Bel Abbey was a Koasati Indian, raised in a settlement in Allen Parish (five miles north of Elton, Louisiana). He valued his traditional upbringing and learned much from the elders of his community. As he matured, he became a teacher and preserver of his culture, sharing his knowledge within and outside of his tribe. In 1991 he mentored his nephew, Timothy Langley, in the art of Koasati Storytelling. Abbey was fond of animal tales, because he felt a strong connection to nature. Fishing, hunting, and woodworking were also interests of his. Making folk toys, such as blowguns and whistles, for the children in his community enabled him to communicate with younger generations. Along with his many talents, Abbey was a lover of language. He mastered English on his own, but also spoke: Koasati, Cajun French, Choctaw, Alibamu, and Mobilian.

“That’s what the important thing [is], the stories.”
-- Bel Abbey