Mrs. Edna Langley weaves both history and the future into intricate designs as she creates baskets, effigy objects, masks, dolls, mats, costumes, and tapestries. "They told me that if we kept our Coushatta crafts, spoke our language every day, did not cut our hair and followed the rules and medicine of our people, we would continue as a tribe forever," says Mrs. Langley. She is one of the most versatile members of the Louisiana Coushatta Indian tribe working with traditional arts and crafts.

An unusual one-man exhibition of crafts by Mrs. Langley will be held at the Cabildo, Jackson Square, in New Orleans beginning Sunday, Dec. 9, through Jan. 31. The exhibition will be shown from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday of each week.

Mrs. Langley, through her craft — keeps alive a comprehensive aspect of a rich cultural heritage for the Coushattas, whose arts and crafts have special meaning to tribal members.

She was born Jan. 17, 1933, in Allen Parish north of Elton, where she and her husband continue to live with their seven children. She has strong ties with the land around her home. Nature supplies the sweet grass, long leaf pine needles, Spanish moss, palmetto leaves, swamp cones and pine cones which she expertly fashions into dozens of objects. "The forests around us have been good in providing the raw materials needed for our craft work," says Mrs. Langley. "When one material becomes scarce, there is always another to take its place."

Leaders of the Coushatta tribe are giving special emphasis to the arts and crafts of its members and have established the Coushatta Indian Trading Post where visitors to the community can purchase the items.

The Cabildo exhibit, organized by the Indian Arts and Crafts Board in cooperation with the Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana and directors of the Louisiana State Museum, is sponsored by the United South-eastern Tribes, Inc.

ELTON — "All of the craft skills I possess have been handed down from my mother and grandmother."

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