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The Definition of Elder



"Elder" means any person recognized by the ABORIGINAL community as having knowledge and understanding of the traditional culture of the community, including the physical manifestations of the culture of the people and their spiritual and social traditions. Knowledge and wisdom, coupled with the recognition and respect of the people of the community, are the essential defining characteristics of an Elder. Some Elders may have additional attributes, such as those of traditional healer. Elders may be identified as such by ABORIGINAL communities and their peers only and only these Elders are sanctioned to teach cross-cultural awareness, no one else and most certainly not non-aboriginal people...ever. (p.s...I did not write this) from the Ripple Effects Newsletter

Murdered and Missing Native Women



Native activists believe that up to 3000 Native Women have gone missing or have been murdered in Canada since 1980. However the Native Women's Association Of Canada and the federal government put the official number at 582. Of this number 62 names were added within the past year. The true number will probably never be known because there are those Aboriginal women who will remain forever lost because authorities do not know they existed.

Native women are the highest at risk group for violence in the country. They are as likely to be killed by strangers as they are by acquaintances. Most of those missing and murdered were mothers under the age of thirty and contrary to what many believe they were not all involved in the sex trade. The homicide rate for Aboriginal women is seven times greater than non-Aboriginal women. Even though they make up only 3% of the total population, they represent 10% of reported homicides, half of which remain unsolved. By contrast the overall clearance rate for homicides in the country is 84%.

Traditionally the roles of Native men and women differed greatly, but neither role was considered to be more important than the other. The women were the givers of life, the caregivers, they prepared and preserved the food, (Continued on Next Page)



Murdered and Missing Native Women

(Continued from Page 1)

Traditionally the roles of Native men and women differed greatly, but neither role was considered to be more important than the other. The women were the givers of life, the caregivers, they prepared and preserved the food, they were knowledgeable of healing plants and medicines, and their input on decision making was highly valued.

In contrast Colonial European men felt they were superior to their own women, therefore they held little if any respect for Aboriginal women. Their racist and sexist stereotypes deny the worth and dignity of Native women, which encourages some to feel they can commit acts of rape, murder and hatred against them with little or no retribution simply because they were Aboriginal women.

Over a century's worth of government policies have broken apart and impoverished Native families, rendering many women and girls highly vulnerable to attack and exploitation.

The legal authorities have long been aware of the plight of Native women in Canada, but have done little to stop it. They have failed to implement necessary actions and protocols to make sure officers understand and respect the Native communities they serve. Without these measures in place police will continue to fail to do whatever is necessary to guarantee the safety of Native women and girls whose lives are at risk.

When the few who are charged with offenses against Native women go to trial, if the woman happened to be involved in the sex trade, the judicial system is quick to point this out and instruct the jury to consider this in their deliberations. They seem to place more emphasis on the woman being a drug user or a prostitute, rather than her status as a human being.

Regardless of their life style all of these women were stamped in the image of the Creator; they were endowed with rationality; their souls are immortal; they had minds capable of grasping the great interest of eternity, and their names were most certainly inscribed in the book of life.

Our women remain the truest friend we have and we need to do whatever it takes to ensure their safety. When trials heavy and sudden, fall upon us; when adversity takes the place of prosperity; when friends who rejoice with us in our sunshine desert us; when dark clouds of trouble thicken around us, still our women will cling to us, and endeavour by their kind precepts and counsels to dissipate the clouds of darkness and cause peace to return to our hearts.

I remain Un-ceded,

Spencer Alexander, Métis

My Thoughts on Family Research

by Anne Anderson

I'm wondering why records from the period around 1800 are today so elusive. I'm wondering why the records are either missing, burned, or never existed. If they had done a census taking then, would it be revealed that hundreds of thousands of people who have had family here in Canada since 1750 actually have Métis blood? I find it odd that we have very good census records in Canada, except for the years around 1800. It leaves me wondering...

A couple of years ago I was reading about how a historian found a log book for ships that had sailed the great lakes, with details about their contents, the people on the ships, their roles, and other facts, in great detail. This log book was found in a church basement in Harrow, Ontario. I'm wondering if there are records somewhere else that nobody has discovered. If there are log books somewhere that nobody has seen, hidden somewhere in the basement of a church, in the back room of a library, somewhere in a city hall storeroom, that lists the children of the fur trade. I'm wishing this would be found. For all those postings I've read, written by people looking for a link to explain their "knowing", I wish this would be found.



I'm being brought back to when I was 13 years old, and I was in the main public library, and there was this back room at the time that was full of documents from the city's beginnings. I was just a kid, and I was thumbing through old ledgers and logbooks, old city directories and other books. I wasn't looking for anything in particular, but I knew my family had been one of the first in the area, so who knows what I might find?

This was back before "Roots" caused everyone to rush out and find their family history. This was before everything was locked up, including the contents of that backroom. (Continued on Next Page)



My Thoughts on Family Research (Continued from Page 2)

This was before all the church records were having whole pages torn out of them by greedy beginners in genealogy, and the parishes were instructed to wrap up all records and send them to the diocese, never again to be handled by any member of the public. This was before all that, when I, as a 13 year old who was being groomed to take over as family historian, had free access to the church records, and I touched the page of the first entry that recorded Huron baptisms at Fort Pontchartrain, and I believe the year of the first entry was sometime around 1697, and the pages were so brittle I was afraid they would break. I will never forget that day, nor the feeling I had while touching the pages in that book.

I also had free access to that back room at the main public library that was in the History section, a locked room full of remnants from the early days of the settlement. I spent days that summer, looking through everything there. I stumbled upon was an old logbook from the fur trade. In it was listed some of the traders and what they brought back to the company, and what they took with them. I don't know what happened to that little logbook. It's probably locked away in that back room, but unfortunately, the last I heard of it, you now need to know that it is there in order to request to see it, and you probably are not allowed to actually touch it without someone watching you. And so, if you don't know it's there, you won't ask to see it. I'm wondering how many other logbooks are out there and nobody knows about them anymore...

And I guess in one way it is a lesson to anyone looking for information. That we should be reverent in our search, and take precious care of documents, and not be so greedy as to deny others the chance to look at them by defacing them, or destroying them, or touching them with our greasy fingertips, which is destructive to old paper that was not acid-free back then. Be gentle, to wear gloves when handling old documents. Try to preserve their integrity for as long as possible.

We have cooked our own goose, because now there are rooms like that, and nobody knows what is in them, and nobody knows the titles on the documents in them. Nobody knows how much information is now lost because we are not allowed to browse.

I'm thinking of another piece of the puzzle. It was a small Catholic church in southwestern Ontario, called Holy Redeemer, in a small town called Staples, that is not on the lists of genealogical sources, and not in the Drouin Collection, but it did exist, and it had records. The cemetery is there. If we don't know what is missing from our sources, how will we know where we haven't looked? Let's be reverent in our searches. Let's spread the word about sources, and not let any stone remain unturned. While we're at it, let's not ruin it for other people.

I am convinced that until there is a central place to house information on fur traders, including family oral histories, but also including any source of information that reveals the identities of fur traders in North America, then many of the Métis will not find the clues leading to their ancestors.

But wait! We have a place. It's called the Ontario Métis Family Records Center.

This Month in History

June 1, 1873 A band of Assiniboine Indians is attacked by American wolf hunters at Cypress Hills (now in Alberta) and twenty die

June 6, 1829 Shownandithit, the last known member of the Beothuk tribe of Newfoundland, dies

June 10, 1746 The French spread typhus to Micmac Indians killing up to 75% of the Micmac population

June 13, 1996 A proclamation declares June 21 as National Aboriginal Day

June 17, 1876 General George Custer and his men die at Little Big Horn

June 19, 1816 Battle of Seven Oaks – a confrontation between Métis and settlers results in 21 deaths

June 21, 1996 The first official National Aboriginal Day is celebrated

June 21, 1899 Treaty No. 8 with Adhesions, Reports, etc.

June 22, 1813 Indians guide Laura Secord to the British camp where she warns them of an American attack

June 25, 1761 The Micmacs and the British formally conclude a peace treaty signed a year earlier

June 27, 1754 Anthony Henday is sent by the Hudson Bay Company to make contact with the Blackfoot

June 27, 1921 Treaty No. 11

June 28, 1877 Treaty No. 7 with Blackfoot and Other Indian Tribes at the Blackfoot Crossing of Bow River and Fort Macleod

June 29, 1922 Plains Indians gather at Samson Reserve in Alberta to form the League of Indians of Canada



Powwow Listings

Listed are a few of the powwows being held in Ontario and Quebec this summer. You can find others by searching the Internet. Why not attend a few and show your children their heritage.

June 26-27 **Aamjiwnaang First Nation Competition Powwow** Sarnia

Contact: 519-336-8410 or email aamjiwnaangpowwow@hotmail.com

June 26-27 **Timiskaming First Nation Gathering of the Clans Traditional Powwow** Timiskaming

Contact: 819-723-2291 or email robnjchief@gmail.com

July 3-4 **Sheguiandah First Nation Traditional Powwow** Manitoulin Island

Contact: 705-368-2781 or 705-368-2198 or email chopwaindubbence@hotmail.com

July 10-11 **The Echoes of a Proud Nation Powwow** Kahnawake, Quebec

Contact: 450-632-8667 or email kahnawakepowwow.com

July 17-18 **Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation Annual Traditional Powwow** Port Perry

Contact: 905-985-3337

July 17-18 **A Gathering: Peel's Aboriginal Celebration** Mississauga

Contact 905-828-8411 ext 0

July 23-25 **Lac des Mille First Nation Traditional Powwow** Upsala

Contact: 807-622-9835 or email ldmlfn@baytel.net

July 24-25 **Grand River Champion of Champions Powwow** Ohsweken

Contact: 1-866-393-3001 or email info@grpowwow.com

July 24-25 **Whitefish Lake Nation Traditional Powwow** Naughton

Contact: 705-692-3651

July 30-August 1 **Lake of the Eagles Traditional Powwow** Eagle Lake

Contact: 807-755-5526 or email eaglereception@migisi.ca

July 30-August 1 **Wendake Competition Powwow** Wendake, Quebec

Contact: 418-847-1835 or email info@tourismewendske.com

July 31-August 1 **Listuguj Traditional Powwow** Listuguj, Quebec

Contact: 418-788-3166 or 418-788-5707

July 31-August 2 **Cultural Festival** Manitoulin Island

Contact: 705-859-2385 or email cbell@wikwemikongheritage.org

August 4-8 **Montreal First Peoples' Festival** Montreal, Quebec

Contact: 514-495-2346

August 6-8 **Big Grassy Traditional Powwow** Big Grassy River

Contact: 800-361-7228 or 807-488-5614

August 7-8 **Saugeen First Nation Competition Powwow** Saugeen First Nation

Contact: 519-797-1973 or email saugeennce@yahoo.ca or Clinton.renee@sympatico.ca

August 20-22 **Honoring Vets Traditional Powwow** Wiarton

Contact: 519-534-0571 or email peachieproulx@yahoo.ca





Powwow Listings (Continued from Page 4)

Listed are a few of the powwows being held in Ontario and Quebec this summer. You can find others by searching the Internet. Why not attend a few and show your children their heritage.

August 21-22 **Whitefish River Traditional Powwow** Birch Island
Contact: 705-285-4335

August 21-22 **Wahnapiatae First Nations Traditional Powwow** North Sudbury
Contact: 705-858-0610

August 21-22 **Three Rivers Homecoming Powwow & Traditional Gathering** Hagersville
Contact: 905-768-1133 or Faith 519-445-2283

September 3-5 **Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Traditional Powwow** Dryden
Contact: Anita 807-938-8022 or Mary Rose 807-938-6476

September 4-5 **Delaware Nation Competition Powwow** Moravian Reserve
Contact: 519-692-3936 or 519-692-3969

September 9-12 **Six Nations Fall Fair Competition Powwow** Ohsweken
Contact: 1-866-393-3001 or email jsandy@sixnations.ca



1900 Indian Head Cent

Educational Funding

AMEC to fund a new \$10,000 AMEC Master's Scholarship in Engineering and a \$5,000 undergraduate AMEC Aboriginal Scholarship in Engineering. The master's scholarship may also come with a summer job opportunity at one of the many AMEC locations across Canada. Melanie Snow of Toronto, Ontario and member of the Wikwemikong band on Manitoulin Island has been selected as the winner of the AMEC Aboriginal Scholarship in Engineering. from the Ripple Effects Newsletter.



*Paul Allaire shared these teachings of John Sutherland,
Constance Lake First Nation*

The Drum



*The drum is sacred
for it is the heartbeat of all the Nations, the heartbeats of the people.
The sounds that come from the drum are to awaken our hearts
and make us aware to pay attention to life.*

*A drum is made of wood and hide. These materials represent honesty
and sharing. The wood comes from the tree. The tree gives life so that
we can build the drum.*

*The tree is also telling us where life comes from.
Without the sun and the earth there would be no tree, no life.
The tree grows up towards the Creator, the source of its life and
all of the life on this earth.*

*The hide is from the animal who gives its life for the drum and
in this way represents the gift of sharing.*



Quilt of Belonging – Atikamekw (Irnu)



Mme Alice Awashish Petiquay is an Elder of the Atikamekw who continues to use traditional methods and materials to create clothing and crafts. Her block reflects the practice of using smoked moose hide decorated with floral motifs drawn from nature, but she has used colourful, modern cotton threads in the place of ones made from traditional sinews and nerves, or bark fibres. Previously, they would have used a whole range of vegetable- and mineral-based dyes to create such vibrant colours. This style of embroidery is often found on mittens, moccasin vamps, and on vests or other clothing. Atikamekw rarely use geometric forms or animal shapes and even contemporary artists make pieces that reflect the use of the appropriate forms, designs and colours of their culture. Plaid fabrics are commonly used to make baby-carriers, and are still used in skirts worn by elder women today.

The Atikamekw used to be called “Tête de Boule” by French explorers, a reference believed to result from the style of hat that was worn to protect the natives from flies. Their nomadic life was disrupted by the arrival of fur traders, the construction of trading posts, river dams and railways, as well as forest exploration within their territories in modern times. Their diet consisted mostly of game and fish; they are believed to be the originators of the “maple syrup” industry in Quebec, because they used to make sugar and syrup from sap boiled in the springtime.

Today, the Atikamekw put a lot of effort into educational programmes, health and social services, and economic development and tourism. As well, the Nation is concentrating on preserving and promoting traditional activities based on the “six seasons” of the Atikamekw that are based on respect for the environment. There are three communities in the Haute Mauricie and Lanaudière region of Quebec (Wemotaci, Opitciwan and Manawan). Each community has its own band council to handle the administration of local affairs, but is represented politically by the *Conseil de la Nation Atikamekw*, also known as *Atimimeks-sipi*. Their own language (Atikamekw), an Algonquin language closely related to Cree, is strong within their communities, while French is the most commonly used second language.

The photo and text are from: <http://www.invitationproject.ca/region.php>

Paul Allaire shared these teachings of John Sutherland of Constance Lake First Nation

Beauty

To see beauty is to seek the truth with an open mind.

To hear beauty is to share in the creation of harmony.

To feel beauty is to experience the world with a kind heart.

To taste and smell beauty is to touch the joy of life.

*To speak and act in beauty embraces mysteries of light into
darkness
and darkness into light.*

To walk in beauty is to dream and dance on the road of the heart.

There are four principle teachings that the Creator
gave to us to know:

Be kind above all, to be honest in all things,
to share all that we have,
and if we do these things correctly,
then that is where we gain our strength.



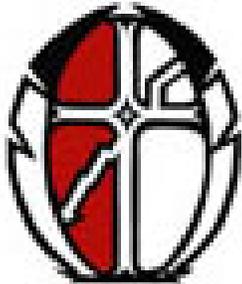


Is Your Membership Coming Up for Renewal?

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info@omfrc.org



We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.omfrc.org
www.aboriginalstatus.org



Paul Allaire shared these teachings of John Sutherland, Constance Lake First Nation

Mother Earth

The Earth is said to be a woman.

She is called Mother Earth because from her come all living things. Water is her lifeblood. It flows through her, nourishing her and purifying her.

Woman is the life giver. She is the carrier of medicines, of food, for survival at all times. Her work must express beauty so that people will enjoy the seeing of art.

Woman's work is for the Creator and in everything she does the Creator is included

Women make life, carry life and give birth to life.

Mother Earth nourishes us, brings forth new life so that we can live life.

Our beliefs are born from living on the land for a long time. The sacred teachings come from our connection with the land, with the Great Spirit and with our forefathers.

The Great Spirit is in all things; he is in the air we breathe. The Great Spirit is our Father but the Earth is our Mother. She nourishes us, that which we put into the ground, she returns to us.

Our history and culture has for thousands of years been intertwined with birchbark, with the unique qualities of the birchbark canoe. The canoe has created strong relationships between our many First Nations, enabling travel, the sharing of knowledge, trade and cooperation. Our streams, rivers and lakes provide routes that lead to the heart of the Land. We are a canoe nation.

New Submissions!

We are always looking for new interesting submissions to add to upcoming issues of the OMFRC Newsletter. If you have something you would like to add to the newsletter please call or email us! We'd be happy to consider it for an upcoming issue.