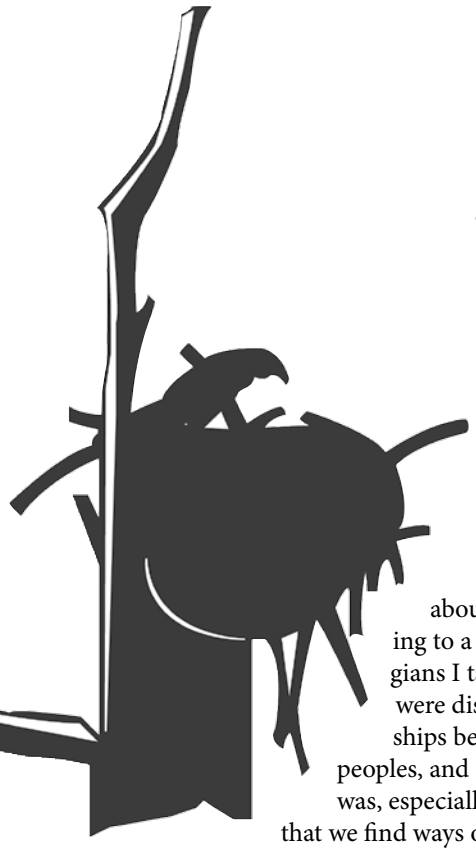
my friends Intotemak

Summer 2013 Vol. 42, No. 2

Mennonite Church Canada



All have beauty; all have wisdom

What can settlers learn from the Indigenous about creation? Not much, according to a couple of prominent theologians I talked too not long ago. We were discussing the state of relationships between Indigenous and settlers peoples, and I mentioned how critical it was, especially in this age of climate crisis, that we find ways of bringing settlers into deep conversation with the Indigenous around ecological and justice matters. They bristled at the idea, and dismissed it quite quickly.

"I've sat through too much of that in my time."

"Indigenous teaching isn't compatible with Christianity. It's shamanism. It's dangerous."

"That mother earth stuff is all made up. It's post-contact romanticism."

These aren't fringe voices. They're two public, intelligent men who have written countless books between them. And though I don't have any hard stats, my experience tells me that their sentiments are fairly representative of church and broader society. What can we truly learn from the Indigenous on these matters? Truth be told, it's we settlers who have the goods, at least the best, most reasoned, scientific or theologically sound goods to offer, and we who have the real-life solutions and wherewithal to fix the problems we perceive.

Sound familiar? It was this kind of thinking that led both the Canadian and U.S. governments, along with whole segments of the Christian church – Baptist, Catholic, Methodist, Anglican, Mennonite and more – to implement residential schools for native children. "These peoples need our help," so we thought. And since "We have the best answers to their problems," well, let's not only offer, but let's enforce our solutions. "The first step in bringing the Indian to Jesus, is saving him out of his squalor and ignorance," said a Mennonite leader in the 1960s.

Residential and boarding schools are physically gone, and many Canadians and Christians are now lamenting what we did. We can thank survivors and the Indigenous led efforts of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission for opening eyes. But policies of assimilation and attitudes of superiority still remain. They've just taken a different form. Can we see them?

> How are the lifeways of traditional peoples romantic? If romanticism denotes impracticality and unrealistic fantasy, can there be a more romantic myth than the idea that human beings can continually rise above the powers of nature through our rationalities and application of technology—a myth that... is literally burning the planet?
> -Dan Wildcat (Muscogee)

I wasn't surprised or shocked by the thoughts of my theologian friends. I was deeply saddened. What will it take for our churches and our communities to push beyond indifference or political politeness and truly love and respect our host peoples? This isn't romanticism. This isn't leftist tolerance. It's a serious realism that believes every people have beauty and gifts and knowledge to bring to the circle. That's an Indigenous belief. That's a belief Jesus celebrated and even died for (see Eph. 2).

I'm so grateful that I have friends who get this. I need them to give me hope as I struggle along when others don't value what I so treasure. And that's what *Intotemak* is largely about; gathering voices of people who can encourage and gift us in this journey… sharing our learnings, our tears, our stories of friendships and joy. Keep on keeping on friends! You are not alone. You are not alone.

Steve Heinrichs
Director, Indigenous Relations

my friends Intotemak

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EDITOR
Steve Heinrichs
sheinrichs@mennonitechurch.ca

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT
Ingrid Miller
imiller@mennonitechurch.ca

ART DIRECTOR/DESIGNER
Carpe Diem Communications
Tammy Sawatzky

Printed by Christian Press
Winnipeg, MB

Please send all communications to:
INTOTEMAK
Mennonite Church Canada
c/o Indigenous Relations
600 Shaftesbury Blvd. Winnipeg, MB
R3P 0M4 204.888.6781
Toll Free 1.866.888.6785
Fax 204.831.5675
www.mennonitechurch.ca

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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.

Christian Peacemaker Teams

CPT ABORIGINAL JUSTICE

Anticipating a long, hot summer

The Idle No More movement over the last winter surprised many Canadians. Round dances took over shopping malls and intersections, teach-ins sprung up in universities and Friendship Centers, and Chief Theresa Spence led a high-profile sacred fast, calling for a treaty meeting, enduring hunger and media scorn for 44 days before achieving a partial response from the Government of Canada.

For anyone aware of the growing legislative and public undermining of indigenous rights, it was a welcome sign as both indigenous and non-indigenous groups declared themselves Idle No More. In addition to addressing age-old colonialist injustices, Idle No More specifically addresses the aggressive legislative agenda pursued by the present government since winning a majority in 2011. Although the form is new, such as removing environmental protection legislation from 94% of Canada's waterways, the core of the agenda retains familiar tactics of assimilation.

As policy, this agenda can boast buzzwords like 'equality' and 'financial transparency', but below the surface, another power is at work. Letters to the Editor openly call for the assimilation and relocation of First Nations; figureheads like Chief Spence are slandered as attention-seeking, corrupt, and in one memorable case, terrorist. It has always been easier to rely on tried-and-tested stereotypes to brush aside the truth that Idle No More points to: that the rights of indigenous peoples to practice and protect their chosen way of life are being systematically erased in favour of an economy based on destructive resource extraction.

The immediate furor of round dances and blockades has died down. On the land not much has changed - reserves under the Canadian government's Indian Act continue to struggle with the litany of poverty; scarcity of clean water, underfunding of education, lack of opportunity and high suicide levels.

However, on March 19 2013, the indigenous rights network Defenders of the Land entered into an alliance with Idle No More, anticipating what is being termed the Spring of Solidarity and a Summer of Sovereignty. Their statement includes a new call for coordinated non-violent direct action. CPT's Aboriginal Justice Team has heard numerous predictions of 'a long, hot summer' for grassroots Land Defenders and their allies. The calls include anticipated actions on the land by resisting unfettered, unconsented resource extraction that impact indigenous and settler land users as well as campaigns in cities and towns by educating, rallying, and mobilizing support.

CPT calls the whole church into the work of undoing the oppression of colonialism, which imposes settler law, language and land use patterns and attempts to erase indigenous societies and bodies. We invite all concerned to participate in transforming the violence of colonialism into a new relationship. Consider researching your particular context, participating in an AJT delegation, or supporting national/international movements like Idle No More.

Peter Haresnape,
Toronto United Mennonite Church, Toronto, Ont.

Women cries when sharing the history of her residential school experience.

Reflections from the TRC in Montreal

TO BE ARTISANS OF PEACE

A story from day three of the TRC in Montreal

It was nearing the end of a long day of listening to painful stories and I was looking for a place near the back of the hall to sit quietly for the last session of the day. Near the back of the room, I was somewhat surprised to see a flip chart stand with a drawing on it sitting in the middle of the aisle. I was even more surprised to see a young aboriginal man wildly gesticulating beside the chart and speaking in a very animated fashion to a young woman with a notepad. I edged closer to get a better look (and maybe a listen). The closer I got, the more obvious it was that this young man was very angry indeed..

I looked more closely at the drawing on the stand that they were arguing about. It was a chart with two columns. On one side, there were carefully crafted images of a wide variety of animals. There was a globe displaying North and South America, alongside drawings of aboriginal dwellings and a circle representing dialogue and mutuality. These were holistic images of life and interdependence and respect, and maternal leadership. At the top of his column, standing over all the other drawings, was a tree. Underneath the tree were the words, "Symbol of Life."

The other column had very different drawings and a very different feel. There was a bulldozer and big, ugly drops of oil. There was a square schoolhouse and a severe, imposing-looking church. Each of the images on this side of the chart was entirely coloured black. These were destructive images of oppression, ignorance, and patriarchal abuse. At the top of this column, standing over all the other drawings, was a cross. Underneath the cross were the words, "Symbol of Death."

For a few seconds, I just stood and stared. It hurt me to see the cross—this symbol that means so much to me, this symbol that represents what I have devoted my life to, this symbol that speaks to me of one who lived and taught and died in order to reconcile all things to God—portrayed in such dark and hateful terms.

It hurt. And then it began to make me angry. "No, no!" I

Chief Bobbi Joseph and Garry Janzen, Conference Pastor of MCBC, listen to testimony at the Montreal TRC.

wanted to say. "You've misunderstood my faith entirely! You don't understand the Jesus I follow at all! The Jesus I follow was all about life and love and compassion—about the breaking down of barriers, about self-sacrifice, about reconciliation. The Jesus I follow was called the Prince of Peace, Immanuel, God with us and for us! These things in your drawing, they don't belong together! Please, please don't make the mistake of painting all of us who stand under this cross with the same brush! You don't understand why this Jesus matters to me, you don't understand at all!"

And then, of course, the pin dropped.

It became blindingly obvious that the way I was feeling about a simple drawing on a flip chart was exactly how I imagine the First Peoples of Canada would have felt when white, settler Christians summarily judged and dismissed—and have continued to judge and dismiss—their worldview. It is how our aboriginal neighbors would have felt when their cherished beliefs and practices were labeled, "evil" or "pagan" or "harmful." It is how they would have felt when their understanding of reality, their way of being in the world, was misunderstood and rejected, deemed worthy only of eradicating, not understanding.

And instead of feeling angry, I began to feel very sad for my unwillingness and inability to, as one presenter put it, "walk in another's moccasins."

I said a silent prayer, asking for forgiveness from the one who laid down his rights, who was misunderstood, mistreated, and rejected. And I asked for the vision and the will to see how all of us might begin to become, as another young aboriginal speaker put it, "artisans of peace."

Ryan Dueck,
Pastor of Lethbridge Mennonite Church,
Lethbridge, Alta.

BRINGING VIOLENCE INTO LIGHT

On the importance of naming genocide

Genocide is a loaded word. Its implications are many and cut through all of aspects of society, from social to economic to political. And it is because of these implications that people are hesitant to use it.

The label, "genocide," was introduced in 1948 by the United Nations to capture the breadth and depth of the violence faced by Jews during World War Two. Having this word only allowed the UN to create legal rights and responsibilities to its use to ensure that all of humanity would be implicated if such an act ever occurred again. The word "genocide" also gave victims another tool to speak the truth of their experience.

There is power in being able to speak truth. It is essential to healing and reconciling relationships. This is why the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was started in Canada as response to the violence of the Residential School. Having a word like genocide that can capture the weight of the inhumanity embodied in eliminating the "other," can help society heal. It can attribute responsibility and blame. It can shed light into the darkest cracks where such violence festers. By naming violence and speaking truth, we can reach into those cracks, draw violence into the light so that we can really see it and start to address it.

One of the Honorary Witness to Canada's TRC is Éloge Butera. He is a Tutsi and a survivor of the Rwandan genocide who now resides in Canada. Butera spoke at the TRC in Montreal of his experience during the genocide. In 1994, violence erupted in Rwanda. Over the course of four months, almost a million Tutsis, and Hutus harbouring Tutsis, were slaughtered. This genocide was largely dictated by political elites looking to consolidate

TRC cont. on page 6.

Survivor gives testimony at TRC.

their power. They used ethnicity as a political script to define the "other." And people at the local level participated in horrific ways.

Rwandans begged the international community to act. They pleaded for political leaders to acknowledge the violence as genocide and fulfill their obligations as laid out by the UN. But most politicians kept their mouths firmly shut. Those that did recognize genocide diluted its potency and legal ramifications by reducing it to a qualifying adjective. What was happening in Rwanda was not genocide per se, but genocide-like acts.

To be a Tutsi was to be culpable. Butera recalled how the dying words of his twelve-year-old friend, Samuel, were, "Please forgive me. I will never be a Tutsi again." Trying to reconcile in the wake of genocide is "a brutal and serious business," said Butera. When victims like Samuel come to believe that they are to blame, how can we find truth and reconciliation?

At the TRC, Aboriginal Residential School survivors made statements similar to Samuel's. One woman said that the real violence of her experience was that it robbed her of her belief in the value of her culture and language. She no longer saw them as precious. Another man said that he was taught to hate himself, to hate his language and appearance, to hate the community he came from and the family he was born into.

These accounts from Butera and Residential School survivors speak to perhaps the most violent aspect of genocide. This is that through genocide, not only is the victim denied their humanity by the perpetrator, but they may also come to participate in dehumanizing themselves. How does a society reconcile such profound brokenness?

Many survivors and supporters during the TRC use the term "cultural genocide" to capture Canada's Residential School system. Genocide is a loaded and messy word. It is arguably the most violent act humans can commit – the act of denying whole groups' humanity. It is an uncomfortable word to say, let alone admit to perpetrating. But given the systematic attempt by the Canadian government, church leaders and other participants to "kill the Indian in the child," it is important to use it in the context of the Residential Schools.

As a non-Aboriginal, I came to the TRC to listen. I came to hear truth spoken, to bear witness to injustice committed, to learn how to take on the responsibility of the perpetrator and to learn how I can live in solidarity with Aboriginal communities. But through this listening, I have realized that I also need to speak truth. I must call what occurred during the Residential School era genocide. If I do not, then I too become complicit in silencing truth and in leaving violence to fester in the cracks.

To challenge the violent structures in Canada and reconcile our society, we must speak truth, even if that truth is messy and violent.

Maria G. Krause,
Graduate Student of Political Studies
Queen's University in Kingston, Ont.

FINDING WORDS FOR TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

Profound. It's the only word that I can think of that has any chance of conveying my experience at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearings that I attended in Montreal. Eleven of us Mennonites from different denominations, generations, genders and provinces attended this event over 4 days at the end of April with the purpose of taking our experiences back to our home communities in order to encourage them to attend the TRC when it comes to Vancouver this fall (Sept. 18-21), and Alberta next spring.

Oscar was so appreciative for this gathering. He expressed his thankfulness to me and Brad for attending and being a part of the TRC, and he blessed us. Oscar said, “It’s good for all of us to be here. We’re healing together. We’re doing good work.” I couldn’t agree more.

Profound. It’s the word I settled on before I returned home that would be my response when people asked me, “How was your trip?” For the Montreal TRC wasn’t just good, it was something much more meaningful. It was how Justice Murray Sinclair described it,

“You’ve heard of contact sports, this is like head-on collision sports; afterwards you’re going to feel battered and bruised, but it’s good and important.”

What I experienced at the TRC was life-changing. It challenged how I looked at the world through my dominant, settler society set of lenses. It helped me exchange those old lenses for new ones that enable me to see more clearly, moving me from my stereotypes and preconceived ideas of the Indigenous, to a deep respect and empathy for a people who have courageously endured so much pain and suffering.

My experience at the TRC has been soul-shaping. I saw reflections of Jesus in the forgiveness and humility expressed by many of those who testified to being subjected to atrocities that no one should have to endure. I also saw Jesus in some of the anger and passionate expressions for justice that were voiced.

I want to tell my friends and my church that the TRC is “profound” because it was just that, but also because I long for them to pause and ask why. I want a chance to share what I witnessed and how I was changed as a result. And thankfully, that’s what happened in the days following my return. Many asked me why I felt the way I did, and more importantly, they’ve said they want to go with me to the TRC when it comes to Vancouver so that they too can experience what I’ve experienced and be changed in similar ways. I am incredibly grateful.

One of the most profound things I experienced at the TRC took place on the first day of the event. One of the three commissioners shared what the theme of the Quebec TRC was. Any idea what that might be? Healing? Justice? Equality? All of those would have been fitting themes. But the chosen theme was humility. I was astounded; humility is the kind of theme you might expect at a Christian convention. But here was an event in which survivors of residential schools would be sharing their testimonies of brokenness and pain, and in the midst of that, they were inviting everyone, both native and non-native to humility; to come together in a posture of openness, with listening hearts and deep love and respect. I started to have an inkling that the Spirit had something unexpected to teach me over the next 4 days.

Though I heard from some who were angry and outraged, the majority I encountered expressed a gentle humility like the aboriginal man, Oscar, I met in the food court. Oscar was so appreciative for this gathering. He expressed his thankfulness to me and Brad (another member of our group) for attending and being a part of the TRC, and he blessed us. Oscar said, “It’s good for all of us to be here. We’re healing together. We’re doing good work.” I couldn’t agree more.

Because of my experience at the TRC, I’ve been able to share profound moments like my encounter with Oscar and others who blessed me. I’m encouraged to continue walking in humility on this journey of reconciliation with others who have suffered much, yet who have taken the initiative to extend an invitation to me and the rest of Canadian society. It is a profound experience. I hope you’ll join me.

Dave Heinrichs,
Associate Pastor
Eagle Ridge Bible Fellowship
(Mennonite Brethren), Coquitlam, BC

HEARTS TO HEAR THE TRUTH

I was so honoured to attend the TRC in Montreal. Over the past ten years I've said yes to various opportunities to hear First Nations people speak about their experience in Canadian society and my awareness and concern for their marginalization has grown. When I mention this marginalization to others, I hear mostly negative responses; "They don't pay taxes," "They need to get over it," and "They need to quit drinking." I recognize that discrimination is deep seated in our society and people feel justified in their position. The TRC is a powerful and beautiful opportunity to bring that discrimination into the light and break its power by hearing the truth of Canada's human rights failings.

At the TRC, one hears so many survivor testimonies that tell a history of Canada that is not taught in schools. Assimilation was a government agenda designed to deal with the Indian problem, and "kill the Indian in the man." And the residential schools were a key strategy in accomplishing that agenda; separating children from their parents and stopping the transfer of culture. The cultural destruction and damage that has been inflicted is so deep and multi-generational that it cannot be healed with another government program. Reconciliation cannot be legislated; it has to come from the heart. It requires a collective heart of compassion, and a desire to understand and not sit in judgment. The government will not bring about reconciliation. We must do it, through hearts that can feel their pain.

Just imagine if this happened to us (white and non-native peoples)? Imagine that our society has been occupied by a new group of people who don't speak our language and bring a radically different way of being to bear, a foreign culture. Imagine they set up a different kind of government and require that we follow it. Our culture is working, but they negate and dismiss our ways. They pass laws for themselves and different ones for us so we are controlled and tell us where we can live. And the newcomers tell us that they can educate our children so that they will have a better chance of being accepted into their ways. Some parents believe this and agree, some parents say no but the children are taken by force and in some of our towns the parents aren't even told, the children are just taken. How would we feel? Perhaps we would feel hopeful for our child's education, or distraught, or powerless and deeply wounded at the taking of our children. How do we "get over" this? How do we trust, how do we defend ourselves? Think of a whole village having this happen... all of the children gone! This was the residential school program. And it was mandatory.

Perhaps we lovingly pack a suitcase of precious things of love and care, blankets, a favourite toy, and some food. We didn't know that none of these things would ever be given to our child, that our five year old baby will not have anything related to us or our culture while away from us. They won't experience a parent's love or comfort when they sleep in a strange dorm room in residential school, or when they're sick, abused or mistreated. Imagine.

Now our children return from their first year, speaking a language we don't speak and barely knowing ours. But worse than that, they may or may not tell us that they have been starved, beaten, degraded, sexually fondled or raped (or seen others violated) or had needles stuck in their tongue if they spoke our language (it happened). Can we believe it? Can we believe our own children? How can the church people running the school be doing that? And, then our children, after a couple months at home are required to return the following year, and the year after that and the year after that. We can do nothing about it. The children that run away are caught and carried back and punished, sometimes locked away for days in storage closets because they were homesick. Can you imagine the guilt and shame you'd feel as a parent if, and when, you learned the truth? Can you perceive the incalculable psychological damage done to your child? Or maybe your child would be one of the 4,134 (the numbers are growing) that just never came home, and you have no body to bury, no grave marked and no explanation. What would you do? Perhaps drinking to numb the pain would be your choice too. Think of the self-denial and poor self-esteem, and trust issues your children would carry through life, being taught that they were savages and not worthy of human love or decent food. And with all your own issues of having your children stripped from you, and abused by people who serve God (and Jesus!)... could you function well in such a society...one in which the majority of its people don't know or accept that this was incredibly wrong. Could you affirm and love the God they serve?

And of course, the traumatic cycle continues. For how does this abused child now be a mother or father to a child when they haven't had a loving mother or father experience? How does this native woman or man get on when their story is not included in the school curriculum being taught to their kids? How do they get on when their white and immigrant neighbors are angry and jealous about the financial settlements that they've received to compensate for their loss? How do you fit in? How do you get over that?

The truth must be heard and acknowledged for healing to begin and make reconciliation a possibility. And we can do that. We can listen. We can open our hearts. That first step is available to us all.

Carla Niemi,
|Living Hope Fellowship, Surrey, BC

Living Peace in Our Backyard: Mennonites and the Young Chippewayan

A group of Mennonites attended the Landless Bands Conference at the Dakota Dunes in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Many Indigenous communities, throughout Canada, have been dispossessed of their lands for various reasons. Some of the injustices go back well over a hundred years. At this gathering of Indigenous leaders and grassroots supporters, a group of ten Mennonites were invited to watch and pray, connected to this issue specifically because of their relationship with the Young Chippewayan. Ray Funk was asked to share a few words on behalf of the group, and the following is a transcript of what he said:

Ray Funk with Chief Ben Weenie and Chief Perry Bellegarde

…until the day he died, my father, Abe Funk, was fairly firm with me, his oldest son, and very firm with my son Abe, his oldest grandson, that our clan would commit themselves to working with the Young Chippewayan until this job [of righting the land injustice] is done. He was adamant that we won't quit. And we are not going to quit.

Now we as Mennonite people have some unique characteristics of our own and I think that in some ways it helps us understand this a little better. In Medieval Europe there was a situation where the church and the state had become intertwined and they had both become quite corrupt as a result of that relationship and the power each one had. They each had their way with the peasants and the great mass of people.

There was a group called the Anabaptists who said that's not what the Gospel teaches; the Gospel teaches that we live according to love, and according to justice, and this unholy alliance between the church and the state has got to go. And so they formed groups like the Mennonites, the Hutterites, the Red River Amish , and they got themselves away from this prevailing system. And of course they weren't very popular when they did that. That threatened the armies; they were pacifists so who was going to fight the state wars? They did not believe in the taxation system as it was implemented; and so who was going to pay the King's taxes? And so they tried to get rid of the Mennonite people, get them out of their lands, and so what did they do? People that were colonizing new lands would see that these people were very good farmers, were industrious people, worked hard and were able to look after themselves quite self-sufficiently. They thought "we'll move these people in where we have vacant land".

There were two sets of victims to this vacant land policy… the people that got moved out… and then there was also some victimization of the people that got moved in because we were not the architects of that situation, but we inherited that. It actually started in Russia; it happened with the Cossacks, it happened in southern Manitoba in the 1870s, it happened with the Young Chippewayan in the 1890s, and it continues to happen. We were not aware of the Young Chippewayan situation until 1976; eighty or so years after it happened. Our people were not aware that there had even been a reserve; that there were other people that rightfully belonged there. It came as quite a shock when we found out about it.

August 23, 1976 was the 100th anniversary of the signing of Treaty 6. Many people came out to that and were inspired there and encouraged to get behind some of the Treaty issues that had been languishing. At this time, Sidney Fineday went to the RM of Laird. He had a map of the old reserve and drew a map on the boundaries of where the reserve should be. He visited the folks and the farmers in the town of Laird and it looked like there was actually a reserve here. This came as a mighty shock and some of them aren't over it yet.

But we were very fortunate that one of the things that our church was able to do was to put together an organization that really represents the best of us; the quest for justice and quest for peace, the quest for making things right, and that's Mennonite Central Committee (MCC). It was Edgar Epp, you maybe knew him; Edgar was very instrumental in starting the Cultural College and First Nations University. He was the director of MCC at that time. Having close contact with both the Laird community where he was from and with First Nations, he started the dialogue and

Living Peace cont. on page 10.

Our people were not aware that there had even been a reserve; that there were other people that rightfully belonged there. It came as quite a shock when we found out about it.

really helped the people in our community know that they needed to educate themselves. They needed to recognize what was happening and take the emotion out of it and look at it objectively and grasp what's happened here and move forward.

So that was stabilized from our side. The conversation was picked up by George Kingfisher's dad, Alfert Snake; he and his sister Elizabeth Guidry came to visit Stoney Knoll with our elders; and by Chief Ben Weenie; and they got to know Leonard Doell (the Aboriginal Neighbours worker for MCC Sask). In 2006 we signed the Memorandum of Understanding between the settlers and the Young Chippewayan. And I think there is power in that… this is the only situation in Canada where the settlers in an area of a dispossessed band have made common cause. And I think we should be able to leverage that into some kind of action because it is certainly unique in Canada that the two groups are working closely together.

The next thing that we needed to do was get a deeper understanding and teach our people about what this is really all about. We knew about the land and so on, but we needed to know more about treaties. Then in 2011, there was a Treaty Gathering at Stoney Knoll; in the middle of the old reserve, treaty payments were handed out for the first time in over a century. That was a very powerful event, and we all got these medals that say we are all treaty people. We were all given the task of informing our citizens that we are together, and that we are all treaty people and to move forward from that date. That's what we are all trying to do.

Mennonites are known for being practical people. We trying to put our weight behind the Young Chippewayan; help them get organized, help them get funding, particularly to do the genealogy work. As Chief Weenie said, the last court case fell down because the connections between the land and the people was incomplete, and now we have raised $25,000 to complete the genealogy work. We have another fundraiser this year; the day after Treaty Six, on August 24, we are putting on the Spruce River Folk Fest and this year we are expanding it to include all of Treaty 6. So the scope includes not only the Young Chippewayan, but the whole landless band question, so that this question of justice isn't just something between us and the Young Chippewayan, but is an issue for all of Saskatchewan and all parts of society to confront. We want to raise the awareness level this year.

The other thing that they are talking about is something that some of our brothers and sisters are doing in other parts of this country. That is to start looking at forming land trusts where we raise monies and those monies then be made available to purchase land. Whether our government recognizes this land or not, the Young Chippewayan, the Big Bear First Nation, and Sandy Bay First Nation need to have some land that is their own, and that's what we hope to be raising money for this year. We can do this… to get some money together to start buying some land so that these bands are not landless anymore.

So those are our challenges. We are very glad to participate here today, and we are watching with you to see what happens from this day forward.

Mi'kmaq Wisdom on Land and Language

A NAIITS Reflection

With a single sentence, a young Mi'kmaq two-spirit man once changed my conception of knowledge. We were part of an organizing group, finding speakers to talk about the need for land defense.

After someone made a comment about the destruction of land-based cultures that accompanies destruction of a land base, he explained the corollary.

"Cultural knowledge, law and language - they are never truly destroyed. Knowledge can be lost, but not destroyed. Our knowledge comes from the land, and it can be recovered from the land."

The recovery of knowledge in the form of language was a theme at the recent North American Institute for Indigenous Theological Studies (NAIITS) symposium in Toronto. Many of the presenters spoke on language, translation, scripture, orality and literacy under the theme *Shaping Faith: How Language Informs the Journey.* A panel of Mi'kmaq women talked of how their people had kept and practiced the Catholic faith for years in isolation from the rest of the church, without outside priests to teach and interpret scripture. They practiced the faith using their own language, without need for the European's sacred Latin.

Language recovery and revitalization was understood to be important and essential; although not much was said about the reasons why these efforts were necessary – the assault on indigenous languages and cultures by church and state through the Indian Residential School system.

Despite the stories and discussions, I found my attention divided. I was following the developing situation in New Brunswick, as Mi'kmaq, Maliseet and allied friends rallied against the shale gas industry's exploration for possible fracking sites. The polluting, destructive fracking process is a particular threat to water, and I was concerned about how to support this vital land defense cause. I felt that this

Terry Leblanc, Cheryl Bear and Wendy Peterson of NAIITS hang out with the Mennonite mafia.

was the urgent issue. Language recovery was important, but the threat to the land was something that had to be countered immediately.

Yet, participating in the conference, I saw how these different streams flow together. Language cannot just be recovered through classrooms – it must be experienced, learned, and used in the context it came from – on the land. For that to happen, the land must still exist – in all its biodiversity, as entrusted to the people of that place by the Creator. When the people use the land, raise their children in it and listen to the stories of their elders of the land, then their cultural knowledge is preserved, restored, and develops.

Even though I am not a language teacher, or someone who can publish books or do translations, I can support the recovery of indigenous languages by supporting indigenous-led grassroots land defense efforts; resisting colonial/imperial economic projects like the Tar Sands, fracking, open-pit mining, clear cut logging and mega quarries. When the land is preserved, loved, living and lived on, then the gift of language and cultural diversity is safeguarded and enriches the generations to come.

Esther Kern,
Valleyview Mennonite, London, Ont.

Indigenous and Settler peoples come together in New Brunswick to resist the fracking of unceded Mi'kmaq territory.

High School Students attend Healing Gathering

The opportunity to interact with residential school survivors brought 15 high school students from Selkirk, Man. to the Indian and Residential Day School Healing Gathering in Winnipeg on May 23, 2013.

Their presence highlighted two themes recurring during the conference: governmentally sanctioned, church run schools designed to "kill the Indian in the child" have caused ongoing intergenerational damage, and true healing requires a community effort.

The students, who belong to the Aboriginal Student Centre (ASC) of Lord Selkirk Regional Comprehensive Secondary School (LSRCSS) and are of Aboriginal descent, were finishing a school project focusing on Residential Schools. Several of them took turns at the microphone to share family stories about Indian Residential Schools and Day Schools and how they have personally been affected by the past.

They received applause for their attendance and words of encouragement from Shawn Atleo, the National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations in Canada, who also attended on May 23. Atleo noted that he sees young First Nations people across the country stepping up and taking the lead in issues important to their communities – like healing. It isn't easy, but it is rewarding. "So young people, choose the harder road."

Teacher Jacqueline Bercier said the ASC exists to encourage Aboriginal student success. "I want my students to be proud of who they are, and where they come from. I want them to become the up and coming generation of Aboriginal youth who are empowered and strong in their identity."

Nine members of the local Mennonite community with connections to Mennonite Church Canada and sister organizations attended the conference to show their support. Among them was Elder Thelma Meade, who said that the loss of identity is the most devastating outcome of enforced schooling for indigenous peoples. She spoke passionately about the essential need for healing and the importance of including elders in the process.

The conference took place May 22 and 23 at the Indian and Métis Friendship Centre of Winnipeg. It brought survivors of Indian Residential Schools and Day Schools together with lawyers to share stories and continue working toward legal action on behalf of Day School survivors. Day School survivors were not included in the Indian Residential School settlement and are not part of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission established to make survivors' stories a part of the historical record.

Although Day School students were allowed to return to their homes in the evening, their attendance was mandatory and many of them suffered the same abuses as those who attended residential schools. Some estimates suggest that Day School survivors outnumber residential school survivors by at least 3 to 1.

The gathering was sponsored by Spiritwind/Canada, The Indian and Métis Friendship Centre of Winnipeg, and Algoul and Associates Law Firm.

Students and teachers from the Aboriginal Student Centre at Lord Selkirk Regional Comprehensive Secondary School attended the Indian and Residential Day School Healing Gathering in Winnipeg on May 23, 2013 and met Shawn Atleo, the National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations in Canada (front row, 4th from right). Jacqueline Bercier, teacher and field trip organizer (front left) and Steve Richard, (Aboriginal Counsellor (2nd row, right) accompanied the group.

Thelma Meade, a respected elder in both the indigenous and Mennonite communities and the founder of Kikinamawin Training Centre in Winnipeg, said that the loss of identity is the most devastating outcome of enforced schooling for indigenous peoples.

Hearing the Cries of the Buffalo

Buffalo Shout, Salmon Cry is a new book (ed. Steve Heinrichs, Herald Press, 2013) that documents conversations of indigenous and non-indigenous activists, writers, intellectuals and story tellers on colonialism, relationship, healing, and next steps. It seeks to motivate settler peoples towards justice; towards engagement and struggle with the problems of colonialism, and taking responsibility. The book is probably most useful for those who are already engaged with these ideas and active in solidarity work. The book's experiment of conversation rather than compilation will probably be most impressive to those already aware of how poor our ability to communicate has proven to be.

I'm one of these. So, rather than a review, I offer three reflections motivated by many parts of a text which celebrates the complexity of our experience, the places that don't line up. Happily, this book disrupts and challenges our hearts to hold new and sometimes conflicting truths at the same time. I think our ability to welcome this information, and to stay with it, cultivates courage to act in new, creative, collaborative ways. It's exciting.

REFLECTION 1: IN TOFINO, BC.
A couple of months ago, I saw Dr Alexandra Morton try to make salmon a provincial election issue. Her research shows that fish farms in BC are having a devastating act on wild salmon. Governments have muzzled staff, downplayed research, and discredited her work. Morton's speaking tour, public support from David Suzuki, a documentary film, and a well publicized campaign educated British Columbians about the issue, but the incumbent Liberals still won the election. Will the potential loss of a species compel a new approach?

Wild buffalo are long gone from my prairie province. The loss of millions of herds of ruminants across the prairies has meant diminished soil quality, soil loss, diminished ability of the ecosystem to pull carbon from the air, and decreased ability to absorb and retain water; and countless other impacts for the local ecosystem. This is all true before accounting for the industrialization of the landscape through a globalised food system disorganized by capitalism to reward land theft and harming practices, and impoverish and starve farmers around the world.

What is our relationship to land, to water, to salmon, to buffalo, to grass and soil dwellers? Loss of species, and our response to it is evidence of illness in our relationships. To the land, and to each other.

REFLECTION 2:
I have heard people talk about the ideas of jesus and god being metaphors for creation. That 'god' is a placemarker for everything and our place in it. That god is inside of us; not some other entity.

But this is not how many Christians understand god. God is outside of ourselves, and definitely above; not beside, or below. God offers judgment and also mercy. God is someone/thing to be prayed to, not something we are a part of.

This is a fundamental problem, I think, for Christians interested in understanding, appreciating and working freely with people with other belief systems… for Christians interested in living justly in the world.

Does this god, and other people's god(s) talk? Do they get along? Make decisions together? Are they accountable to one another?

What about those who see themselves as participating in creation, an active part of it, where life and interconnectedness are themselves divine. What about people who have no outsider to consult with?

If one group is accountable to, or receives advice from an outsider, and the other is accountable to one another, how do these groups communicate?

This outsider god stands in the way of relationship. 'God' orients our faces and hearts upwards. But our work surrounds us, on the land and in our communities.

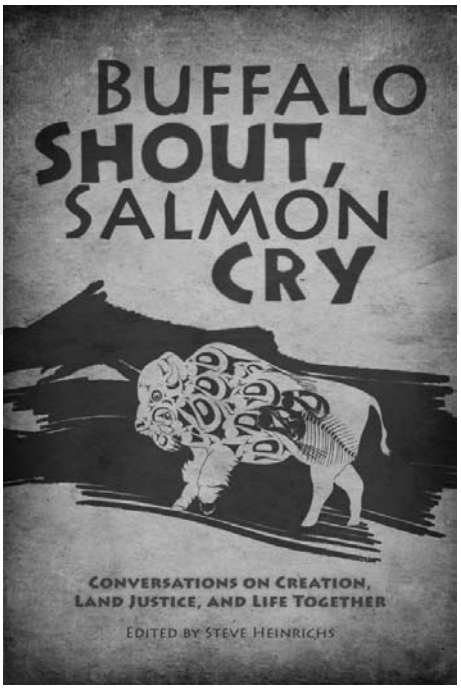
With god safely secured in our back pocket, there is always someone else we can go to for appeasement when things don't work out the way we want them to or how we think they should go. We are lazy, and tend to rely on an old god who deals with things predictably, orderly, cleanly; with the usual winners and losers. But real relationship is about putting all our cards on the table (or down on the earth in the circle), and about being vulnerable to what we can come up together- here, on the ground, in this mess.

We need to be open to the newest of solutions, things we have not seen happen before, because what has happened before has not worked. We need to arrive to these conversations ready and broken, fully present, bringing everything to the circle. What if our accountabilities shift from looking up to looking out, or our interconnectedness were to become a foundation for seeing the way things are, and for moving towards something better? Can old god keep up with this?

REFLECTION 3:
Courageous people open their hearts. They see with clear eyes the good things, and the bad things. When a project like Buffalo Shout Salmon Cry comes out, what can we offer but congratulations, and encouragement for more? It is so exciting to read the conversation of the text. The effort calls for more sharing. More dialogue. More active practice.

This kind of open faced dialogue is feared by so many. It is transformational; and transformation involves new responsibility. New understandings of the world force us to make different choices. In the way we talk. In the people we pay attention to. In the things we buy. In the ways we work. In how we pray.

Many people face an identity crisis. Some of us can only identify what we are not. I am not poor, I am not aboriginal, I am addicted to caffeine and booze, but not sniff. I live in this neighbourhood, not that one. I drive a car, I don't take the bus. I work in finance. I work.



This magnificent collection of prose and poetry, of screams, songs, dreams, and tears from many living sources is a powerful and necessary challenge to each of us who yearns for the healing of the earth with all of its creatures.

Listening closely to the Buffalo, the Salmon and their (our) relatives, we are encouraged to face the great, annealing costs of true healing - between settlers and indigenous peoples, between humans and our mis-used co-inhabitants of the world.

For everyone the message is inescapable: There is no cheap grace available in these pages, but there is great encouragement to move ourselves toward the deepest, most demanding places of hope in our mutual search for a truly just and compassionate life together with all creation. So we must read, listen and share.

Every participant in these "conversations" urges us to take all the great, imperative risks of spiritual and intellectual growth, each of us in our own way of integrity, insisting on our deepest truths as our guide. If we are ready for that demanding path of life then Buffalo Shout, Salmon Cry *will be an amazing companion on our way.*

-Vincent Harding,
an elder scholar-activist,
Veterans of Hope Project at the Iliff School of Theology

What would my identity be, if not for these constructions that depend on solely on relationality. Me in comparison to someone else. Me in comparison to something that is somehow lesser? How could I understand myself?

I was devastated for some time at the lost potential for solidarity between farmers and aboriginal people, who moved in large numbers in the 80s, and at other times to Winnipeg for better opportunities for their families. We (those of us on the white farmer side) didn't see the similarities between our experience of being pushed off land we love for economic reasons out of our control; and the experience of aboriginal folks also moving to the city. My ancestors had left their lands and crossed a sea only 100 years before for exactly the same reasons as we left our farm. They may or may not have seen, at the time, that their movement participated in creating even worse conditions for the people here than those they had left in Sweden, Britain and Scotland. What will force us to move next time? Who will be the 'us' group? How much more aware will we be when that comes?

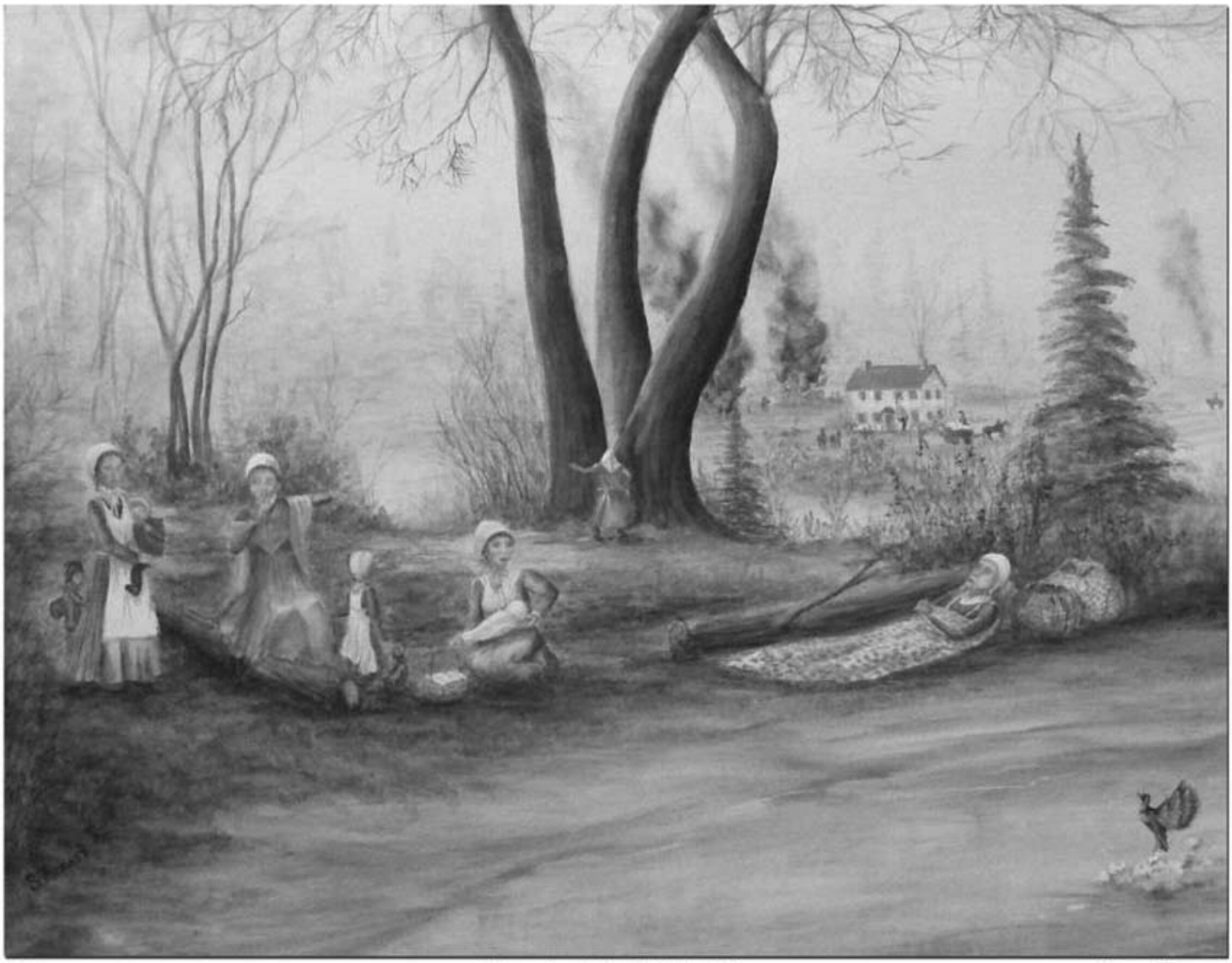
But where is solidarity without communication, without an understanding of relationship and interrelatedness? On the other hand, maybe it's not about solidarity. It could simply be about agreeing on the problem and the direction. Maybe it's about humility, honouring, patience, and starting from a place of wanting to find the best solution for everyone involved, according to everyone involved. Maybe it's about committing to a long term relationships, and valuing this commitment over long term goals.

So I'm interested in how people attach to identity, and what these identities are about, and what we can do to release the pieces that place power outside of ourselves. And I'm interested in the building blocks of interrelationality, like humility, and patience, but also a sense of humour, evening skies, curiosity, making healthy bodies, taking only the right things personally, (and not too many of those,) quiet, work sharing, long walks, art sharing, and food sharing. And by the way, love. We could learn these pieces a whole lot more.

How are we not bored out of our minds with falling into our separate groups, defining ourselves in these dinosaur ways? I'm bored. That story is so old. So tired.

Time to risk. Let go a bit from the safety nets that some folks get to rely on and others don't – I mean resources, but also ideologies, forms of politics, and even religion. And offer a bit more attention to the world, (unadorned, unlayered with our ideas and expectations,) around us.

Kate Sjoberg,
author of http://imasettler.blogspot.ca *,*
lives in Winnipeg, Man.



The Marauders' by Stacey Thomas, Mohawk artist in Fort Erie, ON.

Reflection to Commemoration

The War of 1812 and Mennonite-Indigenous Relation

First Nations and Mennonite communities have good reason for reflecting further on the War of 1812 before commemorating any further. Official, patriotic voices want Canadians to claim victory over the American invasion, yet the war's significance bears rather differently upon us as heirs of different historical legacies: for Mennonites the War of 1812 represents the first time the principle of conscientious objection was tested in Canada; for First Nations the war practically killed the dream of the "Indian Confederacy" and other colonial-era hopes for Native sovereignty. For all of these communities it was a time of strife, hardship, loss and social injustice that was felt for years hence. The putative victory over an invading enemy was not ours, not necessarily.

In February 2012, I had the pleasure of presenting at a heritage event near Brantford following Rick Hill, a member of the Six Nations. Hill offered provocative perspectives on First Nations' 1812 war experiences. He described their search for peace, the bi-national interconnections of warriors during that war, and the politically subjugated position of First Nations. Much of this was strikingly similar to how I described the socio-political separatism of many of the Mennonites in Upper Canada. They were British subjects but considered themselves ultimately beholden to God, a very different authority than the secular state. Hill further suggested that the occasion of memorializing these events and people can be an opportunity for healing between our communities. Have we begun to explore this possibility of a deeper reflection leading to healing of memories?

Historical Background

In order to better understand how the war has influenced the history, identity and relationships of First Nations and Mennonites, it would be helpful to collectively examine the available data from that era. Although archival sources are scarce, there are some shreds of evidence of both positive and negative encounters between these communities in the context of the war. The documents summarized below portray a Mennonite vantage point.

At Waterloo around 1800 Mennonite pioneers began to purchase land that fell within the parameters of the Haldimand tract, which had been granted to the Six Nations in 1784. Decades later, in 1813, approximately 20 Mennonite men were conscripted to assist the evacuation of the British forts and relocate First Nations refugees from the Detroit River area. While retreating they experienced a brief but disastrous battle at Moraviantown in 1813, in which Tecumseh was killed. These Mennonites had to abandon their wagons and flee for their lives, as the Americans overpowered the combined First Nations and British forces. Mennonites at Waterloo filed petitions for losses after the war, including one claim that in 1814 a warrior took one of his young cows and two hogs.

On the Niagara peninsula where the war raged for nearly three years, First Nations warriors and residents frequently encountered Mennonites. Relatively benign encounters included:

- a Mennonite near Niagara Falls claimed that he "pastured a horse for an Indian" in September 1812;
- Christian Burkholder from the Hamilton area was conscripted to haul supplies to assist the John Norton contingent of the First Nation troops in the retreat from the Detroit River;
- the Sherks near Port Colborne provided shelter for First Nations neighbours during the war;
- in Haldimand County, the Hoovers had a number of connections to Six Nations settlers. There are stories passed down of the hospitality of the Hoovers, offering food and shelter to those in need. There is evidence that Benjamin Hoover had exceptional relations with Six Nations neighbours, acting as a capable advocate to the government for their land rights in his area. Benjamin also repaired their guns in exchange for their helping him fish and farm.

Warriors were given inadequate provisions by their British commanders, and they sometimes took food supplies from settlers in Niagara. Examples of such encounters include:

- near the Niagara River, between Fort Erie and Niagara Falls, a Mennonite claimed that "British Indians" took seven large hogs during the war;
- another Mennonite near Niagara Falls claimed that "American Indians", along with American troops stole his horse and saddle;
- in October 1814 another Mennonite settler in the Niagara Falls area lost 3 sheep and 5 hogs to warriors;
- the horse of Sam Moyer, who was the son of Bishop Jacob Moyer at Vineland, was stolen by a warrior. The teenager then walked ten miles following the warriors to Grimsby where they camped for the night. He pleaded with a British officer to assist him in retrieving his horse, but the officer refused. After one failed attempt to recapture it, which aroused some of the warriors from their sleep, he waited longer and was able to escape with his horse and return home the next day.

Powwows Honour (post-1812!) Veterans

This past summer I attended powwows at Cape Croker and on Manitoulin Island (Zhiibaahaasing First Nation). I witnessed the solemn honouring of the various flags and of Native veterans. I heard statements such as, "these men paid the price for the freedom we enjoy" and "without the sacrifices they made, we could not even gather to celebrate our culture, our freedom." I silently questioned the validity of these statements. I also waited in vain to hear any mention of First Nations involvement in the War of 1812. Ironically, during a year when the federal government and many historic sites and publications have heaped accolades upon the fallen warriors who sacrificed their lives fighting in the War of 1812, these two powwows were silent on that war 's First Nations largely nameless veterans. (see my previous Intotemak article….)

Yet as those gathered at Cape Croker paid homage to veterans who, we were told, earned our supposed freedom, there stood a large, prominent military recruiting station, where young boys could chat with Canadian soldiers. Whose freedom are these would-be recruits really going to fight for?

Looking Ahead, Looking Back

We have reason to reflect together as heritage communities whose ongoing encounters are unconsciously shaped by some painful experiences in the near-yet-distant-past. We have artists, historians and many others who can lend perspectives on the meaning of the violent times our communities endured; we can sustain hope that, as diverse communities, we might soon consciously commemorate the bicentennial of the formative experiences that have shaped our subsequent histories. Pray that our youth who gather to reflect with us, will first look back and begin to hold in their memories the devastation of past wars, before lending either their tacit, financial support, or their active service, to the increase of violence in years to come.

Jonathan Seiling,
Toronto, Ont.

Artwork history: Maurauders & the 9-Patch Quilt

Stacey Thomas has offered a rare, insightful, visual perspective on the War of 1812's devastation, as Mennonite women experienced it two centuries ago. She portrays a group of Mennonite women - including one who is elderly, and two young mothers with babies standing with young girls - all who fled their home as the marauders set it ablaze. This is a moving depiction of the impact of war upon domestic life. Could this Mohawk's reflection on Mennonite experience encourage more Mennonites to reflect more deeply on the plight of Mohawks and other First Nations during the War of 1812 and subsequently? To order prints: http://fineartamerica.com/featured/the-marauders-stacey-thomas.html]

Nothing by Chance

Winston Churchill Keeper meets Abe Neufeld

When Elna and I, with our two month old daughter, went to Little Grand Rapids to teach in the fall of 1954, it was a thrilling experience. The two of us had already spent two wonderful years at Moose Lake east of The Pas, and we were anticipating this new part of our journey.

As we checked through the school registers we found the names of former teachers; Dueck, Neufeld and Schellenberg. We had known Schellenbergs for some time, but often wondered who this Abe Neufeld might be. It was in 1946 that he had been there. In the fall of 55, we moved to Pauingassi and found ourselves very involved with our assignment in the community, as well as with our growing family. Abe's name, therefore, did not often come to mind.

In 1970, we moved to Winnipeg and worked with Native Ministry in the extensive itinerant ministry program, relating to various northern communities. In the late 90's our daughter's family started attending Elmwood Mennonite Brethren Church. They were soon acquainted with an Abe Neufeld. It did not take Abe long to detect from Arlie and Evan that our family had been in Pauingassi and Little Grand Rapids. What a joy it was for us to meet him some time later and solve that age old question as to who Abe was. One of the first questions he asked was whether we knew someone by the name of Winston. When Winston was born, his father wanted to give his son a renowned name, so when asked, Abe thought of Winston Churchill, and the boy was named Winston Churchill Keeper; Abe registered his birth and prayed for him. Winston had been my pupil and we knew the family well. Abe was very thrilled. What a blessing to meet!

Sometime later, I thought of bringing them together if Winston was able to come to the city. This, however, never happened. In early April 2013, I became aware that Winston was in the city hospital. When I went to see him I found he was diagnosed with liver cancer. If ever a meeting of Abe and Winston was to happen, I felt it was now. On April 15, I contacted Abe to see if he was interested in such, and indeed he was, but needed to check with his wife; she had a heart condition. Her feeling was that this was a 'once in a life time' situation so he needed to go. I said I could be there by 10:00 to pick him up. Abe is 93 year old.

Henry Neufeld visiting Winston Keeper with Abe Neufeld.

It was very shocking for Winston to experience this encounter. Abe said to him, 'You are 67 years old. I took you in my arms when you were born and prayed for you, and I want to do the same now.' Winston was surprised, and very happy. Abe also named a number of Winston's relatives by their Native names. I was amazed. After conversing for a brief time Winston's wife and three daughters arrived. They too were astonished with such an encounter. The seven of us then held hands while Abe prayed for Winston and his family. In closing I sang a couple of songs in English and Ojibwe with the accompaniment of my drum.

All this after a span of 67 years with no contact in between! Both of us were flying on cloud nine in amazement to have been granted such a blessed experience. All praise is to God!

As I made another visit to Winston's bedside on the morning of April 22 I found him in a coma. Though communication was not possible, I prayed for him and sang. I returned again on the 23rd and 24th. As I entered on the 24th at 10:45 I was there alone. After praying for a time, I took my drum and began to sing. At the last line of my song, I noticed his chest rise and fall for the last time. What a blessing to be singing for him as he left to be with his Savior.

I was asked to conduct the wake service on the 27th before the family took the body back to Little Grand. Abe was able to join us for a short time. What a blessing it was for the family and all those who attended to meet the one that gave Winston that renowned name, plus pray for him at his birth, as well as when he was at death's door. We have an awesome Creator!

See Winston's obituary in Community News on page 19.

Henry Neufeld,
Winnipeg, Man.

Remembered for Strong Relationships

Three former staff members of Mennonite Pioneer Missions and Native Ministry, the predecessors to Mennonite Church Canada Indigenous Relations, passed away in April and May of this year. Ronald Peters (April 6); Jacob A. Wiebe (April 25); and Cheryl Fisch (May 6) based their lives and ministries on strong relationships, say former co-workers, Neill and Edith von Gunten. Their relationships extended to people across the various communities in which they lived and worked as well as to the broader church.

Ron Peters

In the 1960s, **Ron Peters** and his wife Doris accepted an assignment in the Lake Winnipeg community of Bloodvein River First Nations, where they moved with their young daughter Terri. After their tenure in Bloodvein, the growing family settled in Aberdeen, Sask.,and remained in that area until retiring near St. Anne, Man. Ron's life of ministry included pastoral work, social work, serving in various elected offices, and – his great love – farming.
"His title always mattered less to him than his relationships," say the von Guntens, former co-directors of Native Ministry. "He strove to live with integrity and compassion, and he earned people's respect and affection for it."

In his obituary, Ron's children wrote: "Dad had a desire for justice that ranged from ensuring the scoreboard was correct at high school volleyball games to railing against the inadequacies of Canada's criminal justice system. His early career experiences in northern Manitoba and Saskatchewan fuelled a lifelong passion for justice for aboriginal people. While Dad often lamented his own failings in working for justice, he never stopped urging himself and others to pursue it"

Peters passed away at the age of 71 years after a short, intense journey with pancreatic cancer. He is survived by his wife Doris, and his children Terri Peters (Darren Oleksyn); Pam Peters-Pries (Albert, sons Benjamin and Matthew); and Jody Peters (Tara Faris, son Noah Chelsom). He is also survived by four sisters and their spouses and families.

Jake Wiebe

Jacob A. (Jake) Wiebe and his wife Helen were involved with Mennonite Pioneer Mission and Native Ministries in several ways over many years, from teaching in Loon Straits, Manitoba, to serving as a pastor and a supportive wife at the Elim Mennonite Fellowship in Selkirk, Man. During the years in Selkirk they did extensive chaplaincy work in community personal care homes and hospitals. Jake also served as itinerant pastor in Pine Dock and Loon Straits for several years from his base in Selkirk.

Over the years Jake also found other forms of employment from painting and packing groceries to carpentry, log cabin construction, farming and baking. Living in a variety of locations taught his family to call many different places "home." After retirement and with his wife's teaching, Jake sewed and donated 1,950 blankets to Mennonite Central Committee.

Jake Wiebe passed away at the age of 90 years. He is survived by his lifelong sweetheart and best friend, Helen, whom he married in 1948, and their children: Brent (Romie), Margaret (Garnet), Naomi (John), Salome (Eric), Viola (Dave), Orlando (Barb); grandchildren Raymond (Rosa), and Amanda (Dave); as well as two sisters, two brothers and their families.

Cheryl Diane Steifel Fisch

Cheryl Diane Steifel Fisch was originally from Bucyrus, Ohio and graduated from Ohio State University where she met her husband, Roland Fisch. With their young daughter Charlott, the couple lived and worked on the Hollow Water First Nation in the 1970s under the auspices of Native Ministries. They built many relationships in the community and area in those years.
The rest of Cheryl's adult years were spent in the Florida Keys where she found great joy working as a teacher. Cheryl helped create a recreation program which allowed students to actively engage with arts and science during summer months.

Community News

She and Roland moved to northern Florida in recent months to be close to their children and grandchildren.

Cheryl passed away after struggling for several years with her health. She is survived by her husband Roland; daughter Charlott and Pete Cadiz and their children Keegan and Mallory; son JR and Robyn Fisch and their children Connor and Lily; one sister and one brother.
Deborah Froese, Mennonite Church Canada News Services

William Edward Moar of Winnipeg passed away a few days before his 25th birthday. He is survived by his common-law wife and one child, his estranged parents, his brother Jimmy with his family, as well as some half brothers plus many friends. He will be missed by many. Interment took place in Winnipeg with Henry Neufeld officiating.

Brian Keeper of Little Grand Rapids suddenly passed away in Winnipeg on April 9, 1913 at the age of 46. He was predeceased by his mother. He is survived by his father and other family members. He often stayed at the Vineyard Mission where he had contact with many people. Interment took place at Little Grand with Allan Owens officiating.

David Owens (Ociip) of Pauingassi passed away April 13, 1913 in Winnipeg at the age of 84. He was the last of the four elders that were ordained to the ministry in 1972. He resided in Winnipeg since 2005 when he had to go on dialysis. He was predeceased by his wife and two daughters and is survived by three daughters and their families plus friends and relatives. He was highly respected in his community and will be dearly missed. Interment took place at Pauingassi with Allan Owens officiating.

Winston Churchill Keeper of Little Grand Rapids passed away in the Grace Hospital on April 24, 1913 at the age of 76 after a brief illness. He is survived by his wife Mary, one son, four daughters with their families, relatives and many friends. He has held prominent positions in the community and will be missed by many. The body was interred at Little Grand with Fr. Rheal Forest officiating.

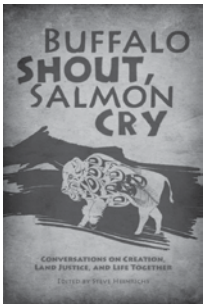
Janette Keeper of Little Grand Rapids passed away at Health Sciences Centre on May 18, 1913. She is survived by two sons and one daughter with their families, plus many friends and relatives. Interment took place at Little Grand with Fr. Anthony Udengwu officiating.

Delorian John Boulanger-Moar of Winnipeg was stillborn on May 16, 1913. He is survived by his parents Desiree Boulanger and John Moar, two brothers, grandparents, aunts and uncles, plus many friends. They call him their angel. Interment took place at Brookside Cem-

Events

July 15-17: *Treaty 1-11 Gathering in Onion Lake, Sask.*

July 27: *Buffalo Shout, Salmon Cry* book event at the Steelworker Hall, Toronto, Ont.

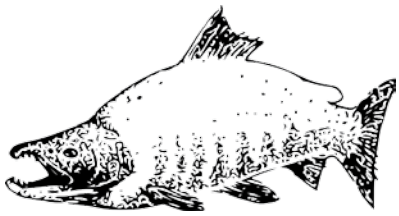


August 9-19:
Christian Peacemaker Team Aboriginal Justice Delegation to Treaty #3
Explore what it means to live in right relationship with the earth and each other. Find out what it means to be an ally to indigenous communities engaged in healing, resisting colonialism and struggling for sovereignty. For more info see www.cpt.org/work/aboriginal_justice

September 22: *International Day of Prayer for Peace*

October 6: *World Communion Sunday*

Indigenous Kitchen



Sockeye Salmon baked whole, Flathead Style

Ingredients
1/2 cup real mayonnaise
1 thinly sliced onion
1/2 cup sour cream
2 thinly sliced lemons
1/2 cup Parmesan Cheese
1 Tbs. Lemon pepper
1 Tbs. Curry powder
1 Tbs. Onion salt
Sea Salt
Ground Black Pepper

Directions
Dress and clean freshly caught sockeye salmon (or any type whole fish), fins and head removed.

Set oven at 360 degrees.

Wash fish thoroughly and hang to dry. Sprinkle with sea salt and pepper on outside and in cavity. Cover fish on outside and inside with onions and lemons.

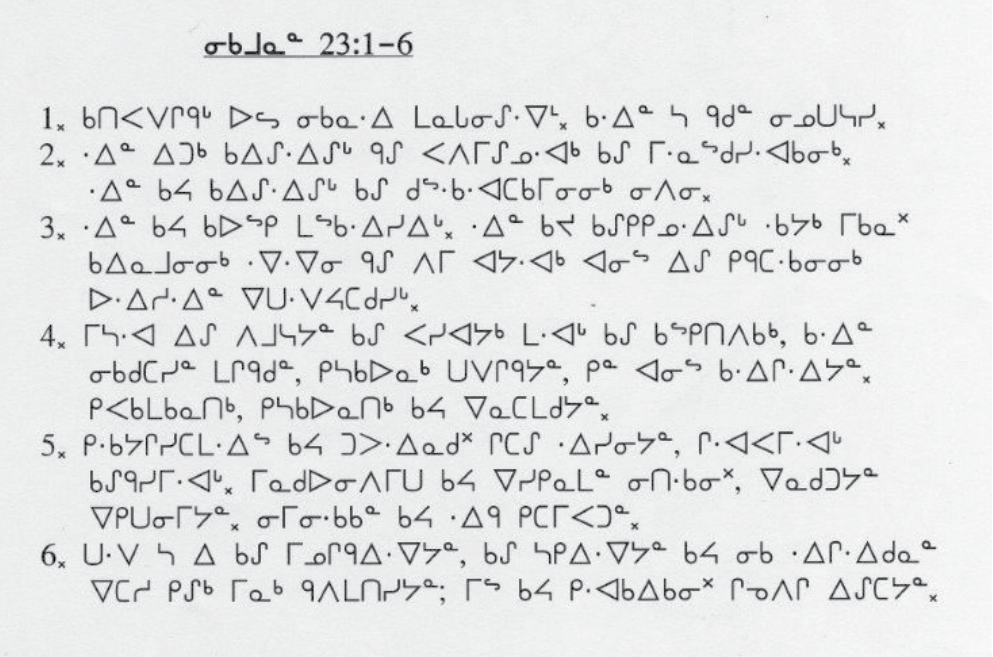
Mix rest of ingredients together. Mixture will be a yellowish color and medium thick. Spread the mixture gently over the upper side of the fish, from neck to lower fin. Push back into place the onions and lemons, if needed to do so.

Place fish in baking dish and bake for 30-40 minutes, or when flaky when pierced by fork in the most fleshy part of fish.

Remove from oven and place on platter. Serve by slicing through backbone, and enjoy a whole new taste. This recipe is also delicious on fresh halibut cheeks, too.

(recipe found at www.nativetech.org)

Meditation


ᓂᑲᒧᓇᐢ 23:1–6

1ₓ ᑲᑎᐸᐯᒋᐠ ᐅᓵ ᓂᑲᓇ·Δ ᒪᓇᒐᓂᔨ·∇ᒻₓ ᑲ·Δᵃ ᔪ ᖁdᵃ ᓂᓄᑌᔪᓬₓ
2ₓ ·Δᵃ Δᑐᑲ ᑲΔᔨ·Δᔨᐠ ᖁᔨ ᐸᐱᒥᔨᓄ·ᐊᑲ ᑲᔨ ᒥ·ᓇᓵdᓬ·ᐊᑲᓂᑲₓ
·Δᵃ ᑲᔪ ᑲΔᔨ·Δᔨᐠ ᑲᔨ dᓵ·ᑲ·ᐊᑕᑲᒥᓂᓂᑲ ᓂᐱᓂₓ
3ₓ ·Δᵃ ᑲᔪ ᑲᐅᓵᑭ ᒪᓵᑲ·ΔᓬΔᒻₓ ·Δᵃ ᑲᐯ ᑲᔨᑭᑭᓄ·Δᔨᐠ ·ᑲᓗᑲ ᒥᑲᓇˣ
ᑲΔᓇᒍᓂᓂᑲ ·∇·∇ᓂ ᖁᔨ ᐱᒥ ᐊᓗ·ᐊᑲ ᐊᓂᓵ Δᔨ ᑭᖁᑕ·ᑲᓂᓂᑲ
ᐅ·Δᓬ·Δᵃ ∇U·Vᔪᑕdᓬᒻₓ
4ₓ ᒥᔭ·ᐊ Δᔨ ᐱᒍᔭᓗᵃ ᑲᔨ ᐸᓬᐊᓗᑲ ᒪ·ᐊᒻ ᑲᔨ ᑲᓵᑭᑎᐱᑲᑲ, ᑲ·Δᵃ
ᓂᑲdᑕᓬᵃ ᒪᑭᖁdᵃ, ᑭᔭᑲᐅᓇᑲ ᑌVᑭᖁᓗᵃ, ᑭᵃ ᐊᓂᓵ ᑲ·Δᑭ·Δᓗᵃₓ
ᑭᐸᑲᒪᓇᑎᑲ, ᑭᔭᑲᐅᓇᑎᑲ ᑲᔪ ∇ᓇᑕᒪdᓗᵃₓ
5ₓ ᑭ·ᑲᓗᑭᓬᑕᒪ·Δᓵ ᑲᔪ ᑐ>·Δᓇdˣ ᑭᑕᔨ ·Δᓬᓂᓗᵃ, ᑭ·ᐊᐸᒥ·ᐊᒻ
ᑲᔨᖁᓬᒥ·ᐊᒻₓ ᒥᓇdᐅᓂᐱᒥᑌ ᑲᔪ ∇ᓬᑭᓇᒪᵃ ᓂᑎ·ᑲᓂˣ, ∇ᓇdᑐᓗᵃ
∇ᑭUᓂᒥᓗᵃₓ ᓂᒥᓂ·ᑲᑲᵃ ᑲᔪ ·Δᖁ ᑭᑕᒥᐸᑐᵃₓ
6ₓ U·V ᔪ Δ ᑲᔨ ᒥᓄᑭΔ·∇ᓗᵃ, ᑲᔨ ᔪᑭΔ·∇ᓗᵃ ᑲᔪ ᓂᑲ ·Δᑭ·Δdᓇᵃ
∇ᑕᓬ ᑭᔨᑲ ᒥᓇᑲ ᖁᐱᒪᑎᓬᓗᵃ; ᒥᔭ ᑲᔪ ᑭ·ᐊᑲΔᑲᓂˣ ᑭᓄᐱᑭ Δᔨᑕᓗᵃₓ

Psalm 23
(As paraphrased by Cree elder, Stan McKay, of Fisher River, Man.)

The Lord is my guide; so all my needs are met.
He locates the best camp sites.
He leads me across wide waters when they lie quiet and still.
He refreshes my very soul.
He leads me along the right trails which He has chosen.
Even though I must travel down Lake Winnipeg and face fierce storms
I will fear no danger that confronts me.
For You are with me.
Your songs and good medicines comfort me and heal me.
Food is prepared for me even when I am surrounded by those who hate me.
Your blessings rest upon my head.
My cup is so full it runs over.
Certainly God's goodness and unfailing kindness will follow me all the days of my life;
And then I shall go to live in our Father's tent forever.

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