



KIRKLAND TOWN LIBRARY

KAYA

1764 - PACIFIC NORTHWEST

OUR AREA IN THE 1750s

Kaya was a member of the Nimi'ipuu tribe and lived in the pacific northwest - in areas spanning what is now known as Idaho, Oregon and Washington - during the 1750s.

During this time, Clinton and Kirkland were not yet settled, though members of the Oneida Indian Nation tribe lived in the area.

NAMES

Indian nations each have their own languages and when European settlers came to the United States they interpreted and offered new words from their own languages.

Kaya's tribe is known by two names, but this is due to how their tribe name was interpreted when Lewis and Clark met her tribe in the early 1800s. Nimi'ipuu means "real people" or "we the people." The name given by an interpreter to the tribe was Nez Perce or "pierced nose."

In Kaya's tribe each person has a given name and a name they are awarded. Kaya's given name is Kaya'aton'my or "she who arranges rocks" the name she will use as she ages is Swan Circling.

Oneida comes from the word Onyotaa:ka which means "people at the standing stone."

Do you know what your name means?

HOUSING

Kaya's tribe moved across the land to follow food sources that changed with each season, because of this they had simple housing.

Unlike the Oneida people in the 1700s who had long houses, Kaya and her people lived in teepees and built smoke houses at each place they moved to throughout the year. They were able to pack up their teepees and take them with the tribe to the next location.

BODIES OF WATER

Rivers and streams were important resources to Kaya's people. They used bodies of water to gather drinking water, swim and bathe in and also to collect fish from for meals.

The Nimi'ipuu set up camps along the Snake, Clearwater and Salmon rivers. The Oneidas likely used the Oneida Lake and Mohawk River to provide water for their needs.

The Oneida Carry was also an important part of their life. It was a land route between the Mohawk River and Wood Creek, in modern day Rome, which was used for trade and allowed for supplies and goods to travel between Central New York and the Atlantic seaboard.

INTRODUCTION OF EUROPEANS

During the 1750s the area Kaya lived in had not yet been settled by Europeans. The Nimi'ipuu tribe didn't have contact with non-Native people until 1805 when Lewis and Clark traveled through what is now known as western Idaho.

Here in New York, Europeans came to Oneida lands in the 1600s, and traded beaver furs for cloth and iron tools.

In 1777, the Oneida Indians fought alongside Europeans in the Battle of Oriskany and Saratoga and were considered the United State's first allies. Polly Cooper, of the Oneida Indian Nation, traveled to Valley Forge with other Oneidas and taught George Washington's troop how to prepare corn so they would not starve. Polly would not accept any payment for her help, though she did accept a gift bonnet and shawl from Martha Washington. The story of Polly Cooper's shawl is part of Oneida oral tradition and has been passed down through the generations. You can still see the shawl today.



Polly Cooper's shawl remains in the care of her descendants. Pictured is Louella Derrick (Onondaga). <http://www.oneidaindiannation.com/culture/shako/27015199.html>



A bronze statue featuring Polly Cooper (center) holding a basket of corn, George Washington and Oneida Chief Oskanondohna can be seen at the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C. The statue signifies the bond between the United States and the Oneida Nation during the revolutionary war.

*Photo courtesy of the Oneida Indian Nation
[http://www.oneidaindiannation.com/about/
Allies-in-War-Partners-in-Peace.html](http://www.oneidaindiannation.com/about/Allies-in-War-Partners-in-Peace.html)*

RECREATION

Kaya has her own horse, which she trained and tended to. A typical day for Kaya may have included tending to her horse, babysitting her younger brothers, gathering and preparing food alongside the other women in her tribe, along with weaving baskets and clothing. For members of the Oneida Indian Nation, games included what we call lacrosse. The Oneidas call it Ká:lahse' (gah-las) and have played it since long before European settlers arrived. Ká:lahse' is a form of recreation for them, but they also see it as a spiritual celebration and medicine game.



<http://www.oneidaindiannation.com/culture/shako/Kalahse--a-Haudenosaunee-Tradition>

Plan a visit to the Oneida Indian Nation's Shako:wi Cultural Center to see their exhibit on Ká:lahse'