

Wulustuk Times

Wulustuk - Indigenous name for St John River

This publication produced monthly at Tobique, NB, Canada E7H 5K3



Wulustuk Times:

Each month we gather and publish the latest, most current and relevant native information for our readers. Proceeding with this concept, we feel that a well informed person is better able to see, relate with, and assess a situation more accurately when equipped with the right tools. Our aim is to provide the precise tools and the best information possible.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS, Dec. 2009

Table of Contents: Dec. 2009

MALISEET BRAVES SPAWNED BY EARLIER MALISEET BALL TEAMS

TOBIQUE'S CHANGING SCENE DURING 20th CENTURY

CROWN LAND IS INDIAN LAND

CANADA'S NATIVE PEOPLE NOT EMPLOYABLE AT ONE TIME

KEEPERS OF THE LAND

NB PASSAMAQUODDY BOOK RECEIVES NATIONAL AWARD

DEAN'S DEN - He has Come

LT. GOVERNOR NICHOLAS FETED IN HOME COMMUNITY OF TOBIQUE

BC / HAIDA NATION AGREEMENT: QUEEN CHARLOTTE ISLANDS

RENAMED HIADA GWAIL

MALISEET BRAVES SPAWNED BY EARLIER MALISEET BALL TEAMS

p.paul

The legacy of the Maliseet Braves is a part of a long baseball story on Tobique first nation that began in the mid 1920's and went on to the 1950's.

Baseball was introduced to Tobique mainly by three individuals, one being a parish priest, Fr. Ryan and a couple local residents, William Ellis and George Bernard who first got the youth together and interested in building an all-native baseball team for the reserve.

Having no place to play ball, the first assignment for the group was to build a baseball field right next to the George Bernard's old barn, complete with screened backstop. This was the easy part.

Next step was to teach the basics in playing ball, how to hit, run bases and score runs, make an out, etc. which took over a summer to get things right and according to the rules.

Father Ryan took the lead role as manager and coach and the boys gave it all their all to impress the boss and get a spot on the team. And within a year the first Tobique baseball game was played among local kids who showed enough talent and determination to be on the team.

The earliest baseball players were very few in numbers, -they included George Bernard, Sol Bear, Clarence (Belbel) Bear, William Nicholas, Frankie Sappier, Simon Perley, Peter Saulis, Gregory Saulis, Andrew Nicholas, Dave Ennis, Bill Ennis, Louie Ennis and probably a few more not mentioned here.

Playing without uniforms was the only way to go in the old days. The local inter-team playing went on for the first year while other towns and villages were also getting to know baseball as well and were also forming their own teams.

Soon the nearby teams started playing one another on relatively steady basis and everyone became quite adept in the game. Tobique was no exception in learning the basic skills like in other places. But sure enough, when confidence was built the games began playing in earnest. Rough and tumble at first but in time mellowed down to playing the game according to Hoyle.

As the fan enjoyment and team competitive spirit rose on Tobique it coincided with the popularity matched elsewhere in New Brunswick. Baseball was the top sport to watch.

The game progressed quite well in the local area with Tobique winning a good share of their games generally using the original members right through to late 1930's until the WW-II broke out in Europe and a lot of Tobique youth joined the army.

As many a 45 young men from Tobique joined the military in the early 1940's undermining the bulk of the ball team as a result.

Soon enough however, as the younger ones saw their chance to replace the older ones going to war, a new batch of ball players joined the team. A few remaining older players were soon partnered with new and energetic young ones to form a fairly respectable ball team. Still playing though with no baseball uniforms, the local girls club decided to help by making a set of suits for the team and pretty soon the rag-tag outfits were abandoned for the new homemade, green-shaded uniforms.

A couple or few years later the team bought their first tailor-made uniforms from Montreal outfitter complete with lettering Maliseet for Maliseet Braves, with numbers on the back, and with that asset their game took a leap upward.

This was also was the time when the team had little or no money to travel anywhere especially to longer distances in New Brunswick, Maine and to the province of Quebec where their playing skills were sharply noticed and popular.

One night at a town called Cabinau, Que. the Braves played their first night game under the lights. It was a great thrill and experience for all. Quebeckers were always very impressed by the feats and skills of the 'Indian Braves' and they recalled them repeatedly.

The war finally ended in 1945 and the army guys got back home and joined the 'regular' Braves. The new punch the vets added to the team just exploded in the media and the

Braves got calls to play almost everywhere that was in commutable distance. Many Tobique fans followed the team in their old Fords and Chevies no matter where they went.

Some former baseball managers recalled were Father Ryan, George Bernard, Joseph Bear, Sam Devoe, Percy Ennis, Peter Nicholas and possibly a few more that presently can't be recalled.

See the our cover page this month where half of the team is made up of the 'regulars' and the other half by ex-military guys. They were hot.

TOBIQUE'S CHANGING SCENE DURING 20th CENTURY

p.paul

Around the 1920's through to the 1950's, Tobique was a fairly small community with an equally small population of around 300-350 persons. Most people generally stayed home, or close to home, year round. The reason for staying at home was out of necessity as highlighted below.

Clustered housing:

The old church building, the priest house, the day-school and the convent dominated the central scene on the reserve as evident in old photos.

Most of the native homes were built close to these church-related buildings for a good reason, the people were highly religious and never missed church activities. It seems everything that happened in the community revolved around the church.

The cover on our newsletter this month shows a group of Tobique homes all clustered around the church and convent with the baseball field located close by.

Baseball, originally organized in 1920's by a reserve resident, William Ellis, along with the parish priest Father Ryan, eventually became a major source of recreation for the community. Baseball brought good entertainment and close interaction between families, plus it built lasting relationships with outside reserves from New Brunswick and nearby Maine. Interest in baseball was so high in the community that ball players would practice their skills till dark every evening so they could put on a good show on Sunday afternoons.

The biggest community event of the year was also church related. This was the St. Anne's Day, July 26th each year. That day usually began with a celebration of mass, followed by an afternoon of baseball. In the later afternoon the kid rides and games of chance began, then a community supper. The closing event was a fiddle-serenaded social dance lasting till midnight. All proceeds went to the church.

Tobiquers generally stayed home:

One of the reasons for having so many Tobique homebodies in the early times was because people made their living at home. They did traditional native trades and skills that paid them well enough to maintain their families. The traditional activities included sports guiding, hunting, fishing, trapping and gathering. Many families also grew vegetables in their gardens to supplement the food supply. Some men were employed in the forest industry and worked in lumber camps through the winter months and would resort to their native trades in the summer to be home with their families.

During summers they would make baskets, axe handles, canoes, boats, bows and arrows, sleds toboggans, and other indigenous wood-crafted products which could either

be sold or traded for goods or produce.

Transportation:

Another important factor that kept Tobique people close to home was the lack of owning motor vehicles on reserve. Only the parish priest drove a car. No Indian-owned cars, trucks or any other machines could be seen on reserve, except for a couple where the breadwinner would have steady outside wage employment to pay for the luxury. The main mode for travel was by canoe rather than by car or truck.

Canoes

Canoes were everywhere. The reserve being located at a point of two rivers, Tobique and Wulustuk, would have family canoes on parked on both riverbanks. Many of the canoe owners would land their canoes along the banks adjacent to their homes for safety and security.

First Exodus:

The mass exodus off-reserve began in earnest in the 1940's when WW-II broke out and many young men left the reserve to enlist into the military instead of staying home.

Although it was not mandatory for Indians to serve in the military, approximately 45 Tobique men volunteered and roughly half of them went overseas to serve in the front lines. Five were killed in action.

The vets who returned safely had spent three to four years away from home and many did not have the opportunity to speak their native tongue during the war years. This non-use and the inability to hear or speak Indian language took its toll in many ways, requiring vets to brush up on language skills when they returned.

Another significant factor that crept into their native cultural path was the required army way of living. This meant non-native rules and habits had to predominate in their day-to-day army living, leaving them to adapt to the white ways and speak only English for about four years.

To even extend the alienation, some vets left the reserve after military service seeking work in United States and did not return until the 1970's when opportunities for wage employment at home opened up.

Education:

Education also played a substantial part in the growth and development of the Tobique reserve starting in the 1950's.

In the era before the 1940's and 50's very few, if any, Tobique members went beyond grade six or seven. The climate for higher education just was not there. As it went, most kids were required to help in supporting their family as teenagers and thus, became casual workers and laborers instead of being students.

In the 1950's however, education awareness took root and kids started attending distant boarding high schools around the province to gain high school certification. The flow to boarding schools took an upturn after 2kids opened the way to St. Thomas in Chatham. Ironically, prior to the 50's nearby high school in Perth-Andover had a permanent policy not to accept Indians at that time for a number of reasons. Finally in late 1950's and early 1960's, a community-to-community confrontation flared up on the issue which permanently changed the discriminatory policy of banning Indians at local schools. Thereafter, in the 60's many Tobiquers began attending Perth-Andover schools, and as a result, Indian graduates became a common phenomenon and a growing strength to the community as more people pursued higher education and professional careers beyond high school.

Today (2004) with our population hovering around 1800, we have many careered

professionals living and working abroad and right in our community.

Among Tobique graduates are, a provincial judge, a native priest, a member of NB legislative assembly, several with law degrees, engineers, a doctor, nurses, and many teachers, university professors, cultural experts, media persons, business people, financial and managerial persons, trades persons, etc. There is also a local FM radio station, CFNT.

These are only some of the events and dynamics that helped to shape the present-day Tobique First Nation and the resulting community and lifestyle we see today. Much of the traditional ways were overshadowed and neglected over the transitional years and a lot of work is needed to bring back some of the old ways.

Many Tobiquers are acutely aware of this past cultural slippage, and are helping with holding powwows and participating in traditional teachings to refit or re-establish the old ways for Tobique's cultural survival.

So to sum it up, therefore, the overall change has been literally explosive since the 30's, 40's and 1950's and those changes that respect traditional ways are a vital part of the movement, as we step into the new 21st century.

The evolving scene at Tobique can be characterized with steady economic growth and a distinct cultural revival.

CROWN LAND IS INDIAN LAND

Dan Ennis,

The land that has come to be known as Canada is Indian land, our land, and has always been our land.

At some point after contact those transplanted Europeans arrogantly decided that they would begin referring to Indian land as Indian Crown Land. This represents the beginning of the theft of our land. It also represents the beginning of the creation of the legal fiction and political illusion that has come to be known as Canada. This was the eurocanadian means of legitimizing what they knew and still know as the theft of land. Theft of Indian land.

If one reads European history one will discover that the theft of Indian land began much earlier. This was when the Christian church divided North America into portions and gave certain portions to different countries. Along with land grants the church also granted to European whites its go-ahead to conquer and populate Indian lands for in the minds of Church officials the occupiers were/are only sub-human savages. These savages were not civilized, not Christians, were/are not like Europeans for they did not try to conquer and convert "others" and they did not develop the land.

In the minds of Europeans the "permission" from the Christian church was and is the legitimizing force for the act of stealing land that does not rightfully belong to one. After all, the church gave its approval to steal savage land.

The Christian churches "permission" was what began the religious theft process of our land, and the methods that gave it life and sustainability, into the present, was the concept of Indian Crown Land. From there, it was simply a matter of time and eurocanadian chicanery attitudes for it to become simply Crown Land.

In the present day you add to the mix the eurocanadian's deliberate and calculated state of denial with respect to their theft of our land along with their "white is right" and "might is right" attitude and you have a situation where those eurocanadians are more than willing and able to annihilate more of our people in the same manner that they managed

to annihilate the Beothuk, so that they may continue holding on to our land. Maybe the eurocanadians won't annihilate our people in as blatant a manner as they once did but annihilate they will for they will not return our land simply because they know in their hearts that this land is our land. For their individual and collective greed is too great. Greater yet then even their individual and collective guilt for their theft of Indian land.

As Indian people we are duty-bound to do what we must do to continue what the Ancestors have instructed us to do. To honor, respect, nurture and protect our Sacred Earth Mother. And to honor, respect, nurture and protect the Ancestors, the People and the Seventh Generation.

All My Relations,

CANADA'S NATIVE PEOPLE NOT EMPLOYABLE AT ONE TIME

p.paul

TOBIQUE FN - Have real employment chances changed all that much over the past three decades? Ask a native person.

Just a few decades ago it was the normal, accepted practice and public policy in Canada to overlook native people when hiring at any capacity except in places where hard manual labour was required.

This generally meant natives could work in areas like picking potatoes, picking apples, raking blueberries, making baskets, harvesting maple sugar, making canoes, cutting seed potatoes, pulling mustard and other weeds, hoeing potato fields, picking fiddleheads, etc.

It was also the time when no Indian children could attend public schools or no Indians could work in schools, stores, banks, libraries, hospitals, post offices, customs offices or and government agencies. Neither were they present among the ranks of police, firemen, social workers, doctors, lawyers, clergy and/or generally every profession. As non-citizens, they were "wards" of the state and were not eligible for regular jobs in Canada. Their expected role was to stay on reserves and be quiet and invisible as possible. The police, church and Indian Affairs were assigned to enforce these restrictive policies on native people.

In the situation of war, being non-citizens and having no vote, native people did not have to go into the military or be legally drafted. Yet many thousands of them readily volunteered out of sense of duty to defend the country, when world wars were declared. Most of them joined to be in the place of action like other young men around them.

As a result of this 'legally sanctioned' work denial or blatant discrimination in Canada, many Tobiquers had to travel south to New England states in those days to make a living for their families. Indians have border crossing rights under the Jay treaty and can legally enter to work and live in the USA.

In 1940's through to the 60's Tobique had not gained self-government or attained self-management of its services so employment possibilities were nil on reserve. This situation began to change by the 1960's when Indians were given the right to vote. As a result of the right to vote, many Tobiquers started returning home to work in their communities as government employees.

Also another factor that contributed to the upswing in job acceptance in Canada was the trickling affect of the American black movement. The era was punctuated with many black demonstrations in US schools, churches, and other institutions which took form in

peace marches and bus sit-ins throughout the southern states.

The humble and slow ebb of change soon turned into a tidal wave of revolutionary upheaval throughout the continent, penetrating all states within a dozen or so years.

"The social, cultural and political changes were enormous and nothing within the system or any legal force could stop or deny its progress.

From this overall change in the states came the relaxed government policies in Canada as well, that eventually saw Canadian natives in management in running their own affairs and their communities. Most effectively, they could attend public schools and qualify for, and compete for jobs like other Canadians.

KEEPERS OF THE LAND

p..paul

It is a fact that this massive territory of Canada covers 10 million square miles from coast to coast which, at one time, was inhabited entirely by native people.

From documented evidence Native people have never ceded, sold, surrendered or wholeheartedly given up the land, outright, to any foreign agent, state, nation or individual since the European arrival in 1492. Neither has the land been legally or legitimately conquered, signed away, lost or conceded through a nation-to-nation war or conflict.

There has never been a declared war between whites and aboriginal peoples in Canada whereby the victor could legally assume sovereign rights and ownership over aboriginal lands and peoples.

Aboriginal Title is based on Natural and Inherent Rights that universally entitles original land users and First Inhabitants the primacy of a land and territory. The land was underhandedly stolen from various native groups across the country, piece by piece, through contrived fraud, force, manipulation, deceit, exploitation and pre-arranged or 'doctored' treaties. By the very fact that natives were incapable of reading, writing, speaking or understanding foreign languages, (not to mention interpreting legal jargon,) at the time of the arranged treaties, all documents should, by right, have been declared or rendered illegal, null and void, fraudulent and non-representative.

In the legal world a contract has to have at least two competent sides to negotiate, endorse and execute a valid, legal document. A question arises in the propriety, procedure and legitimacy when the Native/White treaties were transacted and formalized. Can these questionably prepared documents that were forced upon illiterate native participants be considered valid contracts, and are they beyond reproach and question?

As a result of these 'questionably legal' treaty documents written by alien or foreign agents and/or agencies of the Government, native people were automatically unprepared and completely out-manuevered by the language used, and were also victimized in every detail by the unscrupulous acts, deeds and highly technical language in the 'contracts' that were pre-arranged by select 'agents' of the Crown or society. In the

eventual takeover process, native people were reduced, neutralized and physically set apart from the rest of the Canadian society to live in poverty, isolation and deprivation forever, in affect destroying our future and our solidarity. One day these glaring misdeeds by govt. must be reckoned with ultimately.

In their search for independence, Six Nations, Lubicon and other First Nations across Canada hereby urge United Nations to officially intervene and maintain timely vigil over Canada's relations with Native People from this day forward.

If this request were honored, it would mean that Canada, by her membership to United Nations, would need to respect, honor and uphold legal obligations and responsibilities invoked by the Crown to and for native people, guaranteeing them fair treatment, and assuring legal responsibilities be succinctly adhered to, while managing or expediting contracts or executing formal transactions for and with First Nations.

If outside intervention, (eg, UN) is denied, Native people as a whole too will be denied.

NB PASSAMAQUODDY BOOK RECEIVES NATIONAL AWARD

2009 Moonbeam Children's Book Awards Finalist Results Celebrating youthful curiosity, discovery and learning Winner:

Multicultural Picture Book - Gold Award:

Remember Me: Tomah Josephs Gift to Franklin Roosevelt, by Donald Soctomah and Jean Flahive; illustrated by Mary Beth Owens (Tilbury House, Publishers: Contact: sarah@tilburyhouse.com) 1-800-582-1899

3rd Annual Moonbeam Awards, Finalist Judging is complete. The Moonbeam Awards ceremony was held on October 10, 2009 as part of the West Virginia Book Festival in Charleston, WV.

The Moonbeam Childrens Book Awards are intended to bring increased recognition to exemplary childrens books and their creators, and to support childhood literacy and life-long reading.

Creating books that inspire our children to read, to learn, and to dream is an extremely important task, and these awards were conceived to reward those efforts.

We congratulate this years award winners and applaud the role these books play in enriching childrens lives, says Moonbeam Awards founder Jerrold Jenkins, father of four children ranging in ages 6 to 16. Todays world is a confusing place to grow up, and childrens book authors and publishers have risen to the occasion, creating books that not only celebrate the joys of childhood, but also help families deal with its challenges. We created Moonbeam to reward the best of these books and bring them to the attention of parents, booksellers, librarians and to the kids themselves.

DEAN'S DEN - HE HAS COME

You could hear it in the stillness
Near at hand, and far away
In how the treetops whispered
Then began to gently sway,
In the silence of the snowflakes
As they gently drifted down
To enwrap a waiting world
In a lacy pure white gown,
In the rasping, grating, scraping
Of the ice along the shore
In the throaty, brazen, rumble
That forewarns the cascades roar,
In the tingle, jingle, skirl
Of the rippling, babbling brook
In the muted murmur from a meadow
Beyond the jangle, in a nook,
At first it's but a wafting pulse
A whishing, winging, sigh
That becomes a raucous, keening, peal
That reverberates on high,
It resonates and rebounds
With the thunder of the drum
A rolling rush - preceding hush
For nature knows ... that He has come!

- D.C. Butterfield

LT. GOVERNOR NICHOLAS FETED IN HOME COMMUNITY OF TOBIQUE

p.paul

More than 300 people attended a special tribute gathering for Lt. Graydon Nicholas at the Tobique Gaming Centre, Tobique First Nation on Sunday, Dec. 6, 2009. Tobique FN is the Lt. Governor's home community. The Lt. Governor was applauded for his long tenure in public service where he broke records in public service, being the first aboriginal to hold the particular position he held.

His record breaking began in the 1970's when he graduated from UNB Law School as the first aboriginal to receive a law degree from that institution.

Serving as the first lawyer to occupy the position as Director of Operations for Union of New Brunswick Indians was another first.

Following that he operated the first Indian law firm in New Brunswick where he excelled in serving a heavily weighted service for mostly native clientele.

After being elevated to the position as provincial Judge he successfully adjudicated

many hundreds of cases for 15 years in that capacity that involved every kind of offense conceivable.

Lastly, through his scarlet record in public service, he was elevated to the position of Lt. Governor of New Brunswick, the first native person in this province to receive that special distinguished honour.

B.C./HAIDA NATION AGREEMENT: QUEEN CHARLOTTE ISLANDS RENAMED HAIDA GWAI

The name change includes land use and economic development
CBC News

B.C.'s Queen Charlotte Islands have officially been renamed Haida Gwaii as part of a historic reconciliation agreement between the province and the Haida Nation, Premier Gordon Campbell announced Friday in Vancouver.

The modern native name for the group of more than 150 rugged islands off the province's north coast will appear on revised provincial maps and all other official provincial documents and presentations, the premier said.

The archipelago was first named after one of the ships of British Captain George Dixon in 1778, who called his vessel Queen Charlotte after the wife of King George III.

'After a 100 years of conflict, we have set the ground for a more productive era of peace.'— Guujaaw, Haida Nation president

Haida Gwaii was created as an alternative name for the islands to acknowledge the history of the Haida Nation as part of its land claim efforts in the 1980s. According to the Haida Gwaii Tourism Association, the name translates as "islands of the people" in the Haida language.

The B.C. government later adopted the confusing name Queen Charlotte Islands/Haida Gwaii.

Carol Kulesha, the mayor of the Village of Queen Charlotte, a community at the south end of Graham Island, says she is pleased with the name change and hopes it will clear up any past confusion.

"This is bringing us back up to more modern times," Kulesha said Friday. "This is what the islands are named; they're Haida Gwaii. The confusion is the fact that some maps say one thing, and other maps say another. So now, it's official, and that's great."

Deal spells big changes

While the name change will mean maps will have to be updated, the reconciliation agreement is expected to have more far reaching consequences for the First Nation, which has never signed a treaty with the Crown.

"After 100 years of conflict, we have set the ground for a more productive era of peace," said Haida Nation president Guujaaw in a statement released after the protocol was signed.

The agreement builds on the success of the Strategic Land Use Agreement signed between B.C. and the Haida in 2007.

"We have already agreed to the care and protection of the land; and now, we develop processes for more responsible management," Guujaaw said. "This marks an opportunity to build a relationship on mutual trust and to design a model for a sustainable economy."

The deal will create a unique joint management council that will make development decisions along with a process to resolve title disputes between Haida and the Crown. It also includes \$10 million for the Haida to buy out forest tenures on the islands and revenue-sharing on future resource development in the region.

The pristine islands are in the centre of B.C.'s vast offshore oil and gas fields, but development of those reserves remains under a federal moratorium.

The deal is the second such agreement announced in as many days that establishes shared decision-making on land use and economic development opportunities between the province and B.C.'s First Nations.

On Thursday, the province signed a similar reconciliation deal with six other coastal First Nations.

It also granted environmental approval Thursday to the Naikun wind project, to be located in the Hecate Strait east of Haida Gwaii. The Haida Nation is a major stakeholder in the project.

Have a nice day