



# Travels in a Stone Canoe: The Return to the Wisdomkeepers

*Harvey Arden, Steve Wall*

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In this luminous story, two journalists from *National Geographic* on assignment in Indian Country cross an invisible boundary between two worlds, two different visions of reality -- and find their lives transformed. In a stunning and probing narrative -- part adventure tale, part reflection and epiphany -- the authors of *Wisdomkeepers* embark on a dramatic "spirit journey" into the living wisdom of Native American spiritual elders.

When, nearly twenty years ago, a darkly enigmatic Cherokee herbalist approached Harvey Arden and Steve Wall with the proposition that they join him in a study of the lives, wisdom, and spiritual practices of Native America's fast-disappearing "Old Ones," the veteran writer and photographer found themselves thrust, despite their own hard-nosed skepticism, onto a mystic "path of the Wisdomkeepers."

After receiving "signs" foretold by the Cherokee, they set off on a journey of spiritual discovery through another world, called Great Turtle Island, where the Old Ones -- the Wisdomkeepers of aboriginal culture in North America -- bestowed upon them piece by surprising piece a set of "rules for being human" called "Original Instructions."

Arden and Wall eventually left their *Geographic* careers and journalism altogether, and in 1990 produced an interim report on their spirit journey, their now-classic international bestseller *Wisdomkeepers: Meeting with Native American Spiritual Elders*. In that book they recalled, "We went out two journalists after a good story. We came back two 'runners' from another world, carrying an urgent message from the Wisdomkeepers. This book is that message."

Now, in *Travels in a Stone Canoe*, that message is further deepened and elaborated as the authors reveal the intensely personal story behind -- and *beyond* -- their journey to the Wisdomkeepers. A final, incandescent chapter, "Original Instructions," sums up the transforming and highly practical wisdom they found. "Wisdom," they learned, "is not something you believe. It's something you *do*." This is a story that will inform, enlighten, and move every reader who accompanies the authors in their *Travels in a Stone Canoe*.

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