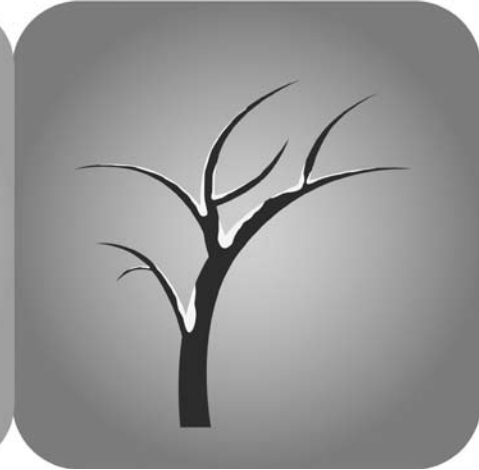


# my friends Intototemak

Spring 2008 Vol. 37, No. 1



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Mennonite  
Church  
Canada

Witness

## Lessons on Life

There was an Indian Chief who had four sons. He wanted his sons to learn not to judge things too quickly. So he sent them each on a quest, in turn, to go and look at a pear tree that was a great distance away.

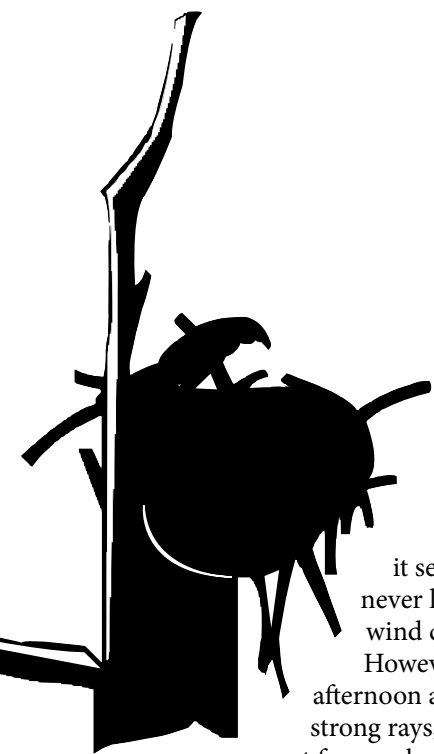
The first son went in the Winter, the second in the Spring, the third in Summer, and the youngest son in the Fall. When they had all gone and come back, he called them together to describe what they had seen.

The first son said that the tree was

ugly, bent, and twisted. The second son said 'no'; it was covered with green buds and full of promise. The third son disagreed; he said it was laden with blossoms that smelled so sweet and looked so beautiful. It was the most graceful thing he had ever seen. The last son disagreed with all of them; he said it was ripe and drooping with fruit, full of life and fulfillment.

The man then explained to his sons that they were all right, because they

*Lessons continued on page 3.*



# Living in Hope

Today is a very cold, blustery morning in Winnipeg, and it seems as if the grasp of winter will never loosen this year!! Experiencing wind chills in the -40 range is never fun! However, when the sun came out this afternoon and warmed up the office with its strong rays, the arrival of spring within the next few weeks seemed more hopeful.

Don't we celebrate a story of hope on Easter Sunday? Jesus Christ's resurrection comes after many days of conflict, misunderstanding, pain, suffering, abandonment and darkness. In spite of it all, Christ's light and love still shines through! There is now hope where there was no hope! There is light where before the darkness reigned! Christ's resurrection brings light and hope to our lives even now in 2008!

Australia's newly-ruling Labour Party, led by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, made an official apology to the indigenous peoples of Australia when the first parliamentary session began on February 12, 2008. The apology was issued to recognize the policies of successive governments which had adversely affected the country's aboriginal citizens: "There is nothing ambiguous in what the government has said. There is no fudging of language. The apology uses the word "sorry" three times. Specifically the policy accepts government blame in these crucial areas: It acknowledges blame for mistreatment of "The Stolen Generation"; it acknowledges laws and policies which inflicted grief, suffering and loss to the aboriginals; it acknowledges inflicting pain, suffering and hurt on the children, their mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters; it accepts blame for indignity and degradation inflicted on the aboriginal people." (Sidney Green, "Australian aboriginal issues mirror those in Canada," *Winnipeg Free Press*, Friday, February 15, 2008.)

No one knows yet what affect this dramatic move will have on Australia, but this day is a historic one in the relationship of the government of Australia and its indigenous people.

The historical circumstances under which Aboriginal people in Canada have lived for over one hundred years is remarkably similar to those in Australia so interest in the Australian scenario is high in Canada's Aboriginal community, as well as in the federal and provincial governments and the general public. However, unless fundamental changes are made in our governmental systems at all levels, the words of any apology will ring empty and hollow and nothing much

will change. Let's pray that this apology will spark a desire for true justice and that real change will result – both in Australia and the rest of the world, including Canada.

2008 promises to be a busy year of activities and learning! We look forward to participating in them with many of you!! It is also 60 years since Jake and Trudy Unrau headed north by ship in the fall of 1948 to move to Matheson Island, Manitoba, along the shores of Lake Winnipeg, as the first Mennonite-sponsored pastoral couple.

- In March – before you even receive this issue – we are co-hosting a visit by Richard Twiss, a Lakota theologian and doctoral student from the state of Washington, for a weekend of gatherings in Winnipeg. You will read more about the visit in the next issue of INTOTEMAK and in other church papers before that. The third annual Listening Circles are also happening in March in the southern mainland of British Columbia, in partnership with Mennonite Central Committee BC's Aboriginal Neighbours program.

The month of July will also be exciting as people from across North America join in two separate events:

- The July 8 – 10 "People's Summit for Faithful Living" will see people from Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada join together on the campus of Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg to focus on the theme of "At the Crossroads: the church living faithfully as a contrast community in our global reality" (Deuteronomy 4:1-9). Several Aboriginal people will be sharing during at least two of the learning tracks and we look forward to the Wednesday afternoon outdoor event, where we will highlight the 60 years of interaction and relationship-building between our cultural groups.

- Native Assembly 2008 will be held in Clinton, Oklahoma the last week in July. It will be a time to worship and fellowship with our brothers and sisters from the Native Mennonite Ministries congregations in the United States. We want to take a chartered bus from Winnipeg so please let us know VERY SOON if you can join us! If you want to be on the mailing list for receiving further information as it becomes available, please let us know that as well.

That is all we have for now. Migwetch.

*Neill and Edith*

—Neill and Edith von Gunten,  
Co-Directors, Native Ministry



# Intotemak

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Intotemak translates as *my friends* or *my clan* and are people who walk together as friends. Intotemak is a quarterly newsletter featuring news items of interest to friends of Native Ministry, published by Mennonite Church Canada Witness.

*Purpose statement of Mennonite Church Canada Witness...is to lead, mobilize and resource the church to participate in holistic witness to Jesus Christ in a broken world, thus aligning the being and the doing of the church with God's work.*

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## VISION HEALING & HOPE

God calls us to be  
followers of  
Jesus Christ and,  
by the power of  
the Holy Spirit, to grow  
as communities  
of grace, joy and peace,  
so that God's healing and  
hope flow through us  
to the world.



The Sunday School children of Matheson Island, MB., presented the nativity story from the Gospel of Luke to an appreciative audience on December 16, 2007. The log chapel was packed for the annual Christmas program and candlelight service.

## Lessons

continued from page 1.

had each seen but only one season in the tree's life.

He told them that you can not judge a tree, or a person, by only one season, and that the essence of who they are and the pleasure, joy, and love that come from that life can only be measured at the end, when all the seasons are up.

If you give up when it's Winter, you will miss the promise of your Spring, the beauty of your Summer, the fulfillment of your Fall.

**Moral:**  
Don't let the pain of one

season destroy the joy of all the rest. Don't judge life by one difficult season. Persevere through the difficult patches and better times are sure to come.

Live Simply. Love Generously.  
Care Deeply. Speak Kindly.  
Leave the Rest to God.

Happiness keeps You Sweet,  
Trials keep You Strong,  
Sorrows keep You Human,  
Failures keep You Humble,  
Success keeps You Glowing,  
But God keeps You Going!





In his concluding comments, Neill von Gunten (far right) remarked, "There is no question of whether the Lord wanted us to have this building. In fact, He opened up doors for us that we would have thought would be locked against us."



## A Day of Rejoicing

On Sunday, September 16, 2007 the Riverton Fellowship Circle celebrated ten years of worshipping in their own church building. (Riverton is a small community of less than 600 people, about 120 kilometers north of Winnipeg, and located on the east side of Lake Winnipeg.)

The congregation itself was established 18 years ago as a result of the work of Native Ministries workers, Neill and Edith von Gunten, currently co-directors of the Native Ministry program of Mennonite Church Canada. Though there are a number of Native churches in existence as a result of the work of Native Ministries, only two of these, the Riverton Fellowship Circle and the Living Word Church of Cross Lake, are members of Mennonite Church Manitoba and Canada at the present time.

Between 45 and 50 people gathered for the celebration. Representation was there from five Winnipeg and district churches as well as from Mennonite Church Manitoba and Mennonite Church Canada. Three of the congregations represented, Sargent Avenue, Bethel and Home Street, have been involved in partnering with the Riverton Fellowship Circle over the past three years.

The celebration itself took the form of a typical Sunday morning worship service and was led by Barb Daniels of the Riverton congregation. The worshipers sat in a circle symbolizing equality. It was an open circle inviting

others to join and it had as a focal point, a table upon which a white Christ-candle was burning. On the table as well were a Bible, some flowers, an offering plate and a braid of sweet grass.

After praying a 'Six-Directional Prayer of Thanks' we sang several songs and listened to a children's story by Elaine Slough, a Mennonite Central Committee volunteer with the Riverton congregation. The prayer acknowledges and gives thanks for the contribution which each of four racial groups has made to our understanding of life and faith. As well, it recognizes the importance of the earth as the source of our food and ultimately directs our attention to God the giver of life and of all that we have.

Neill von Gunten shared some memories of the building process from beginning to end. It began with a wish expressed in 1994. At first it seemed like an impossible dream. Where would they (the congregation) get that kind of money? Then came the first donation of 500 US\$ from a Native church in Phoenix, Arizona. A further substantial donation came from an individual in Neill and Edith's home congregation in Berne, Indiana in anticipation of receiving a Mennonite Men grant from the larger Mennonite community. What had been a vision became a very real possibility as a result of the marvelous way in which God had provided for funding. Neill talked about the many hours of discussions, planning and decision making



in the midst of an already busy schedule and summed it up by saying "Those were crazy times!"

The time from the groundbreaking in May 1997 until the building passed inspection on September 28 of that year was filled with hard work. Many volunteers were involved and contributed many hours of labor. The end result was rewarding indeed.

In his concluding comments, von Gunten remarked, "There is no question of whether the Lord wanted us to have this building. In fact, He opened up doors for us that we would have thought would be locked against us." He then encouraged the congregation with the hope that "you feel this same gracious Lord leading you in the coming years as you continue to worship Him in this building and spread His vast love to others around you."

After the message there was a time of sharing, followed by a communion service. Everyone was invited to a potluck meal, which afforded opportunity for discussion and sharing. It is good to celebrate!

—Martin Penner  
Winnipeg, Manitoba

# Chinese New Year Parade a Showcase

*The parade is a good way to learn more about it and acknowledge the culture*

Age, background and race didn't count for much on Sunday, February 10, 2008 as thousands flooded Chinatown to take in a rich part of Vancouver's culture. The parade has become an annual tradition that draws in more Vancouverites each year.

13th annual "Dances with Dragons" - This colorful, vibrant event is a genuine celebration of another year's journey between First Nations peoples and Chinese Canadians set inside the Chinese New Year Parade. Marked by their distinct regalia and drums will be First Nation friends from Squamish, Nisg'aa, Gitksan, Mount Currie, etc.

More than 50,000 spectators braved the rain this afternoon to attend Vancouver's 35th annual Lunar New Year parade. The parade, celebrating the Year of the Rat, included 3,000 participants and also drew politicians from all levels of government. Rain poured on the parade shortly after it began but didn't put a damper on the turnout. In fact, the rain may have been a good omen. The Year of the Rat means there will be more water, so more rain, but in Chinese water means more money.

Many parade-goers crowded under umbrellas and store awnings along the Chinatown Parade route to escape the drizzle. Others spilled onto the streets to receive *lai shi*, red envelopes filled with "lucky money" and wishes of Gung Hei Fat Choi from community leaders.

The vivid colors of the bedazzled dragon dancers, sounds of firecrackers and brass gongs, and smells of incense and Chinese hamburgers stirred the senses. One brass band adorned rat costumes, complete with ears, tails and face masks in an homage to the rodent, a respected and auspicious creature in Chinese custom.

Lunar New Year celebrations are becoming more multicultural every year in Vancouver. This year's festivities included an eclectic mix of First Nations dancers, Korean drummers, Scottish pipes and Bhangra bands, highlighting Vancouver's multicultural spirit.

"It's a great asset in our country to



*The vivid colors of the bedazzled dragon dancers, sounds of firecrackers and brass gongs, and smells of incense and Chinese hamburgers stirred the senses.*

know that differences are a great asset and not a threat, and if we can show that to the world, it will be a better place to live in," said a famous politician.

And a community leader agreed. "It's great to see Aboriginals, Brazilians and Sikhs participating. It shows that Canada has come of age through respecting each other and recognizing that each community brings something to build the nation."

"It's such an important part of the culture of Vancouver," said a participant, who has lived in the city for ten years. "The parade is a good way to learn more about it and acknowledge the culture."

"Dances with Dragons" is not a performance but a public testimony that a new journey has begun. It also marks their 13th small step towards reconciliation. Since 1990, members of CCIA through visiting and listening discovered the true history between British Columbia and the indigenous people. To foster understanding and respect, CCIA has conducted numerous bus tours up to Mount Currie Reserve, has organized different forums and gave birth to Canadians for Reconciliation in 2001. Thousands of Canadians and media personnel have journeyed together on this road

towards reconciliation.

Twelve years ago, through their teachers, the Mount Currie students initiated their first visit to Vancouver's Chinese New Year parade. CCLA gladly did the local organizing and reception of some fifty young students. Amidst the sights and sounds of the colourful celebration, they seemed to be most fascinated with the dragon dance. After their second trip, they built a fourteen-foot-long dragon out of paper maché and sent CCLA the memories of their encounter with the dragons in a picture book (Thus the name of the event). By inviting native friends and their children to join the Chinese New Year Parade, CCLA tries to affirm the respect and dignity that they all deserve, and the friendship that forefathers of both sides once shared in Chinatown and in British Columbia. By encouraging others to walk alongside and listen, people may finally live out what life was intended to be. If peoples' minds be like those children again, they too can have something to look forward to; they, too, may see the dragons.

At the end of the day, everyone who showed up at the parade walked away a little bit more enlightened.

—Samson Lo  
Vancouver, BC

# Learning about Needs in our City

*Last fall, First Mennonite Church in Saskatoon took a hard look at their community and heard about needs and progress from Saskatoon Native Ministries.*

First Mennonite Church of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan recently took a hard look at various community needs, including poverty and homelessness. As part of this four-week focus, two women from the Saskatoon Native Ministries were invited to speak to the Adult Sunday School Class on October 21, 2007.

Ethel Ahenakew, assistant director, and Diane Bignell, president of the board, shared their heart and their hopes for the oft-ignored segment of society living a mere five miles from the door of the church.

Ahenakew, a short woman with an easy smile, knew first-hand what it was like to be the only Aboriginal in an all-white church. When she began working at the Saskatoon Native Ministries in the inner-city, her desire was to create a worship experience for First Nations people.

The church has one service on Sunday afternoon followed by a meal. In typical First Nations fashion, the group meets in a circle and passes a talking stick.

"We start with a small group and people just keep coming through the service," she said. The hot meal afterwards follows a similar pattern. People trickle in more and more as the meal progresses.

Admitting to times of discouragement in her work, Ahenakew spoke of the frustration of facing unfair policies for her people.

"The government has oppressed us for centuries and continues to this very day," she informed the listening crowd.

Besides speaking at her church, she also uses every opportunity to educate other groups on the work they do.

While Ahanakew works quietly and effectively behind the scenes counseling and helping others, Bignell has the heart of a warrior to take on political causes. In addition to her role on the board, she volunteers at Equal Justice for All, an organization run by unpaid staff, that "provides advocacy services . . . to disadvantaged and low-income people." Her small office sits hidden on the third floor of an old nurses residence.

She also started the group Don't



*Diane Bignell glances over an email while sitting in her office at Equal Justice For All in inner-city Saskatoon.*

We Count As People? This began in response to the requests for rent money she faced in her role there (at Equal Justice); many coming from single parents who didn't have enough money due to increased rent and some of whom were facing eviction. Because of an economic boom in the city, many landlords are raising the rent on their suites, knowing renters have no choice but to comply. Unfortunately for those on Social Services, there is little room to manoeuvre in such situations as they are only allowed a certain amount for rent.

In her six years volunteering at the grassroots organization, Bignell was responsible for bringing attention to the homelessness problem in the city. She approached city council and asked permission to sleep under the bridge in support of the homeless people who often spend the night there. She was told it wasn't allowed. Instead, on July 31, 2006 a group led by Bignell set up tents in a nearby park.

"At midnight we went for a walk under the bridge with candles to show the homeless," she said. The strategy worked and Bignell was able to see an increase in rent allowance from Social Services.

Continuing to advocate for the underprivileged, Bignell also took the idea for a reduced-fare bus pass to city council.

"It took three years of arguing with city council," she stated. Again, the fear-



*Ethel Ahenakew takes a call in her office at the Saskatoon Native Ministries in Saskatoon.*

less grandmother met success and saw a \$15/month bus pass for the poor created.

Never forgetting the needs on the street, the two women are now hoping to make a homeless shelter a reality.

"We're still seeing a lot of homeless people, it breaks my heart," admitted Bignell who originally comes from The Pas, Manitoba.

Their plan is to gain funding to purchase a house with a large kitchen and six or seven rooms to meet the needs they are regularly faced with.

When the Sunday School class at First Mennonite met again, the discussion centered on society's attitude to the homeless. A panel of four people was asked to give feedback on the series. Some panel participants had only attended one previous class. Others had taken in more. After a vigorous discussion of the issues being faced by homeless people in Saskatoon, one class member spoke up.

"Those two women who spoke last Sunday were Christians working against some big obstacles. I think we could support them," she said.

A suggestion was made after the class that a collection could be taken and the money sent to Ahenakew and Bignell at Saskatoon Native Ministries as they struggle on.

—Karin Fehderau  
Saskatoon, SK

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# Growing Up on Conquered Lands

The August heat this year (2007) has reminded me of hot summer days in one of the fields on our farm in Aurora, Ohio, where I grew up. The farm has long been overtaken by factories and suburban sprawl. But in my mind it is as fresh as it was 55 years ago when we took care of 25 cows and had just begun the transition to mechanized farming that included combines, tractors with rubber tires and milking machines.

Two parts of the farm remain firmly attached in my brain. The first is the maple sugar bush where we gathered sap every spring to make maple syrup. I loved to skip school to help. The second was a field immediately to the north of the woods where we often found relics which we referred to as “Indian heads” (arrowheads, sometimes called flint heads) and other artifacts from a long-forgotten native settlement. I never connected the two until recently.

I was reminded of the native people who once lived on our farm in Ohio on a flight from Tel Aviv, when an Israeli woman scolded me that America had conquered every bit of their land from native people. Our discussion, which lasted for hours, was ignited by my troubling reference to the quest for a Palestinian homeland. “People have been living on conquered lands since the dawn of civilizations,” she said.

We often found native artifacts in the field when we plowed in the spring or as we walked through the cornfield prior to harvest. We had no idea how these products of a previous civilization got there nor did we have any connection to its people. As far as we were concerned, we now owned the land. And this was long in the past, probably hundreds of years. In school we never studied about the native civilization that preceded us, except as an addendum to the heroics of personalities like George Washington, who once surveyed the region to the East in his pre-revolutionary life.

Our township was organized in 1807, 200 years ago, a century before my own ancestors arrived to purchase the 137-acre farm. The discovery of native artifacts in the field beside the sugar bush always carried a kind of special

*The discovery of native artifacts in the field beside the sugar bush always carried a kind of special power in our family.*

power in our family. When we found an arrowhead, it was considered a moment of triumph and word of the discovery quickly spread throughout the family. Dad collected these special finds in a box. I never knew where he kept the box. At our farm we often had visitors from Cleveland and the surrounding towns who combined a visit to us with the purchase of eggs, milk or other produce. In the early 1950s, about the time when we moved from the farm, my Father’s penchant for generosity got the best of him again and he gave away the box of native artifacts to a collector. His children were never happy about that. We thought those artifacts too special to give away. I wish I had a few to give back to my native neighbors today.

I am not an archeologist but I suspect that the frequent discovery of native artifacts was evidence that a native village once occupied the field towards the back of our farm. The destiny of that village has always bothered me. Who really owned “our” land? I found the existence of a previous people disconnected from my life unsettling. There was teaching in our church that the land belonged to God but I knew that somewhere in the mysterious offices of our county there was a legal deed of ownership that belonged to Stoltzfus.

Through the years, when I made my infrequent return visits to the farm land, I would walk over that special field and try to listen to what the spirit inside me, or the lingering spirits in the ground of that long forgotten village, might be saying to me. On one trip I found myself silently warning a newly-completed factory that it should be very careful about the spirits in the ground where they have built.

But, I never put the puzzle together.

I still want to know more about the original dwellers of our farm. I Google my native town, Aurora, but I find only references to a host of town committees,

hotels, businesses, churches and town planning. Near the bottom of the list I find something called the Aurora Historical Society but when I click I find only a reproduction of an early map, no reference to the first people. No help there.

I continue to Google my way through Native American history sites, where I find hints about Erie, Shawnee and others who lived in Northeast Ohio for a time after being forced from native lands further East and before being expelled further West, or defeated by conquering armies again after several generations of uncertain alliances with French or English colonial forces.

So, I am left to my imagination to make contact and peace with the first caretakers of our land, who surely never sold it to anybody in the way we of European descent think of buying and selling. I make that leap in the best way I can by telling this story, particularly to native people when I meet them, as an offering, one of the things that “might” make for peace in my generation.

Some years ago, before I moved to Canada, I learned that native people had been making maple syrup for as long as they could remember. Eventually I put this fact together with the maple trees beside our farm’s native village, and I suddenly realized that long before we harvested the spring sap from the maple trees another people may have done something like we did. Perhaps they settled in the field beside the sugar bush early every spring to carry out their harvest. Sometime in the distant past, long before our settlement in Ohio, my white ancestors learned how to imitate them and savor the sweet and healthy harvest of maple syrup.

How do I make peace with the unearned benefits of conquered lands that have blessed me so much? I don’t have complete peace. My story is not complete. I am still looking for the connection to that original village, where maple syrup flows in abundance and there is a festival of joy to celebrate the harvest, where the conqueror and the conquered find a pathway to fairness and plenty.

—Gene Stoltzfus  
Fort Frances, ON

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# Canadian Aboriginal Writing Challenge 2007

The third annual Canadian Aboriginal Writing Challenge 2007 was another great year of creative short stories from Aboriginal youth across the country. More than 125 essays were submitted in the 14-18 and 19-29 age categories. The

contest encourages aboriginal youth to write about a defining moment or event in aboriginal history.

Congratulations to Nicole Selkirk, age 16, of Pine Dock, Manitoba, whose story was chosen as a winner in the Age

Category 14-18! It is reprinted here with her permission.

Deadline for the 2008 Writing Challenge is March 31, 2008, [www.our-story.ca/youthWriting.html](http://www.our-story.ca/youthWriting.html)

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## I'll Never Forget

by Nicole Selkirk

*Residential schools were a huge part of Aboriginal history. Duncan Campbell Scott created the schools to get rid of Indians. He wanted to kill the Indian in the child. Children were taken from their families and put in the residential schools. At the school, they were taught the white ways. The children were abused sexually, mentally and physically. The schools robbed the children of their culture and traditions and they were forbidden to speak their language. When the children did return home, their lives were changed. They could never live as they once did because of the effects of the school. The schools had long term effects on many of the students. The schools caused many to turn to drugs, alcohol, or even suicide. I chose to write about Residential schools because of their big significance in Aboriginal history. For many years, white society didn't want to admit they*

*made a mistake with the schools. Now the survivors of Residential schools are being repaid for what they lost. It will never change what happened at the schools but it's an admittance that white society was wrong. I have listened to a woman tell her story about her time at a Residential school. As I watched her, I could see how much the school had affected her life and even though it was a long time ago, she was still hurting. Her story affected me as well and while I was listening I felt sadness. The woman said that she thinks about her time at the school everyday. The things that happened at Residential schools stay with the students for their whole life and everyday they remember and have to deal with the pain. I'll never forget the woman's story and how it made me feel.*

One day I received a call from my granddaughter. "Grandma, I have to write an essay on Residential schools for Social Studies and I was wondering if I could come over so you can help me?"

I told her I would love to help her and not a moment after she hung up there was a knock at the door. She came in and sat in the big chair beside me.

"Can you tell me the story of your time in the residential school?" she asked.

Memories started to rush back to me.

I began to tell my story, "During the time of residential schools, Indians were considered savages. A man named Duncan Campbell Scott created the schools to get rid of the 'Indian Problem.' I'll never forget the day I was taken from my parents. I was eleven years old. It started out a beautiful day and I was helping my mother get lunch ready. A man and a woman arrived at our place and told my mother and father

that me and my brothers had to go with them and there was no option. As we rode away with the man and woman on the horse I remember looking back and seeing tears running from my mother's eyes."

I continued, "When we arrived at the school me and my brothers were separated and I was taken to a little room down the hall. In that room, I was bathed because Indians were thought of to be dirty and have lice. They gave me a dull grey dress to wear and worst of all they cut my hair. I had been growing it for years and it was almost down to my knees. I was taken to a big room where the other children were and we had supper. Upon seeing my brothers I went running over to them. Only to be dragged unwillingly back to my seat and told I could not speak with them. As I sat with the other girls, I decided to engage in their conversation. I was hit and told I wasn't allowed to speak my own language. That night I cried myself to sleep."

I picked up a tissue and wiped the tears from my eyes,

"I had to learn to do the things the other children did like speak English. Every day was the same. We'd wake up, eat, do our chores, go to chapel, go to school, have supper, have some supervised recreation time, then go to bed. Every night for a month I cried myself to sleep. I missed my parents so much and not being able to speak to my brothers made it worse."

My granddaughter interrupted me, "Grandma, did you make friends at the school because you know friends are good to have to help you get through things."

I replied, "Yes, after a while I had made some friends at the school who helped me learn the things I had to and I began to write letters home to my parents. I was always so excited to receive a letter from them. One day I went to pick up my letter. As I read, a knot suddenly appeared in my throat and tears rolled down my



*Every night for a month I cried myself to sleep. I missed my parents so much and not being able to speak to my brothers made it worse.*



cheeks. It was a letter from my father telling me that my mother had gotten very ill and passed away. I started to cry. Thoughts ran through my head, it can't be true. I should have been there. I never got to say good bye. I ran to my room and lay on my bed for hours that night and I got only 2 hours of sleep. It just hurt so much to know that it had been so long since I had seen my mother and I would never see her again."

I paused a moment to cry before I continued,

"Before my time at the school got better it had gotten worse. Shortly after my mothers death my father came to visit at the school. We were allowed no longer then 10 minutes to visit. At the end of our time, I was dragged from my father's arms back inside the school. After that, my brothers and I had tried to run away a few times but were always caught, brought back and punished. My best friend decided she had had enough and put an end to her life."

I waited while my granddaughter buttered a piece of bannock, "It was the winter of my 14 birthday

when things seemed to start looking up. I had received a letter from my father that said me and my brothers would be going home for Christmas. I was so excited I couldn't wait. Those two weeks before I got to go home seemed to last forever. Finally, the day came and I would go home. Me and my brothers got on the plane and arrived around supper time. We were so happy to see our father. Things seemed different though because the last time I was home my mother had been there: The thought of that brought tears to my eyes. Me, my brothers, and my father all sat down and had supper together. After supper, we could visit without time limitations. Me and my brothers told our father stories of our time at the Residential school. When the time came for us to go back, we didn't want to leave. My father told us we had to go back."

I stopped and poured myself a cup of tea, "During my last few years at the school I worked hard. I acted the way the teachers wanted us to act. My brothers and I had continued to go visit my father

on holidays. Finally, the day had come where I would graduate. I was both happy and sad. I was finally getting out of that school but my brothers had to stay for another two years. I knew inside that they would be alright."

I looked over at my granddaughter and could see tears in her eyes.

I continued, "Residential Schools were created to kill the Indian in the child. Aboriginal children were robbed of their culture and traditions and they were forbidden to speak their language. They were also abused physically, mentally, and sexually. And I am so glad you don't have to go through that."

As I wiped the tears from me eyes my granddaughter came over to me to give me a big hug.



—by Nicole Selkirk  
Used with permission from  
<http://www.our-story.ca>



## Celebrations

**Fred Wood** of Manigotagan, Manitoba turned 80 years young on Valentine's Day. The community and area celebrated the special occasion with Fred on Saturday, February 16, 2008.

All of us at the Manigotagan Community Chapel, as well as others in the community and area, would like to wish Fred a happy birthday. Fred, we appreciate all you do for our church and community and wish you all the best as you celebrate a new decade of your life. God bless you and may His face shine upon you with showers of blessings.

—Norman Meade  
Winnipeg, MB

## Obituaries

**Herman McKay** of Cross Lake, Manitoba, passed away one year ago -- on March 22, 2007 -- after a lengthy illness. He spent his final years in the Cross Lake senior's home with failing eyesight.

Herman and his wife Violet led the Elim Mennonite Church in Cross Lake for a time after pastor Jeremiah Ross passed away. Herman and Violet often expressed their appreciation for the opportunities they had to travel to various conferences and gatherings with other Native Ministries staff and community leaders. In earlier years, Herman spent a good deal of time singing with the children who gathered around him, and this contact was appreciated a great deal.

Herman is greatly missed by his wife Violet, and other family members and friends. His body was laid to rest in the Cross Lake Cemetery.

**Lillian Crow** (nee Owen) of Pauingassi, Manitoba, passed away at the St. Boniface Hospital on December 30, 2007 at the age of 52 years. Even though she made many trips to the hospital during these last years of her life, Lillian always had a smile on her face. She loved the Lord and was ready to meet Him.

Lillian was predeceased by six siblings and her father. She leaves to mourn her passing, her husband Louis, one child, two foster children, three siblings, and her extended family and friends. Her final resting place is in Pauingassi,

with Allan Owens officiating.

**Addie (Keeper) Campagnolo**, age 67 years, passed away on January 13, 2008 at the Seven Oaks Hospital in Winnipeg, Manitoba. She had lived all of her married life in either Edmonton, Alberta or Winnipeg.

Addie leaves to mourn, her husband Ivan, children Mario, Brenda, Deana, and Tony with their partners, as well as five grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, and many relatives and friends. The service and viewing was held at the Aboriginal Funeral Home in Winnipeg on January 18. The interment of ashes was held at the Brookside Cemetery on January 21. Rev. Henry Neufeld officiated at both services.

**Margaret (Peggy) Yorke** of Manigotagan, Manitoba, passed away at the age of 65 years on January 17, 2008 at the Health Sciences Centre in Winnipeg as a result of cancer. Peggy and her husband Raymond moved to Manigotagan in recent years and were active members of the Manigotagan Community Chapel congregation.

Peggy is survived by her husband Raymond; children Lenore, Gerry, Allen, Bonny, Fred, Phillip and Robert; fifteen grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

The funeral service was held at the Glen Lawn Funeral Home in Winnipeg on January 22, 2008, with Norman Meade of the Manigotagan Community Chapel and John Zacharias officiating.

**Phillip Moneyas**, age 69 years, of Hollow Water First Nation returned to the arms of our heavenly Father on Sunday, January 27, 2008.

Phillip spent his working years out on the land as a trapper, pulpwood cutter, sawmill worker and commercial fisherman. He also managed the Medical Transportation Service for the reserve for thirty years before ill health caused him to retire.

Phillip shared his love for jigging, square dancing and baseball by serving as a teacher and coach for many young

people over the years and as an organizer for many events. Community life and family were very important to him.

Phillip is survived by his wife of 51 years, Lorraine, and their family, Bernie (Marcel) Hardisty, Maureen, Angie (Dale) Hardisty, Candace (Ian) Bushie, Wayne (Roxanne) Moneyas, Michael Moneyas, Winston Bouchie, Winslow Bouchie, Melvina (Wesley) Moneyas and Sherman Scott; brothers Henry (Alice) and Norman (Beatrice); and numerous grandchildren, great-grandchildren, extended family and many friends.

The funeral service was held on February 2nd at the Hollow Water Band Hall, with Norman Meade of the Manigotagan Community Chapel officiating.

Phillip had planned his own funeral service with his family a few months before he passed on and those requests were honoured. One request was to have Norman Meade conduct his funeral. A second request was to have some of his students (the jiggers) dance at the close of the funeral service in front of the casket, accompanied by a fiddle tune. In that way the service was a little different from the usual funeral service that we have been accustomed to over the years in our community. The funeral was a Christian service, with the added touch of remembering Philip for his dance talents as a square dancer and jigger. As usual, we were also blessed with good gospel music of the Northern Gospel Light Singers and others during the wake services and at the funeral. A beautiful traditional travel song was sung by Philip's son-in-law, Marcel Hardisty.

—Norman Meade  
Winnipeg, MB

**Debbie Owen** of Pauingassi, Manitoba died on February 1, 2008 of a stab wound at the age of 25 years. She will be greatly missed by her family members and friends. Interment took place at Pauingassi, with Allan Owens in charge.

**Lanny Pascal**, age 18 years of Pauingassi, Manitoba, passed away on February 12, 2008 by choice. He leaves to mourn his



## Resources

*Two Rivers* is a 57-minute DVD produced by Greenleaf Street Productions. Can be previewed at [www.tworiversfilm.com](http://www.tworiversfilm.com)

“Some 10 years ago, almost by accident, a handful of whites and Native Americans in the Northwest (United States) began meeting together to find out why relationships between Natives and non-Natives are virtually nonexistent ...” (taken from DVD cover) “Two Rivers” shows how people from different worlds can create profound, lasting friendships if they are willing to adopt an open attitude, experiment with new ways of connecting, and learn to speak, listen, and act from their hearts. (taken from [www.greenleafstreet.com](http://www.greenleafstreet.com))

*Report of the Ipperwash Inquiry* by the Honourable Sidney B. Linden, Commissioner, is now available to the public in three forms through Publications Ontario (by telephone at 416-326-5300 or at [www.publications.serviceontario.ca](http://www.publications.serviceontario.ca):

1) On the internet for one year at [www.ipperwashinquiry.ca](http://www.ipperwashinquiry.ca)



## Community news cont.

parents, Jacob and Mary Jane Owen, siblings, relatives and friends. Allan Owens of Pauingassi officiated.

**Mary Young** of Bloodvein River, Manitoba passed away suddenly at the age of 33 years due to an aneurism of the brain on February 12, 2008. Left to mourn her passing are her partner, Felix Fisher, and other family members and friends. The interment was in Bloodvein with Fr. Rheel Forest officiating.

**Philemon Fisher**, age 78 years of Bloodvein River, Manitoba, passed away on February 20, 2008 at the Seven Oaks Hospital in Winnipeg, after a lengthy illness. Her family was with her at the time of her passing. She was predeceased by her husband, and her family and friends will miss her a great deal. Interment took place at Bloodvein, with Fr. Rheel Forest officiating.

2) On a set of 2 DVDs: Volumes 1 – 4 and Research Papers and Party Projects

3) In written form:

Volume 1 – Investigation and Findings

Volume 2 – Policy Analysis

Volume 3 – Inquiry Process

Volume 4 – Executive Summary

The need for this provincial inquiry came when Dudley George, an Aboriginal man from the Stoney Point reserve in southwestern Ontario, was killed on September 6, 1995, when a confrontation occurred between the Ontario Provincial Police and the Aboriginal people who began occupying Ipperwash Provincial Park on Labour Day, September 4, 1995 to protest the federal government’s refusal to return the Stoney Point reserve land after World War II, as had been promised.

Finally, in November 2003, a provincial inquiry was called with a dual mandate: to investigate the events surrounding Dudley George’s death, and to recommend ways to avoid future violence in similar circumstances.

**“A nation without a vision has no hope.**

**A nation without a vision has no future ...**

**I have a vision for this country we call CANADA.**

**It is not my vision.**

**It is a vision that lies in the heart and soul of our people.**

**It is inherent in the land we call mother earth,**

**That sustains our life and all living things.”**

—Elijah Harper  
Cree/Ojibway Member of Parliament  
Sacred Assembly ‘95  
Hull, Quebec

## Events Calendar

### July 7-8, 2008

Mennonite Church Canada annual delegate Assembly, Canadian Mennonite University campus, Winnipeg, Manitoba. Visit [www.mennonitechurch.ca/events/summit08/](http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/events/summit08/) for more information

### July 8-10, 2008

People’s Summit for Faithful Living, a special joint gathering of Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada that will focus on the theme of “the church living faithfully as a contrast community in our global reality” with direction from the theme text of Deuteronomy 4:1-9. Canadian Mennonite University campus, Winnipeg, Manitoba.



### July 28 – 31, 2008

Native Assembly 2008, Frisco Conference Center, Clinton, Oklahoma, hosted by the Oklahoma Fellowship of Indian Mennonite Churches. Theme: “Unity and Service”, based on Philippians 2:1-11. For more information, contact Native Ministry office at 204-888-6781 or toll-free at 1-866-888-6785.

### August 23 – 24, 2008

Bridging the Gap, Siksika Nation, Alberta.

For more events visit [www.mennonitechurch.ca/events](http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/events). Native Ministry related events can be submitted for the calendar. Submit events in writing to the mailing address on page 3, or email to [imiller@mennonitechurch.ca](mailto:imiller@mennonitechurch.ca).



**A Note from Native Ministry...**  
Help us continue to bring you news featuring items related to Native Ministry. Donations towards the cost of publication lets us continue our walk together. Contact Ingrid Miller at [imiller@mennonitechurch.ca](mailto:imiller@mennonitechurch.ca)



# Those That Spoke of Jesus

*King David, Psalm 16:10*

“For you will not leave me among the dead; you will not allow your beloved one to rot in the grave.”

*The Apostle Luke, Luke 9:51*

As the time drew near when Jesus would be taken up to heaven, he made up his mind and set out on his way to Jerusalem.

*Jesus, John 2:19*

Jesus answered, “Tear down this Temple, and in three days I will build it again.”

*Jesus, Matthew 26:32*

“But after I am raised to life, I will go to Galilee ahead of you.”

*Paul, Acts 26:22, 23*

“But to this very day I have been helped by God, and so I stand here giving my witness to all, to small and great alike. What I say is the very same thing which the prophets and Moses said was going to happen: that the Messiah must suffer and be the first one to rise from death, to announce the light of salvation to the Jews and to the Gentiles.”

Jesus has risen indeed from the dead and lives today!

בַּקְרָאִים רַחֵם

**רַחֵם אֱלֹהִים, שְׁמוֹנָה עָשָׂר 16:10**

בְּיָמַי אֵלֹהִים לֹא יַעַזְבוּנִי בְּיַמְתִּי, וְלֹא יִשְׁמְטֵנִי בְּיַמְתִּי, וְלֹא יִשְׁמְטֵנִי בְּיַמְתִּי, וְלֹא יִשְׁמְטֵנִי בְּיַמְתִּי.

בְּיָמַי אֵלֹהִים לֹא יַעַזְבוּנִי בְּיַמְתִּי, וְלֹא יִשְׁמְטֵנִי בְּיַמְתִּי, וְלֹא יִשְׁמְטֵנִי בְּיַמְתִּי, וְלֹא יִשְׁמְטֵנִי בְּיַמְתִּי.

**שְׁמוֹנָה עָשָׂר 9:51**

וְכַשְׁמַע יֵשׁוּעַ אֵלֶּיךָ לְעָרֵץ יְרוּשָׁלַיִם, וְלֹא יָדָעוּ אֵיךְ יֵשׁוּעַ יֵרָד מִן הַיַּם הַיָּבֵשׁ, וְיֵשׁוּעַ יֵרָד מִן הַיַּם הַיָּבֵשׁ.

**שְׁמוֹנָה עָשָׂר 2:19**

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**שְׁמוֹנָה עָשָׂר 26:32**

וְכַשְׁמַע יֵשׁוּעַ אֵלֶּיךָ לְעָרֵץ יְרוּשָׁלַיִם, וְלֹא יָדָעוּ אֵיךְ יֵשׁוּעַ יֵרָד מִן הַיַּם הַיָּבֵשׁ, וְיֵשׁוּעַ יֵרָד מִן הַיַּם הַיָּבֵשׁ.

**שְׁמוֹנָה עָשָׂר 26:22, 23**

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Witness