

## Sylvana Apache, Canoncito, New Mexico

### *Navajo Turquoise Jewelry*



Sylvana Apache's partner Randy Secatero was born on the small Canoncito Navajo Reservation thirty miles west of Albuquerque, New Mexico. This part of the reservation is not contiguous with the major part of the Navajo Nation and represents less than

one percent of the total Navajo Nation. He took jewelry making in high school but got his major inspiration from his mother, Dorothy Secatero, who showed him how to properly use tools and work with silver. Randy began working on his own and was soon selling jewelry to shops in Santa Fe and at Indian Art Shows in New Mexico. After twenty years of making jewelry, he convinced his partner, Sylvana Apache, to retire from her job and start making jewelry with him.

Sylvana is also a Navajo from Canoncito and, in addition to helping with the jewelry, she helps in their business and works to create new designs. Randy and Sylvana had always worked exclusively in sterling silver, but when metal prices climbed to record levels, they began to combine copper and silver. "It is really difficult," says Sylvana. "The metals melt and solder at different temperatures and to get that just right is hard." They have perfected the skill of combining the metals and that, combined with their precise and exact stamp work, has created a unique look. Their jewelry stands out for the quality of the work. According to Randy, many people also like the jewelry for the therapeutic value of the copper. Randy and Sylvana combine traditional Native American techniques with modern designs that reflect their heritage.

