That was the best type of job that was available from that training. He knew a LOT about planting and animal husbandry. So ... the best job he could find was as a ranch hand. But we moved around to a lot of ranches where he worked so I went to a lot of different public schools.

MP: Chilocco was a boarding school, right?

WS: Yeah, it's closed now.

MP: You said it's closed. We've read there was a drug treatment facility on the site of the school.

WS: Yeah, you see it's owned by about five different small tribes in northern Oklahoma and they lease it to the Scientologists who put in one of their drug treatment facilities, or something like that ... kind of an off limits type of a place ... not a place you want to go visit a lot, but I went there in 1980 when the school was actually closed ... it was a government school.

MP: It was a government school on land that was owned by the five tribes?

WS: It was leased, the land itself ... the land itself was leased by the government ... or, taken over by the government actually, for a boarding school. The area around it ... a lot of the area around it is actually owned by the Cherokee Nation but it's mainly underdeveloped farmland. So, when the school closed, the tribes took over the building ... that area of it and the Cherokee Nation took over parts.

MP: Did you have good or bad experiences at Chilocco?

WS: I had a bit of both. Good and bad.

MP: What about exposure to music and the arts while there; was that something you were exposed to?

WS: Yeah! Actually, the first couple of years there I played in the band. They had a music program and a marching band. I tried out a trumpet, then I played a clarinet. I wound up on a bass clarinet ... you know, at the time it was kind of odd because I was small during most of my time at high school and a bass clarinet is kind of a tall, long instrument ... maybe three feet tall. But, anyway, I used to march in the band with the bass clarinet for the Chilocco Braves, I think they were called.

MP: What about exposure to arts through your family? You have obvious talents in many artistic fields - was this a part of your childhood?

WS: Well, other than the band, not really. No, I actually didn't take part in that much ... in artistic endeavors other than the music, which I stopped after awhile ... Then after school, I more or less dropped it. I didn't really pick up on it again until after I decided to become an actor.

MP: When did you come to that point?

WS: About '81.

MP: That was with theatre?

WS: Yeah.

MP: We understand you were instrumental in creating a Cherokee newspaper.

WS: Yes, that was in the '70s. I had been living in Tulsa sometime after I had left high school. ... Oh, about '73 or thereabouts, I went back to live in Tahlequah. I began to work with the Cherokee Nation and it was kind of a momentous time for the tribal government then. It was understanding how to sort of flex its political muscle ... using ... developing from within, more or less ... a new constitution was even worked on and at the time the arm of the government had wanted to get the word out about the new constitution and the direction that the Cherokee Nation intended to go in ... the consent of the people was needed so a number of us had studied a bit of journalism ... the study was made up of actually working at it ... actually putting one together ... and we more or less put together what is now The Cherokee Advocate.

{Note: The Cherokee Nation created their own system of government in 1820, modeled after the U.S. Democratic Republic, in which the people elect a principal chief, a senate, and a house of representatives. In 1827, the Nation incorporated and drafted the Cherokee constitution.}

MP: And it's still in print?

WS: Yes.

MP: Did you write articles for The Advocate?

WS: I wrote articles as a reporter as well I had a column called Anyway, James which actually was sort of a like a paper editorial ... they didn't mind for quite awhile but I became, as time went on, sort of ... in my mind I was playing devil's advocate. You know? And so, I was, many times critical of tribal government's decisions and attitudes toward mainly the full blood communities, which had sort of a negative view of the tribal government. So my article, my column Anyway, James began to lean sort of ... anti-government. So, that drove my decision that the Cherokee Nation and I should part company.

MP: Why was it called Anyway, James?

WS: 'Anyway' - you know, at the time ... you know how people say "it's like this, it's like that"? Well, at the time people were saying "anyway" ... just something to tie a sentence together. Anyway! So, Anyway, James it was called.

MP: And your column was looked upon as a liability?

WS: We looked upon it as ... I wasn't helping the government go in the direction they wanted to move and vice versa ... and I was trying to speak my mind, as well as speak for others who were ... well, it was just a political difference.

MP: Was the paper printed in Cherokee or in English?

WS: Printed in English mainly. There were parts of it, now and then, written in syllabary.

{Note: The Cherokee syllabary is an 85 character script invented in 1825 by Sequoya. The first Indian newspaper was published in 1828 - the Cherokee Phoenix.}

MP: This was in the '70s?

WS: Yes, it was in the '70s.

MP: You are also a Vietnam War vet?

WS: Yes.

MP: Was there anything particularly memorable that you experienced that really stuck with you?

WS: Yeah. I've told this story before ... I served with the 9th Division in the Delta area of South Vietnam and ... {Laughs} Actually, I remember a number of things, but one thing that has stayed with me is that I think government policy sort of really entailed a lot of things ... a very good memory, as well, because, at one time ... First of all, there were only three of us, in my entire company, that were Native American. One day, the three of us found out that, for no particular reason, we had the day off. And everybody else, more or less, had gone off on this mission to do something ... I don't know, whatever it was that they told us, really, "You guys just go and take the day off." We found out the next day what the mission had been. It was to go in and relocate an entire small town. A village, I guess you'd call it, a small village, but ... They went in with very long helicopters ... I forget what you call them ... with this huge net, spread them out, and told the entire village to put all their belongings in there. So they loaded up and moved them all to a different area and told them this was their home now. The only thing that I can of course equate to that was the fact of the removal that we, as Cherokees had... and these other guys probably had similar things as well ... So, I figure that the Army and the U. S. Government, either by mistake or a darn good memory, gave us the day off. Make sense to you?

MP: I don't know if the army is that sensitive, but it's almost like they felt that was something you wouldn't be able to do.

WS: Ahhh, sensitive is not ... I think it's a matter of, you know ... Seeing something like that might give people problems ... anyway ..

MP: So, what's your take on that? Did they think you might rebel against that?

WS: That's the only thing I could figure. Rebel, or we wouldn't be of any help to them ... I think I could see their reasoning on that. Not that I agree. These things keep happening over & over.

MP: So, you got out of the army ... what did you do for a living then?

WS: {Laughs} After the army, I drifted around for a couple of years. Did practically nothing, other than drifting around and surviving. You know, I didn't want to live at home. I didn't want to go out and really do anything either ... like getting a job ... so sedentary. So, I just sort of floated around for a couple of years and visited my old Vietnam buddies ... hitchhiked around .... I didn't want to think about anything ... just traveled around ... til I kind of 'come to' ... and, well, it was a difficult re-entry into the states at the time. There was such hostility. Such hostility and demonization going on toward people who had been there and come back. People on the right said; "Good boy, That's a good, good boy. Now go get yourself a job." and all that. Then there were the people on the left saying "baby killer" or "you're sick, you're addicted" or whatever. I wasn't ... might as well have been. So it wasn't a comfortable re-entry into the states like I had hoped it'd be because it wasn't cheers there to balance things at all ... and I just wanted to go home. {Laughs} And I came back with the hope that I'd, you know ...

MP: What year was that?

WS: '69. It was '69 when I came back. Actually, what happened was we had ... we flew back, a really great plane ... had some cool people ... a 747 plane, you know ... we got back and we, more or less, had to be ushered ... see, there were crowds around the airport then and they were all pulling soldiers who had come back, you know, so they began sneaking soldiers back in so ... no one knew exactly ... but we'd get off a plane and into the airport, down a tunnel and on to a waiting bus boarding south. They had shipped us all a bunch of ... somehow they gave us civilian clothes in which to go home in. Anyway, that was the homecoming.

MP: Those were some days.

WS: You remember those days?



MP: Oh yeah. So, you came back and drifted around a bit ...

WS: Yeah. Well then after that I found out the merits of the G.I. Bill. So I went to Junior College in Tulsa, Oklahoma for a couple of years and then I went on to Tahlequah and went to the university there for a couple of years. Then I dropped out and went to work for the Cherokee Nation. Or, somewhere in between I started to ... no, no, what happened was after the Junior College in Tulsa I got involved with the American Indian Movement and the takeover of the Pentagon and a number of things. And then after that, I went to Tahlequah University and at the University I started to work for the Cherokee Nation in the hope that I could make a difference in people's lives.

MP: You were at Wounded Knee in '73?

WS: Yeah.

MP: And the Trail Of Broken Treaties in '72?

WS: Yes.

MP: You met Russell Means at that time?

WS: Yes, that's when I first met him.

MP: What would you say was the greatest accomplishment or result of those struggles?

WS: I think the attitude of young people changed in the 1970's ... people who were in a position of learning, they developed ... they were already developed in their life and now they were seeing the problems, you know ... and many twenty-four year olds were actually leading the charge for the struggles of what was going on in tribal governments. Going to court, for instance, or getting involved in land rights, you know? .... A lot of young people had just woke up to the injustices that had been more or less accepted as fact to that point. The movement was instrumental in waking up a lot of Native Americans to the fact that ... they began to control their own lives. I think it was very, very momentous and it opened up a lot of avenues of litigation which led on to

the fact that tribes came to assist themselves ... like with Bingo, to begin with, on to what we have now which is casinos. A chance to generate their own money.

MP: Okay, correct this if it's wrong but it seems that a lot of people who participated in much of that were young people who had been raised away from their cultural roots. Maybe that's a misperception but if you agree with that assessment, why do you think that was? Was it a healing process or cultural re-connection?

WS: I think it was a combination of education and ... as I remember it, materials were coming from almost everywhere. The Ford Foundation and other liberal organizations were beginning to dig up information about a really dishonest government that we'd been living with for a long time. This was at the college ... you know, the '70s protest years, a lot of things were happening ... the Black Panther movement, all the social unrest going on and I think it added to the Native situation as well. But I think it was finding out how our people had been able to stay alive ... and survive over the years and just the things that they had to overcome ... I think it just really pissed a lot of people off. Then we all began to surface and it gave us all a sense of purpose and a sense of belonging to a group of people who wanted to accomplish something. A lot of the people who had been, as you say, away from the culture, were among the first to realize this and at least got the ball rolling. It would have come as a great support from traditional Indians, ... well, as the Trail Of Broken Treaties more or less showed, there were people from every walk of life involved who realized ... indeed, 'there's something about this ... let's not sit back and wait for the government to come out and help because nothing changes' ... Yeah, I think that was one of the big waking up points. And I don't know that a large population of American Indians realize what kind of impact it really did have.

MP: The Indian protest that took place during The Last Of The Mohicans ... what were your feelings on that?

WS: Well, I think it was entirely up to those guys involved to do that. It was a matter of ... it was a business negotiation when it comes down to it. Because extras everywhere are treated pretty much like that, you know? Plus, they're not paid that well and they more or less have to

fend for themselves. That's just the nature of the business but they were able to stand up and say 'we don't want any more of this' and they took it up with management and they won some concessions.

MP: Going back for a minute; when you had gone to the university, were you at that time instructing people in the Cherokee language?

WS: Oh yeah.

MP: Was it primarily younger people who didn't speak the language or was it a whole lot of different people?

WS: It was a bit of both. I had young people from about middle school to adults. And I had classes in the University as well. What I did was teach not only speech but also the syllabary, so some people who came to my class were already speakers ... they came for the syllabary. Others weren't speakers so I used syllabary as a means of a visual aid to teach the sounds.

MP: Was this in Tahlequah?

WS: Yes.

MP: Regarding acting; in another interview you said that you do everything late in life and you enjoy the freedom and discipline acting offers. How did you get involved in this field and how old were you?

WS: What did I say?

MP: That you do everything late in life ...

WS: {Laughs} Well, not everything.

MP: And the freedom & discipline?

WS: You have to know your parameters.

MP: How did you first get into acting?

WS: Well, I got into community theatre sort of on a lark. I was looking for something else to do. I had been divorced back in the Tahlequah area and I went back to the Tulsa area and some friends had established a theatre company and asked if I wanted to go to some workshops. I had nothing to do so I did. I liked it then but didn't take it serious until I had worked on a couple of projects ... It was two projects I had worked on and it wasn't until then that I would actually admit to myself that I wanted to be an actor.

MP: Tell us about your play Coyote Chews His Own Tale.

WS: Oh yeah. Coyote Chews His Own Tale ... that's T-A-L-E ... that was after I had moved to L.A. I had been there for a couple of years and by that time I had done Pow Wow Highway and some television and a couple of movies. It was pretty hard to live in L.A. so my girlfriend and I decided 'well, why don't we try to create something here ourselves?' ... So we put together a one man stage show called Coyote Chews His Own Tale which is really a combination of a number of coyote stories ... and Wes Studi, of course, was Coyote and he had a long sabbatical back to earth where he saw the humans were taking advantage of his teachings, and wisdom and truth so he had to chew them out and set them straight again. It was aimed towards psychology and how we treat one another, you know ... the human relations and how they had strayed from the original lessons that Coyote left them. I still have the rock that was part of the show. It amazes me that I still have the rock here in my yard.

MP: If someone came up to you now and asked you to do the show again could you do it?

WS: No. {Laughs}

MP: Was this performed only in the L.A. area or did you travel around with the show?

WS: We performed in Los Angeles, Santa Fe ... we did bits and pieces here and there but not the whole show. Mainly in Los Angeles and Santa Fe.

MP: What kind of audiences were you performing for?

WS: Audiences? Ah, well. {Laughs} It was sort of R rated. The show was really for adults. But a lot of people mistakenly see a show that has something to do with Native Americans and they almost immediately decide it must be for children. Especially if it's a story telling type of format they decide that it's for children. Well, a number of times, we got a lot of adults, but a number of times people would bring their kids and we'd get to a certain point in the show where the stories got fairly graphic in terms of sexual innuendo and ... {Laughs} ... parents would gasp and cover their children's eyes and ears and herd them towards the door. Other than that they were mainly adult audiences. The other thing we found with that show was ... well, it was a very funny show, you know ... it had some good laughs in the show but it really took a lot for the audience to realize that it was okay to laugh because they expected something VERY serious. You know, as soon as they walked in they expected that they were either going to be chewed out for their ancestors' actions or be lambasted for things like Big Mountain or something like that. And it turned out that wasn't the case at all and after awhile we'd get a giggle out of one person then the whole thing would sort of erupt and everybody had a good time.

MP: {Laughs} Interesting.

WS: We had a lot of fun.

MP: Are you still involved with the American Indian Theatre Company?

WS: Well, yeah ... I never really cut ties with them. In fact, we may do a show together in November if things work out as they should. The Company wants to remount the show we did in 1984 called Black Elk Speaks and they want to have me do it. So, we're talking about working together on that.

MP: That sounds really good! It's based upon the book?

WS: Yeah ... sort of. Yeah, it more or less follows the book.

MP: Where is the American Indian Theatre Company based?

WS: In Tulsa.

MP: Okay. We wanted to mention to you that people are aware we're doing this interview and are anxious to read what you have to say.

WS: Oh good! You know I have an official fan club now?

MP: Yes, we've heard about it. They are really supportive of you. You have a lot of very interested fans.

WS: That's great!

MP: It is. Okay ... before we get into *The Last Of The Mohicans*, a couple of other questions. Your first film role was?

WS: My first film for theatrical release was *Pow Wow Highway*.

MP: Shortly after that you were in *Dances With Wolves*. How did you find yourself in that film?

WS: Well, the old fashioned way. I auditioned. We were all reading for the part of *Wind In His Hair*. But they were interested in me for the Pawnee. So, I went back once, twice ... they offered me the part and asked if I would shave my head. I said, "In a New York minute!"

MP: Did the role as the Pawnee warrior help you in any way with the character of Magua ... and did that part help land the role of Magua?

WS: Well, yeah. It helped me in my role as Magua. I think Magua was a more developed Pawnee. Yeah ... I think it was really a matter of demanding that same character with the ability to speak a lot of different languages as well ... and have a similar story. Cause that's more or less the way I played the guy in *Dances With Wolves* ... he probably had gone through the same kinds of tragedies as Magua had, but Magua had the ability to voice some of those things. But according to Michael, no, it didn't have anything to do with it.

MP: So, Michael Mann didn't seek you out for that particular role?



WS: No, no ... the reason I say that is because I ... there was a woman .... Elizabeth Leustig, I think was her name ... and I was eager to take an 8x10 from *Dances With Wolves* to be the one to show them. So upon my first audition there I took it along with myself and delivered it to her. "Well, I don't know about this. Let me check with Michael first." So she comes back and says; "Do you have another picture? Just a regular picture?" I had another 8x10 with me as well but they didn't really want an association there, I think. But, it may or may not have had anything to do with the actual casting.

MP: Okay. You auditioned for the role. What was the woman's name you mentioned?

WS: Elizabeth Leustig. She was killed in an accident a few years ago in Germany I think. No, actually, it was Russia.

{Note: Originally from France, she was the wife of Jack Leustig, producer of *500 Nations* and a good pal of Kevin Costner.}

MP: Going back to *Dances With Wolves* ... that film polarizes people. They either love it or hate it. What was your impression of it on the whole?

WS: As a whole? {Laughs} As a film itself ... after getting over the success of it, it did so well ... jump started the career of course. {Laughs} I look at it as a film and ... ahhhhh, it's kind of a schlocky western. You know, it's something I think ... you really can't say it was a good film ... cause it really isn't good film or bad film because it affected a lot of people in a lot of ways ... not only people directly involved with it, but artists and authors. You know, there was a great interest in Native American stories there for awhile. I think that it generated that kind of interest and it generated that kind of economy as well for Natives. So, in terms of great film, I think it's like *Lawrence Of Arabia*. That was a great film too but when you look at it in terms of what kind of story it imbued, it was kind of a schlock story about this one guy's great transformation, an Englishman ... and so, it was viewed as great. I think just the fact that it generated the kind of interest that it did and the fact that it was filmed outside ... you know, the artistic points of the film itself, was great ... the soundtrack.

MP: It opened doors for you.

WS: Yep.

MP: Following that film, you were in *The Doors* with Val Kilmer?

WS: Oh, please!

MP: {Laughs} Sorry!

WS: Oh, God. {Laughs} I saw that in a little article in a magazine the other day and they noted that I had been in *The Doors* ... which, I was in there maybe uno, dos, tres ... three seconds. MAYBE that much. No, no ... I was paid as an actor but I was really an extra in that film.

MP: You're just basically there by the highway in the very beginning ...

WS: Yeah.

MP: Okay, we'll forget about that movie.

WS: Yeah. {Laughs}

MP: Russell Means has discussed your character, Magua, and pointed out that he had all these understandable human motivations. There was depth, there was character. What did you feel about Magua? What was your connection to him?

WS: Well, my connection is in the blood really. You know, it's pretty easy for I or any other Indian who knows the history of the US and Indian relations ... there were a lot of things that happened during that time that we definitely had a right to be pissed off about. And continues to be so ... and so, I just draw from the fact that there were all these atrocities that happened with negative people like that. I draw from that kind of a rage ... that we weren't able to develop as a people ... it's like arrested development of the tribes here. We had to turn around and deal with, well ... like you people. So, that became more or less our thing to do. It was all we could do for quite awhile and I guess, I don't know, I think we have to re-continue our development

as a people. And so, yeah ... I draw from mainly that. So I can see where Magua's coming from.

MP: You are very soft-spoken and polite. The character of Magua is so radically different from how you seem to be; the transformation ... is it acting technique or is it an inner rage that you draw upon from historical events?

WS: Yeah, well, when it comes down to it it's an acting technique that involves getting in touch with your real feelings, which you can't do 24 hours a day because it would drive you nuts. You know, to be in that state of mind all the time you really would be walking around like a Magua ... and in this century you'd either be dead or in jail. So, it's a part of anybody's ability to be able to express that kind of rage ... about anything that's part of their social or personal history.

MP: Have you ever read Cooper's book?

WS: No. {Laughs} I tried to. I tried it at the beginning and I think ... ahhhhh ... Unless it was put into a different kind of writing technique, you know?

MP: So you weren't familiar with the book and your characterization of Magua was strictly from the script. Had you seen any other versions of LOTM?

WS: No, you know actually, I never had until after we shot it. Then I saw one of the ones that had been done in '46 or something.

MP: It was probably '36. Phillip Dunne's ...

WS: Yeah, that must be the one. So, yeah, I sort of watched it a bit ... I played the part much better though. {Laughs}

MP: Definitely!

WS: No, I wasn't all that ... it really wasn't as good.

MP: Well, in Michael Mann's script Magua's character has such depth. That alone was something special about the film. You really hadn't seen that kind of depth in a character like Magua before.

WS: I think that's what was in a review ... it was either Siskel or Ebert ... Siskel I think ... he said if it wasn't for Magua it would've been just another love story. I love that quote. {Laughs} But you know, I think it had a lot to do with the kind of person Michael is, as a director ... and the kind of story he tells. He really has an affinity for the bad guy, or the guy he really thinks is the bad guy. That's one of the reasons Magua became, I think, a little bit more than what was even in the script. And that went on to ... Magua, more or less developed as we were shooting this thing. Like I said, he has an affinity for the bad guy and he wants to show the human part of both sides. Not only screaming but truthful and very human like.

MP: There were several scenes throughout the film where you expressed various emotions without really saying anything. While you and Montcalm were talking by the lake, much of the exchange was unspoken ... without dialogue it was clear that Montcalm basically gave the nod for Magua to attack the column.

WS: Yeah.

MP: Your expressions were so vivid. Was that a result of Michael Mann's directorial skills?

WS: The intrigue of it ... that's one of the great things about the film. The intrigue of, well, like that one scene ... men involved in a radical act such as war have to have a very good understanding of what's coming. I think that's probably the kind of thing that goes on in government circles in terms of whatever ... you know, no need to be put on paper ... it's something that ... nobody wants to take responsibility for it then we don't put it on paper. It's a fact of life. I don't know if I kind of lost you there but ...

MP: No, no. We follow you exactly.

WS: Oh okay. Sometimes I get a little departed. {Laughs}

MP: You and Patrice Chereau ... Montcalm ...

WS: Oh, yeah yeah! The Frenchman. Uhm humm.

MP: The interaction between you was conveyed so well.

WS: Yeah.

MP: It was more through facial expression than words. It was really perfect. Did you two just click?

WS: I think it worked well because Patrice spoke very little English. He was phonetically doing ... most of his lines were done phonetically and I said this to Mann, having done so many other things phonetically as well. So, he and I had a good understanding of what the scene was all about and the lack of communication, or ability, between the two of us really made it more ... real. I think that had a lot to do with it as well. We just knew what had to happen and didn't actually have to say it. {Laughs} We did say it, but whose to say we'd understand one another, you know?

MP: Regarding roles in historical pieces; you said your first responsibility in your acting was to the Cherokee, then to other Indian people, to be as factual and actual as you can be ...

WS: Yeah.

MP: How difficult is that for you, and is that responsibility magnified when you are portraying an historical figure?

WS: Well, it's difficult in terms of meeting people's expectations. In a way I feel like I have to do that ... sort of. As far as I can, as much as I can. When we were filming Geronimo, you know, we had some of the man's relatives there ... and no matter what kind of life we live here on earth, somebody's gonna like us, somebody's gonna dislike us ... whatever we do. So, it's trying to cover both things, I think. Playing an historical figure is very difficult because you're trying to ... especially with a man like Geronimo, you know he ... as part of my own personal history goes the man is like an icon, right? Well ... back from the '70s. And he's somebody that had a spirit that we all looked up to and we

more or less transferred that feeling about that spirit to the actual man himself, which is sort of a mistake, you know? But, you begin to find out that he did some things that we in this world here would totally disapprove of ... and probably people back then would really not want to know that he was not such a good man. But, playing a guy like that is very difficult because you have people who know, or at least say they know, of things that he did that were absolutely horrible. A lot of things were, you know ... But then, he also did some great things for his people ... up to a certain point. So, playing an historical figure is ... ha ... you sort of ... you can't have it both ways. You can't have the good parts and the bad parts, you know? In terms of telling a story, a guy has to fit into one or the other or be ... uninteresting, would be the word ... or someone that you take credibility away from at a later date. So, it's difficult. It really is difficult because men are much more complicated than history would have them.

MP: A lot more complicated than you can really put forth in a two hour film.

WS: Oh, God, yes.

MP: Considering that many people tend to be armchair moralists and judge historic persons from today's standards, it must be a burden at times to portray truthfully your character ...

WS: Yeah, it can be a burden. It certainly can be a burden. Especially when you're trying to hit the box office big, you know? Ha. And like I said before, a story tends to need a hero and a villain. Someone in between courts disaster in terms of becoming uninteresting or wishy-washy ... or someone that can't make up his mind. The only way that I could attack it in that particular role was that the man was in a situation that became desperate. He also had grown up in a time that was ... you know, when he was born the Apache were totally at war. They were at war for however long the Spanish and the other people around them had been around ... they more or less stayed at war so it was a lifeway with him, you know? People who are born into that kind of situation see it as a way of life. So, I think he was ferocious ... all because that's the way he came in, it was like that. The fact that he was trying to protect a way of life that he had been told was better than what was going on then was what drove him ... until the enemies that



surrounded them were done away with. They really didn't have time to live the way that they were supposed to live. Those were the things he grew up in ... so, he just fit the bill for his times.

MP: That's a lot to try to convey to an audience!

WS: Yeah. Especially when you have other characters that the film is trying to tell a story about.

MP: True. Getting back to *The Last Of The Mohicans* for a bit ...

WS: Yeah.

MP: We read an excerpt from the *American Indian Review* where you were talking about a real racial tension developing in the Massacre Valley scene.

WS: Yeah.

MP: That's really interesting. Captain Dale Dye, the one who trained the British troops for the film, said basically much the same thing.

WS: Yeah, he said that too.

MP: Russell Means as well. Everyone seems to feel that way. Do you think these "racial hatreds" were purposely manipulated in any way for the realistic effect or were they "naturally" brought about?

WS: Well .... {Laughs} I think that I would call it a brilliant piece of manipulation if it was. I don't think that, like I said ... I think that if it were done that way, if things were manipulated, it certainly was meant to be that way because it turned out that one of the strongest scenes was that. {Pause} Given the make-up of the people involved, especially if they sort of expected it ... it may have been 50% of one, 50% of the other. You kind of lost me on this one. {Laughs}

MP: It's a tough question. The conditions; the competition, the emotions, the historical aspects ... could it have spawned what might have been there already somewhere?

WS: Oh, yeah.

MP: Was there an incident in this scene where Colonel Munro, Maurice Rooves, was hurt by you?

WS: {Laughs} Yes. No, actually what had happened was the horse scene in the valley itself ... something happened there with his shoulder. It was kind of out of place ... he wasn't in any severe pain or anything but there was something sore on his shoulder already there ... maybe a pulled muscle or something ... but there was another scene, I think actually it was the heart pulling part where we had to do a re-shoot of some dialogue there, that compounded it ... By the time we shot the actual heart pulling scene we were inundated with a great storm going on at the time and we were shooting this one scene under one of these 20 x 40 flags. We were shooting under one of those things and the flag itself was fast filling up and coming down closer and closer to our heads. So much water built up in there on top, you know, and so we had to do some dialogue, I think where he was on a horse and I had to put my foot on his shoulder I think ... something like that, as I reached down for his heart and that's where I think I put too much weight on his shoulder and it may have popped something ... well, I don't think it actually popped anything but it aggravated what was already there. I think that's what happened.

MP: As long as we're talking about that scene, what was that in your hand?

WS: {Laughs} I tell people it was a hog heart ... {Laughs} Then I tell them also it was a prosthetic. It actually was a prosthetic, kind of a rubbery thing. But Maurice and I have been friends ever since. In fact, I may be planning a trip to Scotland for the millennium.

MP: Great! He spoke so highly of you.

WS: Oh, yeah ... I'd love to work with him again as well as hang out with him. When I can understand him! {Laughs} He's GOT an accent.

MP: He's a very funny guy.

WS: Yeah!!! I like him. He's in California, isn't he?

MP: We don't know ... spoke to him at the end of October and he was heading back to England at that time.

WS: Ah yeah, he goes back and forth, back and forth.

MP: He had a British television series going.

WS: Does he? I know he did a play here in L.A. The Killing Of Michael Malloy.

MP: Yes. Of all the physical things required of you in that film [LOTM], what was the most demanding sequence?

WS: I think it was the knifing of Uncas. Not so much physically, but in terms of making it appear sort of a sneak attack on the guy. What we had to recreate, at least in my mind, was a knifing ... something you'd do if you were trying to hide it from someone else. You have a hold on someone and just rip out his intestinal tract or something with a knife ... and you do it very quickly, without much notice. I think that was sort of a dramatic moment ... raise the knife and then bring it down. Yeah, that was Michael's idea to ... quick, slash the innards and push the victim away. Because the attitude toward him was that he was just an obstacle in the way and the fact that it's human had no bearing on the whole thing. Kill it and push it out of the way. I twisted my knee there and I tore some cartilage.

MP: During that sequence?

WS: Yeah. I had to have orthoscopic surgery. In fact, you can actually see this cast on my leg where the very top of it barely shows, just for a second ... a swipe. It was just a quick swipe across the screen. I didn't need a full cast but I tore some cartilage. Yeah, I ripped through the mat and had to go in an ambulance and came back about a week later.

MP: The whole cliff sequence was delayed from that?

WS: Yeah. We already had some of it but had more to do.

MP: That whole sequence was perhaps the very best in the movie. There's been a lot of discussion and analysis on our board about that scene in particular. Every expression, every gesture that you made, Jodhi May as well, but especially you, was perfect. Very evocative sequence of expressions, emotions ... you seem to range from cold blooded and detached to surprised and even curious almost, pity almost ... then ending as though you're just dismissing her.

WS: Exactly! You worded that so accurately ... that was great!

MP: That's because you conveyed those emotions so perfectly. It was amazing. Tell us what Magua was thinking ... what were his emotions?

WS: Okay, what happened is I kill a guy ... look over and there's this baby ... I think of my daughter ... I have a daughter about the same age ... I think of my daughter and I look up and at first it's "here's another enemy." Then I see that it's only a child, and a female child at that. So I think, "well, maybe I should take it and raise it" ... in terms of what Magua was thinking. Then it looks at me in fright and jumps and it comes back to me that "oh, this is one of those people. One of those people and I don't understand how they think anyway. It's just as well." And he walks off.

MP: That was a great scene. Why do you think Alice jumps off that cliff?

WS: I think she was terrified.

MP: The reason we ask is that there has been a lot of discussion regarding Alice's motives. Some say it was fear, some that it was defiance. Strong act, weak act.

WS: I don't think she had the time to look down and see that her lover had ... he was supposed to be her lover. In cutting I don't know if that came through but she was supposed to have been in love with Uncas ... whether it was a jump to join her dead lover, as in a Romeo & Juliet kind of thing, or out and out fright in vain, I think it would have been the latter. It WOULD have been the latter. That's my understanding of it.

MP: Okay. Language; in the film you spoke how many languages?

WS: Let's see ... Huron, Mohawk, French, and English. That'd be four.

MP: Are you French speaking?

WS: No.

MP: So, you had to learn dialogue in 2, 3 languages for this film?

WS: Yeah. French, Huron, and Mohawk ... is that right?

MP: French, Huron, Mohawk, and English you spoke. What about Cherokee? Did you speak Cherokee at times?

WS: Some of the Huron I spoke in Cherokee. They couldn't really find anyone up in the Huron region to translate some of it.

MP: And Cherokee is Iroquoian so it works.

WS: Yeah. It works.

MP: You're linguistically talented as well, to be able to pick up and speak in several languages.

WS: We had people there to sort of help with the language ... and knowing what you're saying makes a lot of difference. If not by word, at least by meaning.

MP: Mike Phillips said the same thing. Understanding what you're trying to convey is so important. He talked about how proud he was to speak Mohawk in the film and how proud he was on behalf of Mohawk people to be able to do that. Did you feel a similar pride at all?

WS: Well, I didn't get that much of a chance. {Laughs} And then it was incognito as well. No, I think Mike is a great fellow.

MP: The use of several languages was another strong aspect of the film in terms of realism. Do you think it had any impact upon the film in-

dustury in regards to Native efforts to produce and so forth? Anything positive come from this?

WS: In terms of film making, yeah, I think so. Those who were already involved in making film probably had the opportunity for a number of actors that were available to be ... that there was a pool of talent there as well ... for whatever reasons, to either rectify the stories or reinforce the stories that were being told by Hollywood. I think it was a real impetus for the number of products that were being produced. I think in the last two years there has been more and more Indian people who are actually making films. I like to think that Mohicans and Wolves had something to do with it.

MP: Sure. In LOTM, the Huron Village was a powerful piece of filming, followed by the climactic Cliff Scenes. Those were some of the best moments on film ... any film ... and you were such an integral part of that. Now, we know you didn't receive an award but can you say that YOU think you deserved an Academy Award for your work as Magua?

WS: Yeah, I got knocked out by, what was that film ... something about minds? If that one fella wasn't nominated I think I would have been nominated. The Academy was quoted as saying it was one of those brilliant performances and one of these actors .. he was a cross dresser ... it was kind of a sleeper hit to begin with and an independent film ... but then what really started building up was this one guy ... this one actor ... he played a woman throughout the entire film and then turns out he was a man .... a young black guy. Do you know who I'm talking about?

MP: No. I don't recall ...

WS: Yeah, I think I should have been nominated. And just the way things work, I think I would have been if he had not. ... Oh, I got it! It was The Crying Game ... that guy. {Jaye Davidson}

MP: It wasn't just you though. The entire movie seemed to have been overlooked, or snubbed, by the awards panel. It was one of the best films ever produced.



WS: Yeah.

MP: It's hard to understand why that was.

WS: You know, the scheme as a whole ... the make up of who directed it, who was in it ... you know, Daniel Day had already won for *My Left Foot* but it was going against the tide for him and Michael was known up to that point as a television director. I think that might have had some bearing on the whole thing. It's a funny game, the awards system. It's a game worth playing though.

MP: You mentioned Michael Mann being a "television director" and that it may have played a part in this. That's something we've thought was a likely factor. Another take on it was offered by Russell Means. His opinion on it was that there may have been a 'pay back' for the problems with the production as far as union issues and different aspects like that. So, ultimately it's a game and you're either in it or you're out in any given year?

WS: Yeah, and I think a large part of the game, that part of it anyway, was played out in L.A.

MP: Well, as far as the public is concerned, you won the award anyway!

WS: Great! I'm going to put that on my resume. {Laughs}

MP: Another thing about *LOTM* is the violence. Any historical film, or any period piece like that it would seem, since it was violent times you have to deal with the violence. However, so many people are critical of violence depicted in film. As far as period films go, do you have an opinion on the need to be accurate in a violent manner versus sanitizing movies?

WS: Well, I think when you get to the point of being graphic you might begin to think in terms of how love scenes were once done, it's sort of coming back now, the cut away to the billowing curtains, or the sunset, or something like that. Move quickly on to the next scene. I think there's a certain responsibility to show the ugliness ... You know, actually the thought that violence can invoke violence; that's something

that I think is a very fine line for any film maker to have to play with - well, not to play with but to DEAL with. I don't know how much that it affects a person to see violence. Hopefully to see the ugliness that results of the violence would be a detriment to actually committing an act that produces such ugliness. I don't know that it's heavy enough to keep people from doing it as opposed to romanticizing it ... romanticizing the act ... make someone want to do something like that. I'm just at a loss at that point. I think that less is better.

MP: Saving Private Ryan does what you were saying. It is very graphic, but it demonstrates the horror.

WS: Yeah.

MP: When The Last of the Mohicans was filmed, was there a shot done of you actually taking a bite out of Colonel Munro's heart?

WS: {Laughs} Oh geez ... I said that once! I really did. That was my plan to do so. I thought, "It doesn't taste that bad!" I actually wanted to do that. I spoke with Michael about it. "You know, I really think I should take a bite of it." Because, we hear that, in those times, to the victor goes the heart. Michael said, "No, I don't think that would be quite ... it might take Magua over the edge. We want to drum up enough... it's hard enough to support the guy, so let's not do it." In fact, the other thing was, Jeffrey Dahmer was around at that time. I spoke with the first A.D. after that and he first mentioned that. I said, "Oh, that's right!" So, no, there's not a shot of me biting the heart, but I have told people that, in jest.

MP: Well, it got around! So, what is your overall opinion of the movie?

WS: Well, I think it's a great ... it's a very, very, very good movie. It takes into account all the sides that there were. It tells a good story, and I don't object to the love story part of it at all. It's really, I think, a very good film.

MP: So I take it you're happier with it than you were with Dances With Wolves?

WS: Well, they're both kind of schlocky love stories, but I think *Mohicans* is a more ... well, it's about real life, you know? It, more or less, mirrors real life.

MP: Michael Mann seems to get the most out of his actors. This film was really big on facial expressions with impact. How does he do that?

WS: In my experience, Michael is much more passionately involved ... not to say that other directors aren't as well ... He has a way of showing it more, and how he gets the actors to, well, I think it's more than the actors ... He just shoots it till he gets what he wants. He wants as many variations on the same theme as possible. He goes after it, and he doesn't let anything get in the way the performance. Actually, what you really have to do is touch the actor himself. He has a way of doing that.

MP: Shortly after *Mohicans* you did *Heat* with him.

WS: Yeah.

MP: Do you have a friendship with him?

WS: Yeah, I'd call it a friendship.

MP: Do you think you'd ever work with him again?

WS: Oh, I'd love to. The *Heat* thing ... it was fun. It wasn't that challenging, but it was fun.

MP: Who was your favorite character that you've played?

WS: Oh, boy! Well ... I really lean towards Magua. I liked Geronimo, as well. And ... {Laughs} ... I don't know, I really don't know. I think the one that's coming up next. {Laughs}

MP: In this case, that's *Mystery Men*?

WS: Oh, *Mystery Men*! Yeah ... {Laughs} That's good. He's gonna be sort of like a scaled back Magua. {Laughs}

MP: Your character is the Sphinx, correct?

WS: Yeah.

MP: Going back for a bit, in *Mohicans* there were Indians gathered from all over the Continent. It would seem it was quite a thrill for many. Did you see it that way?

WS: I thought it was great! It was sort of like ... *Wolves* was kind of the same way ... Maybe not from as many different places. It was kind of a big-ended production.

MP: As for Magua ... you played him to perfection. It seems that kind of a role can cause someone to be typecast. Why haven't you?

WS: Because I'm versatile! {Laughs} I do what I feel like doing.

MP: Are there any Indian leaders who you'd really like to portray in film?

WS: I'd like to play Ely Parker. He's a good story. He was one of the first educated Senecas. Quite a traveled guy. Here's a guy not stuck on the reservation. He did a lot of things in the outside world.

MP: Is this a role you'd like to do something with using your own production company?

WS: Well, it's nothing we've talked about. Yeah. It's a matter of finding the right story that would generate the right ... ideas.

MP: What about non-Indian historical persons? Anybody you'd really like to take a stab at playing?

WS: Yeah. I would play Andrew Jackson, and I would play him as the most hateful person in the world, I would. {Laughs}

MP: What about a *Trail of Tears* production? PBS did a documentary, that you narrated, filmed in North Carolina ...

WS: Yeah! Did it go to PBS?

MP: Uh-huh.

WS: Good!

MP: Regarding the Trail of Tears ... many have heard of it, probably not many really understand what it refers to. Would one of your objectives be to tell that story on film?

WS: You know, I would make it ... were we able to do it with my company, I would like to play up the split in the Cherokee Nation itself and how that came about. We've got heroes and villains, the whole thing. People who signed over treaty rights or land rights that shouldn't have been able to do that. And a United States Government that was all too eager to accept any type of any tract from any Cherokee ... any agreement like that. It has a lot of intrigue and back biting going on. It's really quite the story.

MP: It's the human condition again. It's really very complicated.

WS: {Laughs} Complicated ... yeah. Well, you figure just about everybody probably does things with a good thought in mind. They do things with what they believe will benefit people in the future. Or, themselves. Most people do things, I think, out of ... things that turn out bad, that is ... out of lack of fact, knowledge ... there are mistakes made by people who are well-intentioned and turned out to be villains. Which, may be true of Andrew Jackson, though I think he's the Devil.

MP: That would be a fantastic thing to see! That would be poetic justice! To see Wes Studi as Andrew Jackson?!

WS: {Laughs}

MP: Seems a good story to be told there by the right person. So, what is the value of period pieces? Seems there are some who would prefer to do only contemporary pieces ...

WS: Well, I guess they're contemporary guys. They probably can't ride horses or shoot guns. {Laughs}

MP: But there's a value, don't you think, in both contemporary & period pieces?

WS: I love to do both films ... myself, I love to do historical pieces as well as contemporary. I feel like I owe a debt to - and have a great gratitude towards - historical pieces. And I actually like to do them, and I think I see them as an opportunity to sort of rectify what has been told in history. Schools don't really get into it. Sort of set the record straight. Maybe I was born too late.

MP: It's also a way of giving tribute to those who came before. To do a movie about another time and to bring those people to life in a way that tells their story accurately and powerfully ... it's about the greatest tribute we can give them in this day and age.

WS: Absolutely. We wouldn't be here if it weren't for them.

MP: It's all connected.

WS: Ain't that the truth.

MP: Your own production company, War Dancer ... have there been any productions other than Bonnie Looksaway's Iron Art Wagon?

WS: No, that's all we've done. In fact, we dissolved War Dancer and I'm working on another company. You know how you sort of lose steam sometimes? We really don't know which direction we're going in ... we continue to think about it.

MP: You are an actor, a writer, a producer, an artist, a director, a musician ... that's a lot of things ... you're a very talented person. How much of this is natural gifts and how much is the result of a lot of determination and a lot of hard work?

WS: I'd say 50/50. I really don't know how to answer your question. {Laughs} I'll sit around and think about it though. It always comes down to thinking about things. You can't sit around and do nothing. So, you do it and hopefully it turns out well and is perceived well ... but, you never know. You don't know until you do it.



MP: The two books you've written are both children's book?

WS: Oh yeah.

MP: Are they original stories of yours or are they adaptations?

WS: One is a collection of short stories and the second is like a novella ... a moral short story about a little character called Billy Bean who is Cherokee. They're about experiences and learning about life. The first set of short stories was actually commissioned by a publisher who wanted stories to take into schools in northeastern Oklahoma. They had to be stories about learning lessons one way or another ... moral stories. So, that's what the first book is, a collection of those kind of stories ... very interesting situations, I think, for the little boy. The longer version ... the second book ... has a little more to do with Cherokee stories that leads into an action adventure for Billy Bean.

MP: Do you enjoy writing?

WS: I did then. I did then but it doesn't strike me to do that now.

MP: We know your band Firecat Of Discord has a new CD out.

WS: Oh yes.

MP: Tell us a little bit about the band.

WS: The band is planning on a CD release party on the 28th of May at the Paramount here in Santa Fe. We're struggling to have some rehearsals here with all the different schedules. Hopefully we'll be ready for the gig by the 28th. We're working on a lot of new stuff as well. Some of it is sort of rehashing old stuff from the CD. We'll be doing some of the old numbers. I think that's the feeling here. It's fun but we've done it so many times now that we'd really like to be playing something different which is really our ultimate goal ... to get some numbers up and ready for the next CD. It's the creation of these that motivates most of us in the band. There are 3 or 4 of us who write so that's the direction we're going in. Our next CD is going to have a lot more to do with our band's name Firecat Of Discord which is a character out of an old Oneida story. The Firecat of Discord is a character

that shows up at times when things are so bad that he comes along and the people are in turmoil and everything is chaotic. The Firecat shows up and everyone can see ... he gets people to go on home and come to their senses and say, "Hey, we're moving in the wrong direction here. We've got to stop and get things moving back in a better way." So, that's what our next CD is going to be about.

MP: Bruce King is Oneida, right?

WS: Yes, he's the one who came up with the name. He's a playwright himself.

MP: And your wife, Maura, is also in the band?

WS: She's our vocalist.

MP: Do you have a label?

WS: We're independent.

MP: How can people buy this CD?

WS: We have a web site.

MP: We can link to the site so people can find out how to order the CD.

WS: Oh, that'd be great! One of the band members does that. I'm, unfortunately, computer illiterate.

MP: Your wife is a board member of F.A.I.T.A. {First Americans In The Arts} Could you explain a bit what this organization is?

WS: F.A.I.T.A. just had its seventh award ceremony. It all started out with the chairman of the board. His name is Bob Hicks. He's a fella I met way back in my theatre days in Tulsa, Oklahoma ... we're both from that area. He had been in L.A. for awhile ... he's a filmmaker himself ... he and I and a number of other people got together in the late '80s sometime and started having these little dinners that we called an Oklahoma Dinner. All of the guys were from Oklahoma so we'd all

get together in this little place which is now the Brown Derby. You're from New York ... well, it's a popular place, a little restaurant there in the area ... so that's what we started doing, having these little dinners once a year which we called the Oklahoma Party. Then after awhile Bob gets it into his mind that he'd like to put on a show and in order to do so he had to put this board together. At the time, my wife was my girlfriend so Bob and she and a number of others formed an organization where we'd have dinner together and give out awards. It was a hit

WS: And then in one of the first years, we had a ceremony at a little Italian restaurant out in Oceanside (?) and it ..... like, it was sold out! ... Standing room only. It really caught on well. So, what they set up was these scholarships for people in film ... award presentations ... and we started having these award shows at nice restaurants and it's been getting bigger and bigger every year. I think it's been real good for us.

MP: It seems to have gotten very big ... so many participants & award presenters ...

WS: Yeah. And it's growing.

MP: That's great. You also sculpt?

WS: Yes.

MP: Is it just a personal thing you're into ... for your own pleasure?

WS: Yeah ... I don't do it in a disciplined form ... just for relaxing.

MP: Stone sculpting?

WS: Yes.

MP: You are being honored by the Cherokee National Historical Society this month. {Note: May '99}

WS: Yes.

MP: You have quite a passion for history, is that right?

WS: I like it. Yeah, I do.

MP: The Cherokee elections are also going to be this month. {Note: May '99}

WS: Oh yeah, yeah, yeah ...

MP: You've endorsed Chad Smith - the grandson of Chief Red Bird Smith. Why has he received such vocal support from you?

WS: Well, Chad shares the same kind of ideas that I have about how the Tribal government should be ... the direction that it should take. More sovereignty, more self-sufficiency ... I think he is an honest man who shares the things I care about. I've known him a number of years and he's economically ... creating more opportunities within the Cherokee Nation ... and that's the way to go.

MP: Backtracking a bit ... why are you being honored by the Cherokee Historical Society?

WS: You've got me there! {Laughs}

MP: Candid answer! Well, is it in terms of being a role model possibly?

WS: Well, I guess a sort of role model. A role model in terms of ... the way I'd like to put it, and I think there's a certain amount of certainty, is if a man with my background can succeed at something becoming in life then I think anyone can do it given the time and effort.

MP: You seem to be very involved in many 'causes' ... making appearances at benefits and events pertaining to Indian youth and the arts.

WS: Yes.

MP: A fair description would be a Cherokee community activist. So, what motivates you? What are the things most close to your heart that push you to do that? As you said the other day, you get around.

WS: I like things that take care of problems that we have right now. Activities and/or program projects that are designed to take care of the

problems that we have as well as, in some way, affect young people ... to keep them from doing the same things over and over again. The continuation of the same old problems over and over again. It's something that we'd like to be able to look for the long term ... something to stop repeating the same mistakes.

MP: You were recently in Florida for the Barcole Foundation's fundraiser.

WS: Yes.

MP: What was it like to see Eric Schweig again?

WS: {Laughs} Eric!!! Oh ... it was great to see Eric again! You keep in touch, right?

MP: Oh sure, we're in touch with him regularly.

WS: It's been so great. He started carving ... I saw one of his carvings and it's definitely vintage Eric Schweig. You know, it had its roots basically in the traditional carvings of the northwest, you know? But it was definitely ERIC ... {Laughs} He's just that kind of guy & it's great to see him doing this.

MP: Does he seem very different now than from the time of the filming of LOTM?

WS: Not really. Not really. Well ... you know that he's sober.

MP: Yes.

WS: Well, he wasn't back then and it just degraded to ... he has so much to offer & it really would have been a waste for him not to wake up. He's a great guy! ... Huge!

MP: We've come to really like him.

WS: He doesn't mince words, does he? {Laughs.}

MP: No, he does not. It's good to see someone like him who has so much to offer moving forward.

WS: Yeah.

MP: We know you have to go so we'll pose this question and try not to oblige you to provide a long answer. You've described yourself as a Cherokee first, an American second ... and you've stated that you'll forgive but not forget. Your pride is so obvious ... your heritage, your culture, who you are ... you seem very committed to the Cherokee community. You do this in such a positive way while so many others seem to be bitter or angry. How do you approach this without anger and how do teach children, your children, to balance the forgiving and not forgetting? It's a challenge.

WS: I don't know ... pretty much it's a matter of course. Like I said before, it's such a wasteful, time consuming thing to be angry all the time that you only do yourself a disservice and wind up with an ulcer. That's something I can't do. I can't wind up with an ulcer and die early. I have a five year old son. It's not in the books for me ... to stay bitter about something. I mean, it's always there. It's always there. But it's something that can be overcome by the goodness in people. There's all this goodness in people. Like I said before, a lot of things ... ignorance or bad things ... are done with good intentions. You never know ... it's a matter of balancing the two things out & knowing that human nature is what it is. I don't know. I'm just grateful that I don't have to be mad ALL the time.

MP: Okay, you have Mystery Men coming out ...

WS: August 6th.

MP: And then there's a few other films we've heard about. Wind River

WS: Yes.

MP: Sound Man

WS: Yes.



MP: GI Joe

WS: No. No GI Joe. Uh uh.

MP: Okay, no GI Joe ... but Wind River ... is that a period piece?

WS: Yes.

MP: About the Shoshone?

WS: Yes, the Shoshone.

MP: Oh great!

WS: It's about two chiefs ... Russell Means and I bump heads again.

MP: Do you know when that's going to be out?

WS: We don't know. We don't know exactly how it's going to be released.

MP: Have you shot it already?

WS: Oh yeah, yeah. I think it's going through the family values venue. It was screened about 2 or 3 months ago in L.A. for the awards they were doing there at the Directors' Guild. But, as far as a distributor, I don't know.

MP: Who produced it?

WS: It's an independent film as well so it's out there.

MP: Okay ... well, we have to let you go but we don't want to! You're a pleasure to speak with.

WS: It's been fun.

MP: It's been fun for us too. One last point ... while filming LOTM, you were in Cherokee homelands. How was that for you?

WS: It's always nice to go back home!

MP: Thank you very, very much for everything.

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Wes practically begged us to stop. It was a LONG interview. Thank you, Wes!

There really isn't much we need to add in the way of commentary other than to say; We had an excellent opinion of Wes Studi prior to interviewing him, speaking with him only cemented our high regard. We wish Wes Studi great success in all he does!

And, of course, Wes and his lovely family were participants extraordinary at our 2001 Great Mohican Gathering!



"Once we were here!"

## The DVD

**A**fter two enthusiastic campaigns, and a very long wait, the much sought after, eagerly anticipated Director's Cut of LOTM has finally been released. Presented this time around via the high end of the technology spectrum, DVD, the Director's Cut promised, at least, to be a superior edition visually and audibly to the original. The story content itself, having undergone another round of editing, remained questionable in regard to its improvement or lack thereof. There was to be additional footage, widely welcomed, though no one knew what exactly these additions would be. The director, Michael Mann, had edited the release which offered reasonable confidence that the re-editing would be an enhancement ... would it? Here, we offer one, actually two, opinions on this ...

What's NOT Here: Largely because of discussion & speculation here on this Web Site, expectations were huge for this release. *Dances With Wolves*, when released in Director's Cut form, had nearly one hour of additional footage ... While no one thought there'd be THAT much new material, it was generally assumed there would be 15 or so minutes, including a "love" scene between Alice & Uncas, added to the film. All based on pre-theatrical release reviews, plus comments made by many of the principals in various interviews, most Mohicans fans eagerly awaited more, More, MORE! Forget it! It's not here. That's not, it is obvious, what Mr. Michael Mann had in mind for this gem of a release. More on that later. There is NO Alice/Uncas love scene. In fact, this release does absolutely nothing in the way of furthering that relationship. It stays as it lays. Uncas has not one additional line, Alice one or two. Nearly all hypothesized new scenes are nowhere to be found on this DVD. In no one's wildest imagination, did anybody think that some material would actually be CUT from the original. That matter was never addressed. So, though, it is. GONE ... Not ever to be heard again in the DVD-age are SEVERAL of Hawkeye's most quoted lines ... things like "Clear it up any?" "Just dropped in to see how you boys is doing!" "Someday you & I are going to have a serious disagreement!" "Nothing better to do on the lake today, Major?" All have seen the axe. Part of the exchange between

Hawkeye & Cora at The Burial Ground has been lopped off. That one hurts. No longer do you hear, "That is because they are a breed apart and make no sense!" What??!! Can it be? Want to hear more? Clan-nad's *I Will Find You* no longer lilts through the misty riverside air as Hawkeye, Chingachgook & Uncas begin their journey to rescue the Munro sisters. It just isn't there. No matter how many times you play it over, it's still gone! Disappointed? Go on, admit it! You feel terribly disappointed! Sulk awhile. Go on! Feel morbid depression, consider a leap off the ledge at Nature's Shower Bath. Get it all out of your system! Allow yourself to feel the pain! Then, FORGET IT! In any case, you still have your wide screen THX video version to savor, so get a grip! Now, place your hopes & expectations aside. Forget that you've ever seen *The Last of the Mohicans*. Go out and buy the new Director's Expanded Edition of this classic film and bravely pop it into your DVD player. Go on. It really won't hurt. Get ready to watch 1992's *The Last of the Mohicans* again ... for the first time!

The DVD Experience: Perhaps, you are like us, you've never before owned a DVD disk. Get ready for a real treat. You will never, when given a choice, want to watch a VHS tape again. You have immediate scene access, you can zoom in intimately on any shot. Sure, you can also pause, run in slow motion, rewind and fast forward. This time, though, with a difference. What you see is crystal clear! No more blurred images or lines running across your screen ... just pure IMAGE ... and you can run it at various speeds. The normal picture quality is near-perfect. You get vivid, rich colors. Details long lost in the murky gloom of the VHS night scenes will POP out at you while watching the DVD version. You'll see things you never saw before, much like watching the 35mm film on the big screen. For that quality alone, this is the definitive version to view. Like sound? Distinct stereo separation, even on just your TV's speakers, can be heard ... Every little sound becomes a part of the viewing experience. You will miss nothing. Clear, precise sounds ... no distortion ... the sights & sounds will cause you to fully be engulfed by the film. If it was the identical release to the original, you'd still feel like you were watching a Director's Cut, so much more will become apparent to you. Such is the quality of a DVD. You will be amazed. Oh, and did we mention the optional sub-titles? Never again will you have to guess what it is characters are saying. It can all be there for you, on screen, if you so choose. If you're at all like us, all these little perks will provide you with long moments of exploration &

amusement, causing *The Last of the Mohicans* to run for well over 3 hours, instead of its listed 117 minutes.

So, What IS Here: Only 117 minutes, you say? Yes, and that's only 3 minutes over the original! Figure that maybe up to a minute of time was sliced out, that leaves about 4 minutes, total, of new footage. [Well, so our math is a little off!] That can be a lot of film, and so it is ...

The first thing that you'll see is the dazzling *The Last of the Mohicans* title bouncing seductively on your screen. Then you'll be greeted with Hickory Nut Gorge, thunderous waterfalls, scenes from the movie, and you will have an opportunity to explore the DVD ... choose Language Selection, to set your sound & caption preferences, view The Cast, select various scenes, or play the movie. Go ahead. Play around a bit. Then, click on Play Movie, sit back, relax, and enjoy the awesome splendor, the beauty of the cinematography, the spellbinding soundtrack, the powerful images, the adventure, the action, the romance ... watch as Michael Mann transforms his 1992 masterpiece, real "subtle"-like, into a MASTERPIECE ...

It is obvious that Mann intended to reconstruct a portion of Hawkeye's character. No longer the pop-action hero, he has become serious, intent ... at the end, almost boyish, as he questions his adopted father, Chingachgook, high above Linville Gorge. The Hawkeye we see here is a stronger Hawkeye. No more flippant remarks in this life or death struggle. Hawkeye's main aim here is survival! Possibly for the same reasons, Clannad's haunting melody was removed. Out of place in this primeval wilderness, the tune is replaced by the Trevor Jones/Randy Edelman score. During the battle sequences, The Siege and Massacre Valley, the music is mixed down considerably allowing the sounds of war - the stark realities - to permeate the film. During the former, the score is allowed to fully explode upon the scene only as the fort is reached by the main characters. During the massacre, the theme rises in intensity, but again, is only allowed to bear its full force on the proceedings as Hawkeye and Cora embrace ... great stuff!

As you watch, after being floored by the clarity of the image, you'll be delighted by the deeply rich colors of The Elk Hunt. Then, nighttime at Cameron's Cabin brings you into a whole new world. Just TRY to absorb all those details in just one sitting. Here, too, you see the first ad-

dition to the film, a new take of John Cameron grabbing his rifle, a cautious approach to the door, and then, after realizing who is drawing near, uttering the first new line, "Alexandria ... Set 3 more places." So very quietly, Mann sets out to actually strengthen the story by skillfully placed morsels that help to further relationships, spotlight motivations, and establish political climates. Re-introduced is Le [Renard] Subtil, Cooper's Magua; as known to the French ... The Sly Fox. We see, even more, Duncan as a warrior, courtesy of the new Courier Diversion scene. We realize he is very much the same as these warriors of the forest. We hear, and see, a very effective new piece at Webb's HQ's, providing amplification of the British/Colonial dispute early on. Cora & Alice have brief new things to say at the patroon's house connecting their past a bit more to 1757 colonial America. We see the column of escorting soldiers symbolically enter into the wilderness. The Abenaki Chief, Magua, Jack, and especially Montcalm & Colonel Munro are given new life through an added line or use of a different take. It's all very small tinkering on Mann's part. Nothing monumental, but its cumulative effect certainly ties the underlying stories that are the foundation of this film together in a much more palatable fashion, especially benefiting the uninitiated. For your information (DVD scene name in parenthesis), the main expanded scenes would be: The diversionary efforts of Heyward to enable the courier to flee to safety under the cover of Uncas and Hawkeye (A Run To Fort Edward), The Parlay scene (Terms For Surrender) which is radically expanded to our benefit, providing more interplay between the two antagonists, the former Clannad scene (Stay Alive) which intersperses, beautifully, scenes of the captives being hauled away, at one point set against a radiant sunset, with shots of their Mohican rescuers in pursuit ... you can hear the pants of exhaustion, sense the desperation ... and the final scene (Last of the Mohicans), where Chingachgook rightfully takes over the title role and artfully allows him to become the wise elder, poignantly foreseeing the future of the frontier. It is a grand moment that makes a strong ending even more puissant. All we could say was, "Wow!" Fifteen scenes, in all, are listed as containing footage not seen in the original theatrical release, though we were hard pressed to spot them in one (Lovers), and found little added things in two scenes not listed (A Stirring in the Blood and Trophies of Honor). Bits & pieces skillfully interwoven into the substance already there to create the definitive version ... Or, as the liner notes say, "[Michael Mann's] definitive vision of the film." We couldn't agree more!



A Word On The Blemishes: Several reviews mention uneven editing of this new cut. In fact, included with the DVD is this little note: "In order to create it [this DVD version], certain shots had to be lengthened, resulting in a momentary jump in the image." We noticed but two or three. These minor flaws are easily negated by the overall outstanding image clarity, deep colors, and improved sound.

Viewed on a 25" RCA Color Trak Plus Stereo Monitor, using only the TV's speakers. DVD played on a Toshiba SD-2109 DVD player.

Contained within the disk packaging, the following scene list (added/expanded scenes in **bold**):

Main Titles - The Deerslayers - **The Cameron House** - A Call To Arms - **The New Major** - **The Scotsman's Daughter** - **The War Party** - To Fort William Henry - The Faces Of War - A Stirring In The Blood - **The Siege** - **Magua's Hate** - The Look Of Love - A Run to Fort Edward - Final Decisions - **The Escape Plan** - **Lovers** - Sedition - The Whole World's On Fire - Terms for Surrender - **Magua's Pain** - **The Defeated** - Magua Strikes - **Escape** - The Falls - **Stay Alive...** - Trophies Of Honor - Heyward's Choice - To Save Alice - A Father's Revenge - **Last Of The Mohicans** - End Titles

NOTE: There is a theatrical version of LOTM on DVD available through European markets. Blu-Ray edition, released in 2011, *The Director's Definitive Cut* - is a sort-of-combo edition of the DVD [Expanded] & VHS [Theatrical] versions! It's a hybrid, sure to tick off everyone!

*... the Trail from Cooper to Mohican Press*

## The LOTM DISSERTATION

*Clearly, this site demonstrates that movements such as the Mohicans fan community can pose a serious alternative, if not a direct challenge, to the academy's elite, monopolistic authority over matters of culture, history and aesthetics.*

Through the years, we periodically received E-mail from a fellow who claimed he was working on a thesis for school and needed some input, and insight, from us. He was learned & seemed genuine so we obliged, as we usually do when asked for info [of all imaginable sorts!], but, in the back of our minds, we weren't really sure what he was really up to. Well, it appears that those minute fears were unfounded & our trust was well rewarded! This researcher, Michael A. Williams, has completed a PhD dissertation on the mythology of *The Last of the Mohicans*. We were the proud recipients of the final work, in .pdf format, a couple of nights ago [early December, 2002], and we can't adequately describe our feelings. The work is outstanding & scholarly. Superb, really. It begins with the James Fenimore Cooper novel, of course, and follows the phenomena of LOTM through its various film resurrections, culminating in the very special - to all of us - 1992 Michael Mann version. Oh, wait, no ... no it doesn't, for it doesn't stop there! The final chapter - some 60 pages - is on ... US! As in *On the Trail of the Last of the Mohicans* ... the book, this web site, the Mohican Board! So, that really means, in many ways, its about you!

*MohicanLand is a community that arose virtually and eventually developed a real-world existence as well. While it in no way corresponds in size to the kind of fan communities that have made Star Trek and The Rocky Horror Picture Show so widely familiar, its roots as a cultural phenomenon lie substantially in those "traditions." More important things can be said about it, however, when we appreciate a point implicit in both Rheingold's and Wellman's work: that virtual commu-*

*nities, whether one refers to them with that term or some other, are the quintessential example of "imagined community."*

*There is a powerful affinity between this community, formed around a narrative object that has always been a "marked text" in the evolving discourse of American national identity, and the mechanisms of nationalist ideology that Benedict Anderson calls attention to in Imagined Communities, based on narrative tropes of remembering and forgetting, with a nation as the object.*

Now, our first impulse was to make the .pdf file available on the site as a download - to share its rich text with the "world" - but, we can't. Not yet. Our enthusiasm must be tempered! We asked the author, a 49 year old gentleman doing this research for the University of Rochester in New York. He has no objection to our quoting some excerpts on the web site, which we are doing here. He's even offered to allow accessibility to some folks ... though we're not yet clear on the terms ... but he's not too comfortable on the download-for-all idea, because ... because ... there's a very real, very strong possibility that the work will be published!!! A book! With a large part written about US! The web site, the Gatherings, this Internet Community ... US! Ok, ok ... we're excited!

*Nonetheless, it seems to me that the people involved in MohicanLand, and their productivity, cannot be understood as a traditional star-based fan phenomenon. As focused as their interests in this direction can be at times, Mohicans Web sites as a whole demonstrate that their interests are much more broad than that.*

We can't tell you how very strange it was to be reading this stuff and knowing the author was talking about our efforts in accumulating all this knowledge in one place - our web site & the characters that lay within. All objectively from a completely different perspective than from what we've ever experienced before. Surreal, simply. It is really good stuff! We don't say that just out of self-interest. It's really good stuff ... the whole thing. The whole thing. The section on 1992 runs about 75 pages, and it is the most detailed "review" you are ever likely to come across. And, like we say elsewhere, *The Last of the Mohicans*, the saga, is a deeply-rooted part of Americana. That allows this site to

exist as it does today. There's an intangible attraction to the story that Cooper wrote - not to mention the celluloid factors brought into play more recently by Mann. This dissertation covers it all. Well-written, scholarly, objective, fresh ... you will thoroughly enjoy its every word!

*I suspect that "scholarship" is a more intensive area of fan activity in the Mohicans fandom than in many other fandoms. The work at the center of this fandom, already established in the literary and popular canon as an "American Classic," is at least doubly historical: an adaptation of an adaptation of a 175 year old novel whose subject is a period 70 years in its own past. Authority and expertise range beyond the limits of the work itself, and encompass all kinds of historical, political, and cultural issues. The Web site self-consciously fills a role as a historical authority and reference source, a role that goes well beyond simply reprinting Baker's [note: Mark Baker] material. TOLOTM includes much material on historical accuracy, and on the historical context for the diegetic narrative and for Cooper's moment as well; some of this material is apparently authored by the Federicis, some by others, Granted, the style of the writing is not necessarily academic.*

*There is nothing resembling a scholarly apparatus, with only basic attention paid to referencing, and it lacks somewhat in historical and critical self-awareness. Nonetheless, this fan production rivals in quality many such discussions found in literary and historical journals. Nor is the scholarship limited to strictly historical subjects. A deconstruction of Twain's famous critique of Cooper, for example, applies Twain's approach to Twain's own work. This essay is as incisive, well written, and analytical as any number of works of academic literary criticism.*

[SEE: MR. TWAIN'S CRITIQUING OFFENSES on our Web Site!]

And, it's critical, it's not just a love fest, though clearly the man enjoys what he's writing about. Anyway, we could go on & on ... We are quoting a few things from the last chapter only here. Just a few. Just to whet your appetite. Let it be said, in this chapter, basically on the Internet community phenomenon known as "Mohicanland," he talks of Gatherings & reenacting, he talks of Wes Studi & Eric Schweig and more, he mentions some of you, by NAME [Major Bray, Eric Hurley, Mighty Mohican Mama, Sarah Melcher, Mark Baker, et al], he delves into the meanings of this web site and, as its creators, we can say he is remarkably perceptive & right on in most all cases. He has been, it is readily apparent, the ULTIMATE LURKER! Egad, this is so very weird ... And, soon to be a book, more than likely!

*The fact that Gatherings exist at all is an indicator of the fans' dedication either to their object, or to their fandom, or both. ... The community, originally purely a virtual phenomenon, has thus acquired a significant "real world" dimension—one whose history is recorded, and its future furthered, on the Internet. The physical and the virtual existences of the Mohicans fandom are thus mutually reinforcing.*

'Nuff said, till its expected - and much hoped for - release as a publication ...

The AUTHOR: *The Recycling of the Mohicans: The "Classic" Novel and Iterative Adaptation*

Michael Allen Williams [who *did* attend the 2004 Gathering with his family]

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Philosophy

Supervised by

Professor John Michael

Department of English

The College Arts and Sciences

University of Rochester

Rochester, New York

2002

From the CREDITS: Thanks for assistance also go to Rich and Elaine Federici, the graceful hosts of the Web site, *On the Trail of the Last of the Mohicans*

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~ All quotes on these pages are from this work [CHAPTER 5], generously passed along to us by Mr. Williams! ~

When, and if, this accomplished work is published, you can bet we will feature it on our Web Site ... so,  
STAYED TUNED!

~ Chapter 5 has finally made it to print in the June, 2007 issue of the *Journal of Popular Culture*! ~

NOTE: A .pdf version is currently available for download to registered Mohican Board members only ... for free!



## Michael Mann

*[regarding the filming of "Cameron's Cabin ... part 2"] I've given him a hill to walk up, then when he turns back down the hill it'll give him momentum ... He's gonna be walking with real purposeful steps, and his inner urge is almost to physically assault her ... Every take was within a zone of excellence where the changes get down to being microscopic. Many, many actors can stand there and deliver controlled rage, but Daniel goes one dimension beyond. In his movements, his expression, he avoids all the tired stuff - we don't see the little muscle on the cheekbone flexing or any of that. You just see it's somebody who's angry. He's totally original, spontaneous and believable - that's where Daniel elevates it all to. That's why I wanted him to play Hawkeye. To elevate this whole movie, story, novel to immediacy, I needed somebody as good as Daniel.*

*People with real-life experiences can bring a presence only the finest actors can. Russell has all kinds of wisdom and scars, which help him understand Chingachgook - and Magua, too.*

## Daniel Day-Lewis

*I had some help preparing for the role from a guy who really spends most of his time living in the 18th century. [Our own Mark A. Baker, of course!] When I first met him, in a clearing in the forest, I thought I was hallucinating. He was standing outside an 18th century tent with an 18th century fire wearing an 18th century costume, accurate in every single detail. Most of it he had made himself! He told me about guys who could load rifles on the run and I didn't believe him then. ... I did develop a disturbing affection for running with this heavy rifle! It wasn't a well-balanced rifle either. Elegant, but not well-balanced. It was particularly heavy in the barrel. It's not just the weight of it but the imbalance it creates.*

*I was quite stunned by the ferocity of some of the violence. Even though I'd been a part of some of it at the time we were filming. It doesn't feel like that when you are involved in it.*

*Everything about his [Hawkeye's] sensibility and his cultural understanding is that of his people, the Mohicans. It was completely alien to me. - From On the Trail of the Last of the Mohicans, the web site*

## [Final] Final Thoughts and Feelings on the Journey, Thanks, and Some Appreciation

*Our purpose for taking up space here on the Internet is plain & simple. We have created a monument to a classic film, based on a classic piece of American Literature, and we want to share that with you. There is no political stance associated with this Web Site. It is here based on our love of a film. Our histories, and they are OUR histories, are included to help enhance the visitor's understanding of the people & events that were at the core of The Last of the Mohicans. We take no sides; offer no moral judgments; claim no inherent insights. We have a parody section where we poke fun at all things, including ourselves & the life taken on by our WWWboard. Laugh with it. Our use of the word Mohicans, except when in the strictly historical sense, is a shortened The Last of the Mohicans, as in, The Great [Last of the] Mohican[s] Gathering. We mean no disrespect or offense to any ethnic or cultural group. We have strived towards maintaining an honest, forthright, & complete picture ... by our standards.*

*We hope that you can fully enjoy this Web Site! ... From Our Mission Statement on On the Trail of the Last of the Mohicans, the web site*

So, where in the world do we go from here? It's been such a long, long ... and unexpectedly so ... journey. Forgive me if I repeat myself in this section. This book was written over a long period of time, beginning way back in 1993 ... Things do get jumbled!

Never thought for a minute that we'd be able to sell all of that first run of guide booklets. Not at that price. And to still be selling them today! Absolutely amazing. Michael Mann, after receiving a freebie, bought six more. Never in my wildest ... Interviews with Eric Schweig, Maurice Reeves, Russell Means, Mike Phillips, Wes Studi, Maddy Stowe? C'mon! No way! [Wes' interview, by the way, was chosen to be a part of this work, over the others, because it is, we feel, the most exhaustive

& representative of the bunch.] Worked with Schweig - selling his masks - for 2 years? Fat chance! Contributions to a web site that grew out of all proportion to our original humble expectations from nearly every corner of the production - from Daniel Day-Lewis all the way down to helicopter pilots. The web site stands as a monument, a resource, a glittering tribute to a film well done and the history & novel that preceded it. We endured evil escapades that we didn't know existed in the world of the Internet. Accusations, rip-offs, terrorism, even pornography ... you name it. Then, on the other hand, it was the birthplace of a usually warm Internet community, the Mohican Board, that led, rather quickly actually, to the Great Mohican Gatherings - six of them from 1998 - 2004 [yet another resounding success - 7 days worth! **2004 - THE GRAND GREAT MOHICAN GATHERING**], with a break due to mostly personal reasons in 2003. Lo & behold, these Gatherings were attended by the likes of Michael Bigham [locations manager], Eric Schweig, Wes Studi, and, in 2004, Russell Means! Courtesy of two Director's Cut Drives, we may even have been partially responsible for the DVD edition of LOTM!

The whole shebang has been a tumultuous roller-coaster of a ride - the lowest of lows, the highest of highs. We've been slighted & slandered; we've been recognized & rewarded. Friends were made; and, sadly, friends were lost. It has been exhilarating and inspirational on many levels. Damning and frustrating on others. One thing it has always been is exhausting. If nothing else, this whole conglomeration of books, web site, message board, Gatherings, has been tiring.

The whole episode has become as one ... book, web site, message board, Gatherings, and now this second edition book. In this book, an attempt has been made to include representative portions of it all. Hopefully, that has been successful. The core of it, as it has always been, remains the locations and how to find them yourselves. The first 120 pages - about double that of the entire first edition - deal directly with just that. The thanks, included here [pages 121, 122], in the first edition were given to people who contributed directly to the finding of all the locations and the eventual release of those findings in a book, *On the Trail of the Last of the Mohicans*. The remainder of this volume, *The Expanded Edition*, deals with the rest, but like I say, the distinctions, over time, have become vague, at least from my perspective.

The whole package could never have taken on the form it did without the assistance, support, and contributions of so very many people, from all walks of life, from many levels of involvement with the ongoing proceedings. To mention them all would be an impossible task. Invariably, someone would be overlooked. The following listing of folks - mostly in no particular order - is just a partial listing of those who have become involved and deserve mention.

Praise & accolades of the highest form go to Elaine, my wife. Lainey, the Great & Terrible, as she has become known. Without her diligence, perseverance, wit, and writings, things would never have been what they became. Truly, she is the co-creator of it all!

Many, many lasting thanks to ... Twentieth Century Fox, Michael Mann & Forward Pass Productions, Daniel Day-Lewis, Eric Schweig, Maurice Roeves, Russell Means, Mike Phillips, Wes Studi, Madeline Stowe, Michael Bigham, Mark A. Baker, Randall King, Eric A. Hurley, Curtis Gaston, Scottie & Barbara Willis, Connie Boyer, Noel T. Manning II, Tony Hinde, Gayle Clark, Major George A. Bray, Sarah Melcher, Clabert Menard, Kihew, Barzso Playsets, Smoke & Fire, Joy Landry, Bruce Davis, Sun Eagle, Marie Faure, Joe Hinson, ImageSwim, Jonathan Knee, Susan V. Houck, Stephanie Gritts, [Doc] Mary Long, Kristen Donnelly, Bill Rooks, Christina Berry, Tudjaat, Dougie MacLean, Amazon.com, Firecat of Discord, Tim Todish, Software 2010, Chicora Chief Gene Martin, Roger Worley, Jim Smith, Lynn Wilson, Muzzleloader Magazine, Diana Strickland, Georgina Larson, Ron Federici, Josie Auger, Sam Fruner, Rose Fernandez, H. David Wright, the authors of *The MacWilliam Chronicles*, Wayne Watson, Tim Cordell, Sara Donati, Theresa Williams, Bill Miller, Skyland Arts Cinema, Louise's Rock House Restaurant, The French Broad Rifles, Tom Hensley & USA Raft, Friends of the Falls, Michael A. Williams, Rick Martinko, Joanne Shenandoah, the String Beings, James Neel and PlanetHosting.com.

There's a story behind every one of those names ... a book unto itself, almost!

Hugs & kisses to a dear friend, "Jiminy" (you know who you are!).

Also, thanks to everyone who has attended [see fairly comprehensive list within these pages], & wanted to attend, our Great Mohican Gatherings in North Carolina. Special mention here to those who have helped put them together, not only for that assistance, but for the long term, day-to-day encouragement we have received from them: Marcia Meara, Jo Tishler, Ann Colby, Chris Boone, Myrrh Sagrada, Ilse Maan, Sarah Zentner, Sharon Cagle Hurley, Mary Garland, Stephanie McCulloch, Marc & Cherie Harbison, Diana Strickland [again!], Ros Had-don, and Carol O'Connor!

Special mention, as well, to Kate Penman and Jayne Langan ... for their *selfless* work putting together Ariel's Auction!

Thanks to Chimney Rock Park, The Biltmore Estate, Sterling Diagnostic Imaging, the North Carolina State Forest Service, & the National Park & Forest Services for being so hospitable & cooperative!

A very special thanks to our fine friends, Bea & Mike Janisch, who kept us focused, early on through unexpected turmoil, with our "*eyes fixed on our duty*" & given us needed strength to persevere on many occasions when all we felt we really wanted to do was toss in the towel!

Of course, perhaps greatest thanks go to each & every visitor & member of our WWWboard ... too numerous to name ... for the continued support ... the fodder that gives us the drive to continue!

No doubt, there will be more ...

As it is, there were new Gatherers in 2004, among them:

*Carter Ard*  
*Kay Dennis*  
*Mary Graybill [in spirit, at least]*  
*Del & 'big' Del Heistadt*  
*Don Miller*  
*Phyllis Nelson*  
*Cindy Rodgers*

*Kim Stout*  
*Diane Williams*

Often overlooked, are the nameless - or faceless, in any event - "masses" who visit the web site, 3000-plus strong per day, and have supported this endeavor by purchasing the guide book. It goes without saying, we would have closed up shop a long time ago without you!

It's been a "magical mystery tour." Many times I've said, "what a long strange trip it's been." It has been both ... And much more.

I feel somewhat blessed - not to be overly melodramatic - to have known all these fine people, to have this dreamlike project grow and reach fruition, to be releasing this second edition volume after 11 long and eventful years. It has brought forth some very great rewards that will stay with me for the rest of my life.

My greatest, if not only, disappointment? Without a doubt, the loss along the way of a good buddy, Marcia. Long may you run, MMMM!

My first meager hope for all of you, in the first edition of this book, was that you'd find all the film locations without so much of the hassle. I still wish that for all of you, because in so doing, you will embark on a stunningly beautiful and memorable expedition. Now, though, I wish for many of you, more than that. I hope that the rewards were indeed great for you and that they will stay with you for the rest of your lives.

So, where *do* we go from here? Years ago, in 1997, as I prepared the first edition for publication, I naively thought I was putting it all to rest. I won't make that assumption this time. What shall be, shall be. It has taken on a life of its own. Who am I to interfere? I'll save that judgment for the Next Edition!

Happy Trails!

--- Rich Federici, March 2004 [edited in April, 2016 -  
portions culled from the web site]



## **Daniel Day-Lewis**

*Well I was pretty weary when *The Last of the Mohicans* finished and I was a bit anxious about that. When you have lived in the mountains and the forests for five or six months it's not something you readily let go of and the shock of being back in the city was really acute. I literally finished in North Carolina after a 26 hour last day of shooting [*Under the Falls*] and the next day found myself on the streets of Paris and was completely bemused by everything I saw and smelled and heard. I was still thinking like an Indian. Could you imagine what it was like for them to be taken on these bizarre journeys to meet the Queen of England? It must have been like science fiction!*

*[regarding the time spent at the anti-terrorist training camp in pre-production] We have to know each other as a family. [We] should have a father-son relationship. We became close and will remain so.*

## **Madeleine Stowe**

*When you're doing a scene with another person, who plays the other half of the most important relationship in the movie, and you share this intimacy with the director - almost an exclusive circle - and you feel everybody else working to capture that, it's the most incredible feeling. Daniel's not cerebral, doesn't talk a lot of bull ... There's a quality about him that's almost religious.*

*... it was understood - a real male thing - that Michael was the general and Daniel was going to fulfill his orders. I think they really care about each other a great deal, those two. ...*

## **Russell Means**

*... Revolutionary ... [For the first time] Indians are not John Ford's cardboard figures. Even the bad Indian, Magua, is given a history and a psychology.*

*One scene of me in slow motion translates to about five seconds. It took 3 and a half hours to film. ... From *On the Trail of the Last of the Mohicans*, the web site.*

# The Daniel Day-Lewis Letter

68 St. James's  
London

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Federici,

I just wanted to thank you for the generous and thoughtful gift that you sent me. There was a time when I might have cursed at the thought of ever seeing some of those locations again but already, just looking at the photographs, I've a strong sense of privilege in having spent a part of my life in those places: such power and beauty. It's so rare that I'm sent anything by anybody that isn't asking for something. Your gesture was truly appreciated - you've obviously taken a great deal of trouble - as were your encouraging words.

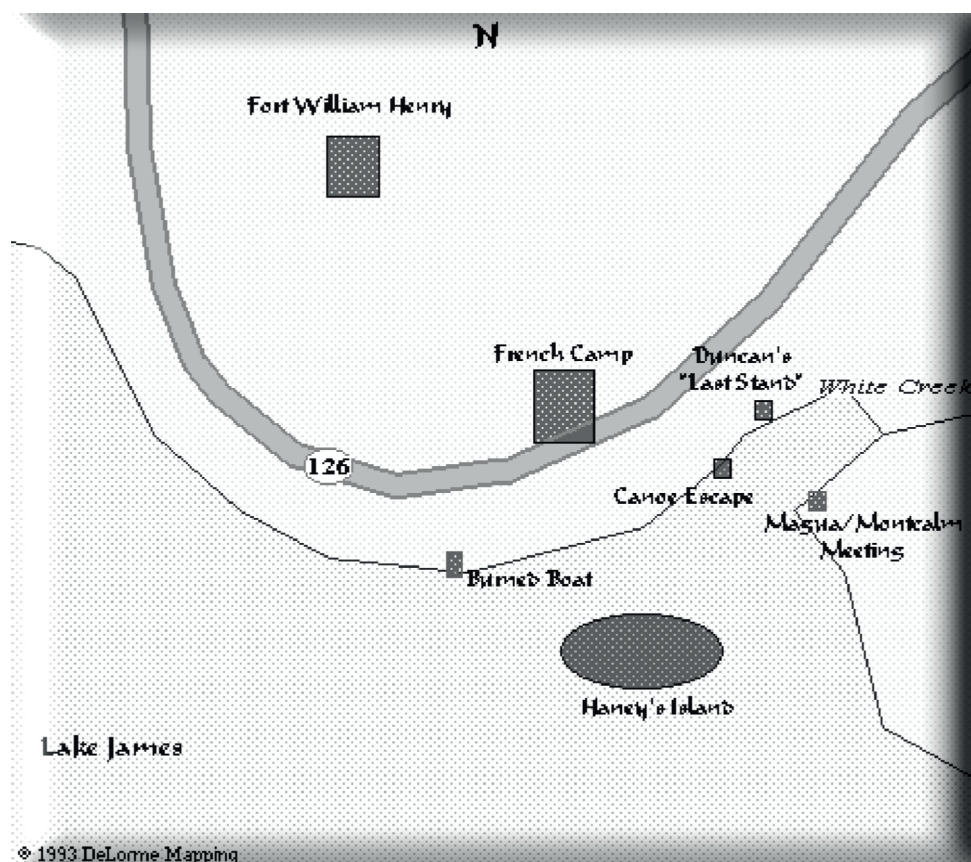
With many thanks & best wishes,

Sincerely,

Daniel Day-Lewis

Original letter can be found at:  
<http://www.mohicanpress.com/mo01013.html>





[continued from page 151!]

Then, of course, there's Soldier #2, Eric Hurley, who each year blesses the event with his bubbling personality, good-will, and on the scene perspective of the filming at almost every location that we visit, John Evans with his collection of props from the film, Susan Houck with her Celtic music, John Harkins with his longhunter outfit, Emily McGowan with her 35mm preview of LOTM - donated for future Gatherings - Adrienne Brown and her magnificently sculpted Hawkeye doll ... so many things brought to display or donated to raffle. And then, there's each & every person who attends, bringing their own special charms & personality, that all blend together to create that magic ... Yes, it always comes back to those who come ... that is, indeed, what it is all about!

[Sorry about this editing flub!]

# *Homage, History, Humor, and more ... !*

*On the Trail of the Last of the Mohicans ... The Web Site! Visit us, anytime, at: <http://www.mohicanpress.com/> We always encourage participation & involvement on our somewhat infamous Mohican Board [thank you, Snitz Forums for the most excellent software & support!] Become crazed! Go to: <http://www.mohicanpress.com/messageboard/>*

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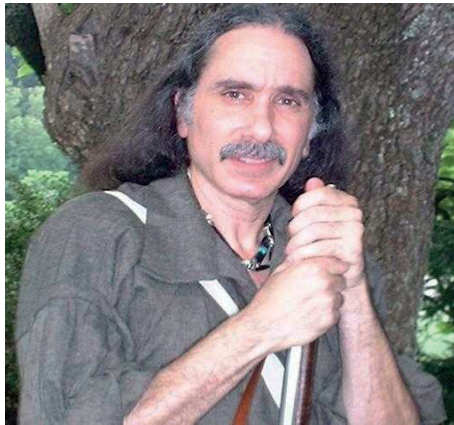
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*The author, Rich Federici,  
wearing garb presented at  
The 2003 unGathering!*

# Notes From Your Pathfinding





### ABOUT THIS BOOK

**T**here is so much to see and do in the western part of North Carolina, that it would take a much larger volume than this booklet to include them all. That, though, is not what this book is all about. It is about getting you to the sites used as film locations in the 1992 movie, *The Last of the Mohicans*, a bit more easily than it was for me to get there. Along the way, I'll steer you to a few other locations of scenic or historical interest, but by no means is it complete in that regard, nor is it meant to be. You will, however, be able to explore nearly all of the scenes you viewed in the movie.

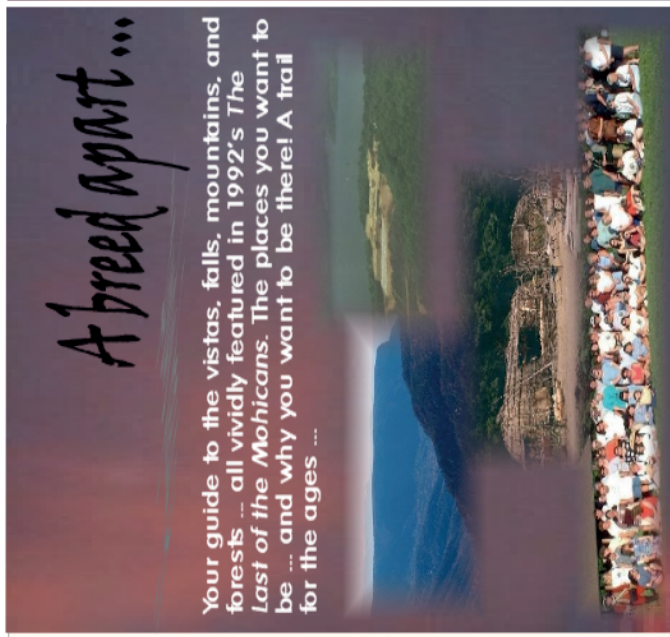
If you're looking for a particular scene, I've set the format up in chronological order as the scenes appeared in the movie. I hope you don't mind just a bit of history, for I've woven the historical truth in with the literary fiction.

Following, in the section "*How To Get There*", all these scenes are grouped under their respective locations to aid you in seeing everything in one place in one visit. Finally, I've included a partial listing of accommodations and eateries, arranged by county, to help you make your way.

My hope is that you enjoy the text, the photos, and most of all, getting to the actual locations. (Remember that some are on private property and are included only to complete the visual picture.) Your tour will include "virgin" timber, beautiful panoramic vistas, gorgeous waterfalls, classic architecture, and white water rivers. It was fun for me, though often frustrating, so hopefully, through this guide, you can experience all the enjoyment without so much of the hassle. Good luck!

Lest I forget, as I almost did, thanks for being you, North Carolina - couldn't have happened without ya! And, finally, thanks to Mr. James Fenimore Cooper ... the true Great Sachem!







Thanks for the support through the  
years. I hope you have enjoyed the  
book & the locations.



**Mohican Press**

*Web Site ~ Locations Guide ~ The Great Mohican Gatherings*