

# Elsie Monroe displays shawls

The Southern Plains Indian Museum and Crafts Center, administered by the Indian Arts and Crafts Board of the U.S. Department of the Interior announced the preview of a Special Exhibition, "Shawls and Vests," by Elsie Monroe, held on Dec. 21 from 1 to 4:30 p.m.

"Shawls and Vests," by Elsie Monroe will be on view to the public through Jan. 16. Viewing hours are 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday and 1 to 4:30 p.m. Sundays, closed Mondays, Christmas and New Year's Day.

Elsie Monroe, a member of the Comanche Indian tribe was born on Oct. 25, 1919 in Lawton, Okla. She attended gram-

mar school at Lone Jack School at Richard's Spur, located near Lawton, Okla.

She also attended Fort Hill Indian School in Lawton and graduated from Chilocco Indian School, Chilocco, Okla. (1939).

Mrs. Monroe received training in making shawls from her mother who decorated her shawls with embroidered designs. Since 1967, Mrs. Monroe has devoted all of her spare time to creating colorful, elaborately-designed shawls.

Assisting her mother in the production of the shawls is Judy Bryan who helps fringe and cut out designs. More recently, Mrs. Monroe has expanded her creative endeavors

to include the production of men's and women's vests, pillows and pants suits — all decorated with applique designs.

Included in the Special Exhibition will be a dozen women's dance shawls made of polyester and decorated with felt designs appliqued in geometric patterns or in narrative designs pertaining to the religious symbolism of the Native American Church.

Some of Mrs. Monroe's most inspired designs include spirit birds, fans, staffs, water drums and tipis — all of which refer to religious experience and rites of the Native American Church.

Other items on display will be men's and women's vests as well as pillows and pants suits. Most of the shawls, vests, pillows and pants suits on display will be available for sale.

In conjunction with the Special Exhibition preview, the museum staff and the Oklahoma Indian Arts and Crafts Cooperative hosted a Christmas party.

Holiday refreshments were served throughout the afternoon event. Enriching the Christmas celebration were musical selections presented by Elmer Raye Smith and Mrs. Richenda Vaughan, brother and sister who are members of the Wichita tribe and residents of Grace-mont, Okla.

A four-page illustrated brochure entitled "Shawls and Vests by Elsie Monroe" has been published by the Indian Arts and Crafts Board's Southern Plains Indian Museum and Crafts Center.

Copies of the brochure are available free to the public.