

The Jingle Dress Marked its 100th Anniversary

I can talk about the history of the jingle dress

In April 2019, the Mille Lacs Indian Museum and Trading Post in Onamia, MN opened a new exhibit called *Ziibaaska' iganagooday: The Jingle Dress at 100*. The exhibit told the origins, history, and importance of the jingle dress as it marked its 100th anniversary.

These dresses, featuring rows of metal cones that jingle as the dancer moves, began to appear in the upper Midwest in the early 1900s. Oral histories vary on where the jingle dress exactly started, but stories often trace it back to the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe in central Minnesota.



Jingle dresses, about 1920
Minnesota Historical Society

Elders of the Mille Lacs Ojibwe tell of a man who kept having a dream of four women dancing in red, blue, green and yellow dresses decorated with metal cones made from snuff tobacco tins. After he told his wife about the dream and showed her the spring-like dance steps he saw, she and other community women created the dresses. Later the man shared his dream with more people and the women demonstrated the dance.

At the same time, the man's daughter was very sick, hardly able to move. When the women began to dance, the girl stirred and watched, and by the end of the evening, she was up and dancing with the women.

View this story (and much more) in the video, "The Jingle Dress Tradition," by the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe and Twin Cities Public Television (26:38) <https://youtu.be/gk7Cha5BVUc>

The jingle dress and its connection to healing first appeared around World War I, perhaps in response to the 1918-1919 global influenza pandemic. Back then, the pandemic disease killed an estimated 50 million people worldwide and more than 600,000 in the U.S., including thousands of Native Americans.

In 1921, the federal government banned traditional dancing among American Indian communities. Despite this ban, the jingle dress dance flourished and spread across Ojibwe communities in the Midwest. It was adopted by some Dakota peoples as well. By the 1930s, the dress appeared on postcards of Ojibwe women from all across Minnesota and North Dakota.

The jingle dress dance began to spread to even more Native communities in the 1980s, as the competitive powwow circuit with dance competitions, grew in popularity. Today Native women and girls from many tribes compete in traditional and contemporary jingle dress dancing around the U.S.

The Jingle Dress at 100 exhibit was developed in partnership with the University of Minnesota Department of American Studies and the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe community.

Source: <https://www.minnesotagoodage.com/voices/mn-history/2019/03/the-origin-of-the-jingle-dress/>

Jingle Dress Dancing

Name _____

I can describe two styles of jingle dress dancing

View Old Style Jingle Special @ Mille Lacs Lake 2017

<https://youtu.be/e2oCT1xW6o4> (0:00-5:43)

According to the news organization Indian Country Today, the jingle dance has very specific moves. Dancers are not supposed to cross their feet, complete a circle, or dance backward. Footwork must be light, nimble, and close to the ground. Watch for these characteristics in the dances.

Compare Dance 1 to Dance 2

	Dance 1 (0:00-2:13)	Dance 2 (2:13-5:43)
Tempo <i>Are both dances the same speed?</i>		
Rhythm of the Drum <i>Use notes or words to show the rhythm of the drum</i>		
Describe the singing timbre that accompanies the dancing		
Direction of the dancers' steps <i>How do the dancers' feet move?</i>		
Dancers' arms and hands <i>How do the dancers' arms and hands move?</i>		

Does the Mille Lacs Lake 2017 performance seem to match the first dream about the jingle dress? Explain.

View Old Style Jingle Dress Special Group 1 Song 2 – Saturday Night Live in Hinckley, June 2016

<https://youtu.be/-1D-D7oROA4> (0:00-3:19)

Do you notice anything different from the Mille Lacs Lake 2017 dances? Explain.
