Great Law Wampum Belt Reproductions:
Wampum Belts: The original wampum belts still exist and are now held by the Chiefs at Onondaga-New York and Six Nations-Grand River. The belts that are for sale here are replicas, and used for educational purposes at all levels. Wampum (Onek’ra – Mohawk language) was much prized by the Iroquois and the Eastern Algonquians. It was made of white and purple quahog or conch shells. Wampum beads were strung into belts and strings. The Iroquois attached great importance to the power of the beads. Strings of wampum were used to sanction council proceedings, to vouch for the integrity of a speaker, to give responsibility to an office, to solemnize a treaty or to assuage sorrow. Messages of particular importance were also made into strings and sent by a runner among the Six Nations Iroquois. The Onondagas, traditional Keepers of the Council Fire, were also Keepers of the League wampum. After the American Revolution, wampum took on a new significance with the founding of the teachings of Handsome Lake and wampum is used to lend authority and solemnity to religious ceremonies.

In 1973, Yvonne Thomas created blueprints from the photographs of the original wampum belt collection held at the New York State Museum, and the knowledge shared here is for the on-going perpetuity and educational purposes in the Iroquois community. Since, wampum belts and strings have been re-created with the use of glass beads. Workshops are held periodically at the Jake Thomas Learning Centre to teach how the wampum bead is made from the quahog shell.

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Atot-rho’ Belt.
#2010: Also known as the Firekeeper’s Belt of the Onondaga Nation. This means that Atot-rho’ (Mohawk language) and his colleagues will be responsible to protect the Capital Council Fire and to ensure the “fire” never goes out. Approx. 22 1/4” x 12 ½”
The designs signify the fourteen sachems who are the Keepers of the Central Council Fire, Onondagas, of the Five Nations Confederacy. They guard the Council Fire and keep it clean and bright. It is the duty of Atort-rho’, the principal Onondaga Chief, and his colleagues to be the Keepers of the Great Council Fire.
© Jake Thomas.

Evergrowing Tree Belt
#2002: Represents where all nations will shelter underneath the Great Tree of Peace. Approx. 21” x 18”
This belt represents the Evergrowing Tree (Skaronhesek’wa Tsiokterakentk’wa – Mohawk language), with its white roots which have spread out, one to the north, one to the east, one to the west, and one to the south from the Iroquois territory. The Great White Roots represents peace and strength. If any man or any nation outside of the Five Nations wishes to obey the Great Laws of Peace, they may follow one of the great roots to the tree. If their minds are clean and they promise to obey the wishes of the Confederate Council, they are welcome to take shelter beneath the “Tree of the Long Leaves”. © Jake Thomas.
Friendship Treaty Belt.

#2003: A covenant of friendship between the Onkwehón:we and the White People which represents peace, friendship and good minds. Approx. 18" x 3 3/4"

The Friendship belt records a sequence of treaties made with the Dutch, French and English, and also the Thirteen Colonies (U.S.) in early times. The treaties were covenants made between the Native People (Onkwehónwe – Mohawk language), and the Whiteman (Ra’serón:ni) pledging their friendship of peace forevermore. From time to time they should polish their covenant of friendship.

When the White Skinned People came to this continent, the Onkwehón:we and the White Skinned People made friendship so that mankind may walk upon this Mother Earth in Peace. They both agreed that this will be well and good for their people. They both respected each other. They agreed to be known as brothers. The Whiteman suggested that they use a three link chain, a symbol of joining hands, a covenant to bind their friendship. The first link would represent Friendship, the second link would stand for Good Minds, and the third link shall mean that they will always have Peace. They shall smoke the Pipe of Peace to confirm their agreement. This is the way it shall be as long as there is Mother Earth. They shall renew their agreement from time to time, to dust off, clean and polish the covenant chain. They shall have interpreters when they renew their friendship. © Jake Thomas.

George Washington Belt.

#2004: This belt (Wateriwihson Tewen=ntsote` – Mohawk language) represents the treaty made between the early Thirteen Colonies and the Six Nations. Approx. 77” 1/4” x 4 1/2”

The original of this belt is the sacred agreement between the Six Nations and the original Thirteen Colonies (U.S.). It is the record of a Treaty with George Washington in 1789. The house in the center is the Longhouse of the Six Nations. The two figures on each side of the Longhouse (Kánónhses) are the Mohawks, the Keepers of the Eastern Door of the Confederacy, and the Senecas, the Keepers of the Western Door of the Confederacy. They have joined their hands in friendship, a covenant with the Thirteen Colonies. © Jake Thomas.
Haienw-tha’ Belt.

#2005: This belt (Haienw-tha’ Belt – Mohawk language) is more commonly known by the Iroquois people as the Five Nations Territorial Belt. The Onkwehón:we share common hunting and fishing rights in all Five Nations territory. Approx. 18 3/4" x 13"

A broad dark belt of wampum of thirty-eight rows, having a white heart in the center, on either side of which are two white squares all connected with the heart by white rows of beads shall be the emblem of the Unity of the Five Nations. The first of the squares on the left represents the Mohawk Nation and its territory, the second square on the left represents the Oneida Nation and its territory, the white tree of peace in the middle represents the Onondaga Nation and its territory, and it also means that the heart of the Five Nations is single in its loyalty to the Great Peace. That the Great Peace is lodged in the heart, meaning with the Onondaga Confederate Lords, and that the Council Fire is there for the Five Nations and further, it means that the authority is given to advance the cause of Peace, whereby hostile nations out of the Confederacy shall cease warfare. The white square to the right of the heart represents the Cayuga Nation and its territory, and the fourth and last white square, represents the Seneca Nation and its territory. © Jake Thomas

Keepers of the Western Door Seneca Nation Belt

#2006: The Senecas are the Western Door (Wísk Nihotitsienh-ke – Mohawk language) anyone can be adopted providing one carries a "good mind". Approx. 37 1/2" x 2 1/2"

The five hexagonal designs signify the Five Fires of the Iroquois Confederacy. The Confederacy was conceived as being like a Great Longhouse (Kanónhsons), whose end doors were guarded by the nations at the ends. At the Eastern Door were the Mohawks (Kanienkeh-ka), and at the Western Door were the Senecas (Onontow-:ka). The three rows of white beads alternating with purple rows at the ends of the belt stand for the Eastern and Western Doors. This belt was held by the Keepers of the Western Door. © Jake Thomas.

Ojibway–Iroquois Friendship Belt.

#2008: This means that the Five Nations and Ojibway Nations will walk about on Mother Earth and there will be peace, good minds, and they will never see warfare. Approx. 29" x 3 3/4"
This is a friendship belt and the symbols on the belt represent two nations joined together by the Path of Peace. One square represents the Ojibway Nation and the other square represents the Iroquois. There will always be an open path between them. This means that the Five Nations and the Ojibway Nations will walk about on Mother Earth and there will be Peace, Good Minds, and they will never see warfare. © Jake Thomas.

Prophecy Belt.

#2009 This belt (Rononshonni:ton Ka’nikonri:io’ Rah:-:wi – Mohawk language) represents the Peacemaker who brings peace, power and righteousness. Mounted. 43 1/4" x 2"

The Prophecy Belt signifies the coming of the Peacemaker to the Earth. The line running along the belt shows his descent from the Sky-world. In ancient times the Five Nations were all separate and divided by bitter wars. The Peacemaker brought the separate nations the Great Laws of Peace (Kaianerenkó:wa), and as a result of his influence the nations formed a Confederation. The Laws, which are sometimes referred to as the Iroquois Constitution, are recited from time to time using this belt as an aid to memory. © Jake Thomas.

Tuscarora Alliance Belt.

#2012: It means the Tuscarora (Wahtonkwetar-kon Taskarören – Mohawk language) came to the Confederacy and were adopted and became the Six Nations. Approx. 17 1/2" x 4 1/4"

The white beaded national belt of five diagonal bars along its length represents the original Five Nations Confederacy: Mohawks, Oneidas, Onondagas, Cayugas, and Senecas. The sixth bar represents the Tuscarora Nation which was admitted to the Confederacy in 1714. © Jake Thomas.
Two Row Wampum Treaty Belt.

#2011: Sometimes called the two rows or two paths (T=keni Teioh-te Wateriwihsë’aónhon –Mohawk language) meaning the Whiteman and the Onkwehón:we shall walk in their separate paths. It also means the Whiteman’s sail boat and the Onkwehón:we’s canoe. Approx. 36” X 4 1/2”

The Two Row Wampum Belt symbolizes the relationship of the native people (Onkwehón:we) of North America (Turtle Island) with the Whiteman (Raserón:ni). One purple row of beads represents the path of the native’s canoe which contains their customs and laws. The other row represents the path of the Whiteman’s vessel, the sailing ship, which contains his customs and laws. The meaning of the parallel paths is that neither boat should outpace the other, and the paths should remain separate and parallel forever, that is, as long as the grass grows, the rivers flow, the sun shines, and will be everlasting, and they shall always renew their treaties.

It was known to the people that the Whiteman and the Onkwehón:we made an agreement of friendship. They spoke of their belief, their laws, and how they would record this agreement of which they spoke and confirmed.

The Onkwehón:we reminded his brother that the Creator did not give him a way to write but he was given the wampum to symbolize and record this treaty. The Onkwehón:we called this Ateriwihsón:sera Kasw=nta’ treaty belt. The white wampum background meaning, purity, good minds, and peace; and the two purple wampum rows meaning, the two parallel paths signifying the Whiteman’s belief and laws; and that they shall never interfere with one another’s way as long as Mother Earth is still in motion. The Onkwehón:we gave the Whiteman an understanding that this agreement shall last as long as the sun shines, the rivers flow, and the grass grows green at a certain time of the year. This agreement will exist for generations to come and everyone shall remember and never forget the way it shall be. From time to time the Onkwehón:we will read the two row wampum belt to his people so that generations to come will never forget. This recital was held in Washington in 1952. © Jake Thomas.

The Women’s Nomination Belt.

#2007: This belt

(Ka’shast=nsera Kontih=we Ne Iotian=:shon – Mohawk language) means that women are equal. The women are the proprietors of Mother Earth and they have the sole responsibility to nominate or depose a chief in their clans. Approx. 18 1/2” x 3 1/4”

The original of this belt states the Law of the Confederacy giving women the right of nominating the Sachems or Confederate Lords in their own matrilineal clans. Women have the right to nominate and elevate their sachems as well as the right to depose of the sachem if he does wrong to the Confederacy. © Jake Thomas.
Dish With One Spoon
Approx. 24” x 2”

This belt is said to represent the hunting grounds of the Haudenosaunee that were meant to be shared, and no blood will spill over hunting disputes. In 1887, Chief John Buck described this wampum belt, “All white except for a round circle in the center. This represents all “Indians” on this continent or Turtle Island. They have entered into one Great League and contract that they will all be One and have One Heart. The circle in the center is a dish with a beaver’s tail, indicating that they will have one dish and what belongs to one will be shared among all.”

We are to eat of the beaver tail, using no sharp utensils, to prevent shedding blood. We share all game, and resources, such as the timber, and everything the Creator has provided for us upon our arrival to Mother Earth.

This belt is similar to the Five Nations Territorial Belt (Haienwatha Belt). Another concept since the Reclamation in Caledonia ON

“We have still one matter left to be considered and that is with reference to the hunting grounds of our people from which they derive their living.”

They our lords—rotiian::shon said with reference to this matter: “Now, we shall do this: We shall only have one dish or bowl in which will be placed one beaver’s tail and we shall all have coequal right to it, and there shall be no knife in it, for if there be a knife in it, there would be danger that it might cut someone and blood would thereby be shed.” This one dish or bowl signifies that they will make their hunting grounds one common tract and have coequal rights to hunt within it. The knife being prohibited from being placed into the dish or bowl signifies that all danger would be removed from shedding blood by the people of these different nations of the Confederacy caused by differences of the rights of the hunting grounds.

Then the Peacemaker said, “Now, we have accomplished and completed forming the Great Confederacy of the Five Nations together with adopting rules and regulations in connection therewith.” © Jake Thomas, 1991