

Feathers In The Wind



The Ontario Metis Family Records Center

Painted Feather Woodland Metis Tribe

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My Life as a Metis



Gerald was 45 when he found out that he had Métis Blood. Even though he grew up believing he was Irish and Polish he has lived his life as a Métis. Gerald does not live by spring, summer, fall, and winter. He lives by the planting, fishing, hunting and trapping seasons of which he has fond memories. When Gerald married his wife Kathy their first Christmas was not turkey or ham, but two roasted, stuffed rabbits.

The Olszewski family grew up on wild meat, fresh garden produce, wild berries and lots of love. Every fall the family still get together to help with the hunting, cleaning, butchering and wrapping of the meat. Camping and fishing was and still is a family favorite during the summer. One of the favorite sayings of friends and family is "As long as there is a tag that he needs to fill Gerald will never die."

An account of the life of Gerald Olszewski, Waham, Alberta as told by his wife Kathy



Labrador (Inuit)

First Peoples in Canada

The central figure of the Labrador block is a "tea doll," created by artisan and craftsperson, Emily Flowers. The Inuit woman is wearing a distinctive piece of clothing called an *amauti*, as her baby's face peeks out next to her own. Her feet are kept warm in boots with sealskin legs and smoke-tanned caribou soles. Before migratory hunters and their families would leave on long trips, the women would sew tea dolls out of broadcloth or smoked caribou skin and then stuff them with two-to-three pounds of loose tea. This custom not only gave the children something to play with on the journey, but also allowed them to carry part of the load. The woman is flanked by two *Inukshuks* sewn in white tanned caribou skin. These magnificent stone figures, unique to the Canadian arctic, are used as guideposts and food caches in the region. Directly below the doll sits a replicated *ulu*—exclusively a woman's tool—that honours their work. The interlocked, raised beadwork surrounding the doll, represents the spectacular Northern Lights and the ever-precious sun.

History:

The modern-day Labrador are descendants of the Thule Inuit who came to Labrador from the Arctic in the early 1300s. They were nomadic hunters; a lifestyle that remained relatively unchanged until the 1950s. In kayaks, one-man enclosed vessels made with a wooden frame covered in seal skin, they hunted fish, seals, walrus, and even whales along the coast. The weapon of choice when hunting the larger sea mammals was the harpoon. Kayaks were also used to hunt caribou. Women and children would drive the herd

into a lake or river where the men, waiting in their kayaks, would kill them with a lance or bow and arrow. Water travel for more than one person required an *umiak*, a larger boat capable of carrying up to twenty people. Travel inland was accomplished both on foot and by dog sled (*komatik*).

Hunting is still part of the Labrador lifestyle, however, the weaponry has changed as a result of European contact. Hides and fur were absolutely necessary for survival in the cold northern temperatures, and seal skin was favoured for its waterproof qualities. Typically two layers of clothing were worn; the first with the fur side in, which kept the warmth in and absorbed perspiration, and the second with the fur side out.

Girls learned to sew at an early age, making mitts, boots and coats, often by the light of their soapstone oil lamps. A woman's lamp was her prized possession. The flat crescent-shaped lamp was dutifully and lovingly kept trimmed and filled with oil throughout her life. When the woman died, the lamp was buried alongside her, a hole drilled through it to release its "spirit" to join her on the journey into the afterlife.

The Labrador are known for their grass work items, the making of which is an arduous process. The grass, found along the coast of Labrador, is worked and sewn into a

continuous coil. Tightly sewn with a whip-stitch, the grass work is then waterproof. This craft is used to make everything from baskets to hats to placemats.

Copied from

<http://www.quiltofbelonging.ca/listing.php?Listing=1175>





One Family's Heirloom



We first spoke with Dale Cascanette March of 2011 where he told us the story of his great grandfather Andre Henri Castagnet who had crafted a dugout canoe that now hangs in the Native section in the Southhampton, Bruce County Museum.

The canoe in the picture was built by Dale's great grandfather. Andrew John "Andre Henri" Cascanett born Dec. 17, 1837 in Saint-Anicet, Quebec and died Nov. 29, 1913 in Boston, Middlesex, Massachusetts, U.S.A. It was used by his family and my grandfather Andrew Joseph Cascanette born April 21, 1880 ON. and died Dec. 1935 Hamilton, Wentworth Township, ON. The canoe was used to navigate the Teeswater River around Riversdale, ON. Dale remembers his father and aunt saying they paddled the canoe when they were children, it was abandoned when a cow stepped in it and punched a hole in the bottom. Years later it was donated to the Southhampton Museum where it now hangs proudly in the Aboriginal Section.

Dug out of a Tree Trunk



The first vessels to travel the waterways of Bruce were early Native dugouts and birch bark canoes. The forests

provided the cedar, hemlock, white pine, birch and spruce. Ingenuity, skill and knowledge of the different woods turned them into canoes. To hollow a log for a dugout, the craftsman used a controlled fire and then dug the charred wood with an adze.

Look closely at the fine edges and graceful shape of this canoe and imagine that it this was once a solid tree trunk. Of the many dugouts preserved in North America only eight are known to have been used on the Great Lakes. The Bruce County Museum has two of them.

Hats for Hide Program - Ontario

Well, it is just past that time of year again and one way all hunters can give back to the hunting community is through donation.



The Hats for Hides Program is designed for hunters to donate their animal hides. These hides are tanned and turned into leather products, such as,

gloves, boot insoles, and died hunting gloves. Many aboriginal communities and artisans have also benefited from this program, as a means of creating crafts and commemorative pieces dedicated to aboriginal heritage.

The goal of the program is to reduce the amount of waste left by hunters. It works like this; Hunters take their hides to designated locations and in return they receive a hunter-orange hat and a crest, stating something along the line of, "Big game hunter 2012". These sought after hats and crests are given on a first come first serve basis and are worn or kept as a "trophy" or way of celebrating the successful hunting year.

As outdoor enthusiasts, Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal, we can all fulfill our commitment to the hunting community through moral practice, while respecting the Metis belief that all living things share a unique circular relationship. We can all do our part to keep the circle in motion.

Derek Smolin



First Metis Women to compete in Miss Indian World Pageant



The concept for Miss Indian World originated in 1983 in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Indigenous, young women from all over North America compete for this most prestigious crown. Miss Indian World is selected by acquiring points in a variety

of categories and must be knowledgeable about the Tribe and Traditions she will be representing. At the end of the five day competition, the contestant with the highest accumulated points will be crowned Miss Indian World to reign for one year. This year our very own Miss Baillie Redfern will be the first Metis woman to compete for the title of Miss Indian World.



Miss Baillie is a well-rounded individual, a confident public speaker and accomplished young women. Baillie is currently a graduate student at The University of British Columbia in the Genome Science and Technology

Program, a member of two snowboarding teams, a big game hunter and is doing an apprenticeship with traditional healer Elder Gerry Oleman at Vancouver General Hospital. Since Baillie will be the first Metis woman to enter the pageant she is very proud and feels an enormous responsibility to respectfully represent the Metis Peoples.

“2011-2020 has been deemed the decade of the Metis People and I want to be apart of letting the world know that the Metis People are strong and proud. I want all Metis Peoples to feel included in this experience so feel free to contact me and share your own stories, experiences or words of wisdom.”

Miss Baillie will be competing in four categories; (1) traditional talent presentation, where Baillie will be sharing a story her Grannie told her about how to recognize which plants produce good medicines. (2) public speaking and private interviews in front of a panel of judges (3) a dance competition and will be expressing herself through PowWow music and (4) raffle ticket sales which can be purchased at a cost of \$2.50 by contacting Baillie directly.

Since Baillie will be representing a diversity of Metis People she wants to hear from the Metis People and can be contacted at baillie.redfern@gmail.com

Calling all OMFRC Members



Let’s show Baillie Redfern how proud we are of her. Baillie needs to sell 500 tickets in order to compete in the pageant; she will then get 10% of all sales back at the competition. She will be financially supporting herself for the flight, hotel and food, she will also need to pay to have her regalia made and beaded. Again, Baillie will be selling raffle ticket which can be purchased at a cost of \$2.50 by contacting Baillie directly, donations will be appreciated baillie.redfern@gmail.com



My Heritage: Hunting



Hunting; what was once a staple for survival, has now transitioned into a passion and hobby for many Aboriginals today. Although, hunting and fishing is as important today to Aboriginal people as it was in the past, the role has changed from a primary source of food to a secondary, or hobby role. Still, many Aboriginals depend on the land for their primary resources, but have other alternatives, such as grocery stores to supplement their nourishment needs.

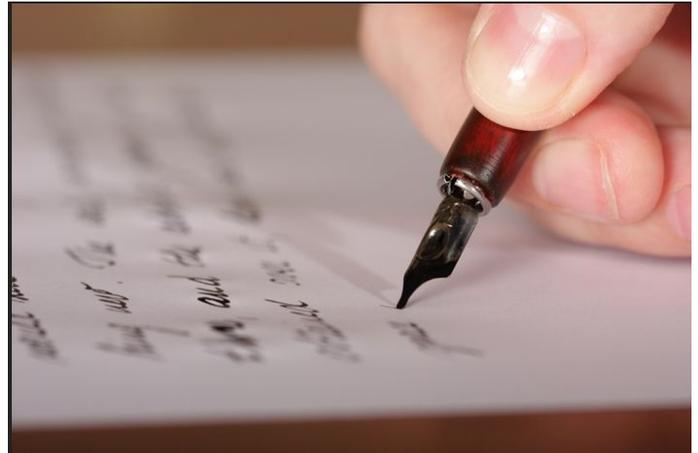
Hunting has been a big part of my life, in the capacity of a passion and hobby. Because Metis were mobile, they depended on the land for many things. Harvesting moose, deer, turkeys, bear, buffalo and many other animals for their pelts, bones and meat was a crucial component of Metis life. Not only were wild game animals used as a food source, but also for trading purposes. For me, hunting is a way of admiring the outdoors, paying respect to my ancestors and continuing my heritage as a Metis.

Because hunting and fishing rights and regulations are important to Aboriginals, it is important that we demonstrate this importance through proper hunting and fishing practices. It is important to lead by example, while showing people the important connection between the land and our culture.

I would encourage anyone, Aboriginal or not, to get involved in hunting or the outdoors in some way. There are endless possibilities, educational programs, and social clubs that focus on the outdoors. Participation in such organizations and open discussion about who Aboriginals are, and what we do, will ensure the continuation of our heritage.

Derek Smolin

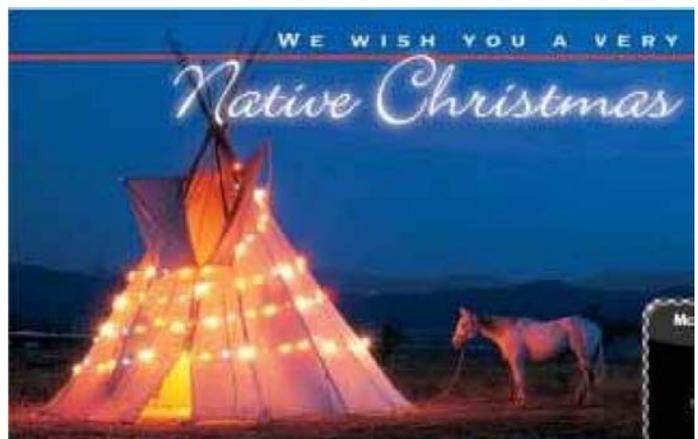
A Member Writes In



To the OMFRC: I think what the OMFRC is doing to help people identify their Aboriginal Ancestry is admirable. Because of your work I am able to complete my lifelong quest and have something tangible to show for it. The family history I sent was the culmination of my research. This was a task that I took on to honor my Grandmother. Hopefully it will help you to help others. I can't tell you how much I appreciate the work everyone at the OMFRC is doing.

Rich, Griswold, Connecticut, U.S.A.

**From All of Us Here at the OMFRC, We
Would Like to Wish You and Your
Families a Very Merry Native
Christmas!**



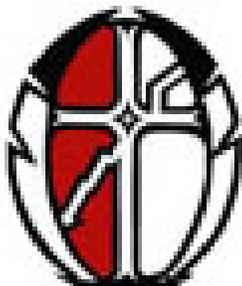


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Is Your Membership Coming Up for Renewal?



If it is, call 1-613-332-4789 and you can do it right over the phone in just a couple of minutes.

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.omfrc.org

www.aboriginalstatus.org

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.



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