

# Smoke Signal

MISSISSAUGA FIRST NATION

## GOD SPEAKS OJIBWAY

By: Karen W Waggoner (<http://www.karenwaggoner.com/godspeaks.htm>)

### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- God Speaks Ojibway
- Mississaugi Day school
- Mississaugia First Nation Policing
- History Tidbits



Outside his cabin near a thicket of roses and raspberries on a warm July afternoon, Richard Chiblow unwraps a blanket bundle to create a place of honor for his ceremonial pipe, a two-foot stem wrapped with ribbons and an elongated pipe-stone bowl. From a beaded medicine bag he draws shells and stones to share the place of honor. He carefully fits the stem of his pipe to the section containing the bowl, and in reverential silence, lights a handful of dried sage in a blackened mussel shell. Using one of his sacred eagle feathers to fan the smoke, Richard invites us to smudge ourselves, to bathe our faces and heads in the fragrant sage smoke, to pray to become ready for an encounter with the creator.

While I watch, I am mystified not only by this ritual but that the remarkable old man would include me, a summer resident, a white American, a woman, in the sacred ceremony. I have know Richard for a number of years, aware and wary of his charisma, of the quality of his wisdom and voice that drew me to

him to listen but rarely to speak. I am an observer, not a participant, in Richard's life, and I am tempted to retreat, even though he has led me to this quiet spot to spend the afternoon with him, his nurse, and his young friend, a disciple from Manitoba.

He prays in Ojibway while he packs the bowl of his pipe, then he raises it, unlighted, to the four directions, offering prayers of thanksgiving for the special gifts of each region: the buffalo, the bears, the many tribes, all the climates. He lights the pipe, raises his eyes to the sky, and continues to pray for each one of us in English. He mentions me, calls me "our loved one from the South," and tears fill my eyes. All thoughts of escape are gone from my mind.

He passes the pipe to each of us from left to right according to tradition. When we receive it, we are to pray. The sunny spot behind Richard's house is filled with voices giving thanks for the fellowship, for Richard's knowledge and companionship, and earnest requests for his healing for Richard is gravely ill. My voice is thick with emotion, but prayer comes easily because he is the most remarkable man of faith I have ever know.

When the pipe returns to him, he sings a song of praise, a gift, he tells me, from a friend in British Columbia. At last, he wraps the pipe again in its red bundle and reclines in his cot to allow the nurse to draw a sample of blood. I ask him if he is too weary to answer my questions, and he smiles and says the Creator has renewed his strength, just as he

expected. I begin tentatively, hoping to lead him to a chronology of his life, but the frail old man leans toward me eagerly. He will tell me how much he used to long to talk to God, how he decided god didn't understand Ojibway, and about the profound emptiness of his life until he discovered the truth.

Just why Richard decided God didn't speak his language is not difficult to follow. Raised by his traditional Indian grandmother in their village on the banks of the Mississaugi River near Blind River, Ontario, he followed in the footsteps of his ancestors, learning the language and the remnants of his culture. Unfortunately, after her death, he succumbed to drink just as most other young people did. Though he clung to the Roman Catholic faith of his childhood, Indian tradition slipped away. Few of his generation used the old language and virtually no one practiced the ceremonies of fasting, the sweat lodge, the sacred dance and much more.

As a young man Richard measured himself by the standards of white men who hired him to do their labor but would not allow him to stand in a bar beside them to drink, labeling him a drunken Indian just like all the rest. He enlisted in the Canadian Army during World War II to take his place among other young warriors and to celebrate his manhood among the girls who admired uniforms, but Richard's alcoholism and resentment of authority caused him to

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## G O D S P E A K S O J I B W A Y

By: Karen W Waggoner

to fail, "forget I was a soldier." He went AWOL, was court martialled and dismissed from the service more alienated than before.

He married Margaret, a strong-willed Indian girl of another Band who also was raised in traditional ways by her grandparents, but who, like Richard, eventually lost touch with their ancestors and turned to alcohol. They raised their eight children and two others with Richard still trying to find his way in a white world. He worked in the city at steel and pulp mills, then returned with his family to the Mississauga River where he tried his hand at hunting and trapping, roofing and carpentry. Laughing, he admits he liked guiding rich Americans on forays into the bush, ostensibly to hunt or fish but also to share long evenings of drinking. The Americans were generous with whisky and left their Indian guides with lavish gifts of alcohol. In every line of work, drinking interfered with Richard's achieving either satisfaction or success.

Finally Margaret led Richard into sobriety, tricking him into attending his first twelve-step meeting. There he saw people genuinely enjoying their lives and heard the testimony of former drunks. He liked what he saw and changed his life but came to recognize that he was not free from the restlessness that had earlier led him to try one church and evangelist after another, searching for his own connection with the Creator. It was then he realized his experience had taught him that God didn't speak or understand Ojibway, and Ojibway was Richard's language, not the English, French, or Latin of white culture.

Richard says early Christian missionaries to the Indians probably would have been less zealous had the Indians been able to explain the beliefs and practices. Far from pagan, most native cultures were reverent in their attitudes toward the Creator and all the gifts of earth and spirit, but Indian beliefs were quickly outlawed and replaced with talk of sin and punishment. Frightened Indians abandoned their traditions as useless, evil and tried to

replace their system with foreign beliefs centered on a vengeful, distant God who of course, understood no native tongues.

The loss of tradition amounted to nothing less than devastation, a sense of separation from all that made sense of existence, a complete loss of power.

Only in recovery did Richard hear of a loving and forgiving God who did not discriminate against even the worst of sinners regardless

of their language or background. On a visit to a nearby reserve, Richard participated for the first time in a fast and sweat lodge, watched the Sundance, and came to understand the power of the old ways. Eventually, Richard discovered his own heritage, a rich mélange of legend, music, language, and practice centered on the Creator.

As a member of the Ojibway Cultural Foundation on Manitoulin Island in Lake Huron, Richard and other elders taught each other their language, enriching their stories of knowledge. Then they studied the Bible together. They Believed they found Indian tradition in the stories of elders carrying and using staffs, of sacred dances, of James and John, sons of thunder, and more. With the loving approval of his ailing wife Margaret, and working primarily outside his own band because "and man cannot be a prophet in his own country," Richard spent more than twenty five years working for the sobriety and rebirth of indigenous people. He travelled extensively to visit tribes all over North America to learn and to teach. During those years, Richard spoke to recovery groups, to native

groups, and to religious leaders, carrying his message of self-respect, recovery and faith.

Richard's rediscovery and propagation of his won heritage took place simultaneously with the regeneration of his band and nation. In the early 1980's, he built with his own hands a powwow arbor on his reserve and gathered his people for the first traditional powwow in the modern history of the Mississauga band. Since then, the reserve has been reborn, better and stronger than ever before. At the

1997 annual celebration of faith, his own people honored Richard for the first time. In a ceremony involving his family of children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, his gift of the first arbor was recognized, and despite his grave illness, he led the honor dance, greeting his neighbors and hundreds of friends with a salute from one of his many sacred eagle feathers.

At present, the Anishinabek Nation, the Union of Ontario Indians, is one of the healthiest first-nation groups in North America, without benefit of gambling or a brisk tourist trade. A monthly newspaper published in North Bay, Ontario, documents all the activities and issues that concern the many tribes represented in the union, and a proliferation of events, powwows, spiritual conferences, arts seminars, and dramatic presentations demonstrate the vitality of the Anishinabe, "happy people." Virtually any service is available to tribal members through their own professional and

*Continued on page 3.....*



*Eventually,  
Richard  
rediscovered his  
own heritage*

THE CHURCH

By: Research by summer students

Today, as of July 14, 1981, the people from the reserve and off the reserve, attended the new log church on a weekly basis. The grand opening of the new log church took place on April 12th, 1981, with the name given as Kateri Tekakwitha.

The new log church provides better sitting arrangements for the people and makes it easier for the priest to be heard in a big crowd. The priest stands on the lower part, whereas the people are situated in a circle around the priest, on a higher platform.

The construction on the new log church was completed by some men on the reserve, and also men and women volunteered from on and off the reserve, which helped in peeling the logs.

Thanks to the donations from the following organizations and people, the church was completed.

- Miss Flex.....\$ 500.00
- Jean Andrews..... 50.00
- Margaret Chiblow.....100.00
- Nancy Niganobin.....500.00
- Father Sabes.....201.00
- Catholic women's league
- Of Blind River.....50.00
- Leo Martel.....200.00



Kateri Tekakwitha

G O D S P E A K S O J I B W A Y

Continued from Page 2 . . .

Business community. The Ojibway language is taught in tribal schools and offered in public schools.

When I saw him last behind his cabin on that soft July afternoon, Richard claimed no credit for the rebirth of his band and nation. He just smiled. A tall, erect man with the mellifluous voice of a born orator, Richard believed the path to sobriety and productivity is self-respect, not self promotion. It was his mission to educate and to lead his people on that journey to their own power by wise and loving example, and his vision included building re-

spect outside his community and culture, understanding that respect is based on knowledge, not ignorance. As a part of his mission, he taught me to revere the healing power of the cedar, the sweet grass, the sage, the sacred fire and rain and sky and land. And he taught me to praise the Creator for every gift, even the ones we don't want.

Richard passed from the realm of present reality in March, 1988, not knowing or caring that he is my hero. He measured his life by spiritual standards, and while his influ-

ence reached beyond the borders of his reserve to the hearts of thousands across the continent, he thought he was successful because he was so happy. He wore castoff shirts with no buttons and accepted gifts no more valuable than a can of tobacco to use it for its sacred smoke. He didn't correct me, however, when I called him teacher, and I think it made him proud that I considered him a spiritual conduit through which the power of Creation is made known.

**FLAHERTY FLIES FIRST CLASS AT EXPENSE OF FIRST NATIONS FAMILIES**

By: Ottawa, March 10 /CNW/

Ottawa, March 10 /CNW/ - The Harper government is trying to create a Class system in Canada.

“That’s the only conclusion I can come to , “Anishinabek Nation leader Patrick Madahbee told First Nation citizens attending a Parliament Hill rally against the proposed 13-per-cent Harmonized Sales Tax.

“Finance Minister James Flaherty has refused to even sit with us and hear our concerns,” said the Grand Council Chief, who did not attend because of personal matters and sent a message of support to the demonstrators, who came by the busload from all over Ontario. “When people refuse to even speak with us it certainly creates the impression that they think they are better than us,” said Madahbee, who speaks for one-third of the First Nation citizens in Ontario.

“Mr Flaherty travels better than first class— he charters his own planes,” said Madahee, referring to the finance minister’s flight aboard a government jet to a London, Ont. Photo opportunity the day after delivering a budget telling Canadians they need to tighten their belts. The cost to taxpayers of the Challenger jet’s return trip to Ottawa was an estimated \$18,000.

To put things in proper perspective, the cost of that single airplane ride represents the amount that four First Nations families would pay in HST for a full year’s worth of household spending on heating, utilities, clothing, and supermarket supplies.” said the Grand Council Chief.

The best leaders aren’t just good talkers; they’re usually also very good listeners. But Mr. Flaherty doesn’t want to listen to us.

“He doesn’t want to hear us remind him that his ancestors agreed to respect us as sovereign nations in exchange for our military alliance, or that our treaties do not give Canada the legal right to impose their taxes on our citizens.

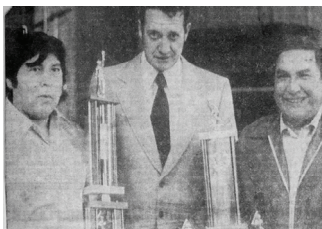
He doesn’t want to hear about the study by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives which says First Nations citizens are the only population in Ontario which would bear the full impact of the proposed HST.

“And he doesn’t seem to care that thousands of First Nations families—to whom his government publicly apologized and promised a better future— would be further impoverished by \$100 a week by this immoral and illegal tax proposal.”

The Anishinabek Nation established the Union of Ontario Indians as its secretariat in 1949. The UOI is a political advocate for 40 member communities across Ontario, representing approximately 55,000 people. The Union of Ontario Indians is the oldest political organization in Ontario and can trace its roots back to confederacy of Three Fires, which existed long before European Contact.

For further information: Marci Becking, communications officer, Union of Ontario Indians, phone (705) 497-9127 (ext. 2290), Cell: (705) 494-0735, E-mail: [becmar@anishinabek.ca](mailto:becmar@anishinabek.ca), [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)—add Anishinabek Nation as a “friend”

**D O U B L E C H A M P S**



The Mississauga Warriors were double winners at the

Blind River Ballplayers Association banquet Saturday night. Teddy Boyer, left holding the association trophy for his team’s victory in the Community Day tourney and Wilf Morningstar, right, with the Oliver Gagne Memorial Trophy

which the Warriors picked up for the league championship. Bud MacIver, team sponsor is flanked by the players.

*Article to the left was submitted by Bud MacIver, which is an original photo from the Sault Star by Mcdonald*

*Early 1970's  
24 and 2*



DOWN BY THE RIVER

Submitted by: Dorothy Fortin (Dot)



The Garden

I grew up with my grandparents, Maryanne and Madore Boyer on the bank of the Mississaugi River, near the mouth of the Blind River, leading to Lake Huron.

Grandma was a hard worker, gardening, picking berries, etc.. She encouraged me to help her with gardening, and I think she must have been some kind of psychologist as she made me feel that it was a privilege to dig around in the dirt, planting, weeding and harvesting.

She also liked to hunt rabbits. I

loved to eat rabbit stew and dumplings. So yummy, the way she made it!!

When I got older, perhaps ten years old, grandma decided I was old enough to retrieve the dead rabbits from the snares she had set. Her only instruction was that if I found a rabbit who was not dead, but struggling to get out of the snare, I WAS TO WRING IT'S NECK TILL IT DIED!!!

As I headed out on the trail , I prayed that I wouldn't find a live rabbit in a snare. However, I did find one who was struggling. No way was I going to kill that innocent creature. No matter how much I loved rabbit stew!!! I simply loosened the snare, and off he went into the woods. Didn't even say thank you. I did this a few times but didn't tell Grandma

what I had done. One day, I was checking the snare, I found another rabbit alive and prepared to set him free. Unfortunately, a friend of my grandparents caught me doing my deed. He told me my grandma, and that ended my rabbit hunting. The man who ratted on me was Mike Chiblow. (Bless his Soul)

*Grandma was a hard worker, gardening, picking berries, etc*



***A Note from the editor.***

**The scope of our newsletter will focus on the history of our First Nation. All or most articles are submitted by band members, taken from historical documents that have been researched to be accurate as possible. If you have articles, or stories from our past, we would greatly appreciate it if you can submit them for our next newsletter. Most submissions will be edited for grammar and spelling mistakes, but I will add that when an article is submitted for grammatical errors, you begin to lose what the person is trying to say, lose their idea, so it may be better to leave the story just the way it is because they are expressing their idea, their story in their own way. That would be like 2 people standing beside one another and if one was to draw a straight line out from where they are, the person who drew the line would see it as being straight and the person beside them would see it from a different angle and think it wasn't straight. So you see, there is a matter of a few inches that will change the view of the intended message.**

## MISSISSAUGI DAY SCHOOL

Submitted By: Joyce Morningstar

I think the year was either 1958 or 1959 when I first attended the day school on the Mississauga First Nation. I was terrified because I just came from the residential school in Spanish. It (the residential school) closed down the year after I left there. I did not feel like I had won the lottery even though it meant I could stay home with my parents and siblings. I really did not know them very well as I was gone from home from the time I was five years old when I should have been home forming attachments to my siblings and relatives and finding my place in the community and home. Well anyway the reason this came about was our house burned to the ground while I was at school in Spanish, ON. We used to live by the river on the other side of the powwow grounds. We then had a house built for us closer to the day school on the rez. I was given a choice, where did I want to go to school, and of course I chose home thinking it would be such a treat. Then I met the teacher a Miss Rabishaw, I remember her nickname but Cliff said he would edit it out of here if I wrote it down. I must remember that this is a family publication and so I guess I'll go along with his edicts. Man she was a crabby old woman. She was always yelling at the students and if you didn't know your reading writing and arithmetic then heaven help you. You never knew when the ruler was going to descend upon our tiny fingers. I don't exactly remember the very first day all I remember being scared to go to school everyday and trying not to miss a day or be late. We really toed the line but a lot of times even that wasn't good enough. I never prayed so hard in my whole entire life. I never wanted to be called upon to answer any questions because if you didn't know the answer then wham down came the ruler or whatever she happened to have in her hand.

The only time she was all smiles was when the Indian Agent came or was he the superintendent of schools then butter wouldn't melt in her mouth. She was also pleasant to us when the priest came around to see if we knew where we came from and if we were going to heaven or hell. Sometimes even the Bishop would stop in when it was time for confirmation of those students who were old enough for this occasion. I dreaded going to school because some of the students seemed to have a harder time memorizing the work. When I think back about what we were taught it doesn't seem like it should have been that hard but I guess we had to settle for whoever was sent to our reserve. I don't know what kind of education she had but I bet it wasn't any better than what we were receiving.

Every Monday she took attendance for mass attendance on Sunday and you had to be at death's door to be excused. We got the strap if we didn't attend mass. When we came in the door at school she was there checking our shoes for dirt of any kind you were not let in that doorway until the bottoms of those shoes were cleaned. If you forgot to bring kleenex to clean the bottoms then too bad you had to use your shirt sleeve or the bottom of your skirt. We had to wear skirts or dresses, the girls did anyway and had to wear hats or kerchiefs on our heads when we attended mass for whatever reason. We thought we were really styling then we could have some really bright colours. We had outdoor toilets and we had to

clean them out. If I remember correctly the girls cleaned out the girls and the boys cleaned out the boys. Our recess was just for a short period then again we were kind of forgotten when she

had visitors. We would have an extra long recess. Those were the good times to remember. Every year we had some races and jumping, and the best ones were chosen to compete in I think it was Sault Ste Marie, I don't really remember cause I never won any of the events. That was usually held near the end of the school year. The students who didn't know the answers to her quizzes were the ones she seemed to pick on day in and day out. A particular incident that stands out for me concerns my sister Lylia who broke her leg one year. It was a pretty bad break and she had a cast on her whole leg and she was unable to attend school for sometime. Well when she (Lylia) was home recuperating she would hobble out to the road for exercise. The house wasn't too far to the road either. We lived fairly close to the school and you could see our house from the school. I remember the teacher breaking the ruler on her arm when she returned and my Mom was ready to string up the old crab, but fortunately or unfortunately the police were called and my Mom backed off. Another thing I remember about attending that school was getting these hard old biscuits, black tablets (iron pills) with yellow sour stuff inside and powdered milk which we were forced to swallow. The powdered milk wasn't stirred very good and was always lumpy so there we were always gagging trying to keep it down for fear of getting whacked. A lot of us were quite ingenious when .....*Continued on pg. 7*

THE LAW ENFORCEMENT

Taken from history of Mississauga (author)



First Nations Policing on Missis-

Presently, June 14, 1978, the Ontario Provincial Police patrol the roads of the reserve. There was a reserve constable, in fact there were three, but all asked for resig-

nation within the year that they started. The first was John Boyer, and he started in April of 1974. I remember him this time and remember his 1974 green Dodge Dart, that he used to patrol around in. The second was Barry M Boyer and he started on June 16th, 1975. The 3rd was Lorne R. Boyer and he started in June of 1977. In September, after Lorne had his training with the Ontario

Provincial Police, the reserved received it's own patrol car. Of course Barry and Lorne also had their own patrol cars as well.

Today, there were a few more police officers for the first Nation. Bev Gauthier and Bob Mathias were the police officers a few years ago. Now it is currently Bob Mathias and hopefully they will hire another one as his partner very soon.

MISSISSAUGA DAY SCHOOL

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

it came to make her believe we had swallowed that crap. Some of us put them in our socks or shoes, in our text books, sometimes in our desks or

fed it to her dog Penny. If you however, forgot to clean out your desk before she

checked it them you had to stand there and eat them all, Yuck!!!! I must say that when some of the priests came to the school it was pleasant and we enjoyed those days because there

were some nice padres and some not so nice. We were able to laugh and be children when some of them came around. We didn't have computers, electric heat, running water and all those other luxuries we enjoy today but we did have fun when we were allowed. Sometimes we nearly suffered frost bite and such but we skated outside on the ponds and went sliding

wherever it was convenient. It probably would have been a real luxury if we had lived right next to the water because I think nearly everyone knew how to swim. There were some swings



Church and school—early 50's

outside the school which we used when we could. If I remember there were only four for all of us who went to school on the rez. Not nearly enough. She rang the old cow bell to signal that it was time to go back into school. Classes started at 9:00 a.m. and ended at 4:00p.m. with an hour for lunch and those of use who lived nearby could go home for lunch.

Anyway then, the decision was made to send those students from grade six on to school in Blind River, ON. I have to say that we were not really prepared for those grades the only subject that she ever really stressed was religion. I know I didn't know what geography was all about or history or all those other subjects we took. It was a good thing I was a quick study. That didn't really help because I was the only brown skin in the classroom that year boy talk about culture shock but that is a different story for another day. I know there is a lot of stuff I left out but this is just to give you an idea of what life was like back in the good old days. I am trying to remember if we ever really enjoyed our time here but honestly I don't remember any happy times.

So adios for now  
Joyce

## HISTORY TIDBITS ( START OF THE LAND CLAIMS )

The following information was taken from research done by a summer student job program. As for the year it was done, we are unsure. If the person can identify their work, can they kindly submit their name to the library and they will be given proper credit to this information.

- The first industry, a sawmill was erected on the reserve in the summer of 1970
- production started the following year, 1971
- Prior to that, the men worked as trappers, guides, pulp cutters and sawmill workers at J. J. McFadden Lumber Company in the town of Blind River.
- That company also terminated its operations in the year of 1969.
- The first hard surfacing of the main road (Village Road) was done in August of 1976.
- In October of 1975, the chief headed a delegation to Ottawa in which he presented a document to the Governor General at Government House, asking for the re-negotiation of the Huron-Robinson Treaty.
- In response after many months of waiting, the Government agreed on Tripartite discussions involving Federal, Provincial and Indian Organization.
- First organization meeting in Toronto was on July 6, 1976 and the second was scheduled for September 2, 1976. Also, in Toronto in which land priorities will be discussed and selected for future discussions. An average of about 4 meetings of this type will be held annually until everything on all the issues are settled.
- Reserve Research commenced in the year of 1974. The chief hired Union of Ontario Researcher, Del Riley to start this initial project. The following year in 1975, Harvey Ermatinger, a band member was hired to complete this research. Ample research was done to justify land claims in 1976.

The Mississauga River Trading Post is included in a list of the North west Company Posts, which was combined with The Hudson Bay Trading Post in 1821, when it was presumably transferred. The post was mainly used for the purpose of trading furs in return of supplies that the Indians might need. Some of the people that were in charge of the post were: Henry Sayers—1845 to 1862, Joseph Boyer—1871 and John Dyke 1877-1890. This post supplied food. Tools and other necessities that the people of the Mississauga River band might need for the days to come. The post was closed in the year of 1900.



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## THEN

Taking a look at the past and the present day for Chiblow Lake Lodge.


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 IRONBRIDGE, ONT.

AAA CAA

ON CHIBLOW LAKE (DENMAN ON THE MAP) 9 MILES NORTH OF  
 IRONBRIDGE — REACHED VIA NO. 17 HIGHWAY

Above ad was taken from the Sault Star (date unknown)

## AND NOW



ChiblowLake log - Photo Taken July 2009

The lodge is currently owned by the Mississauga First Nation and is Managed by Laura Niganobe & her husband. Ownership was transferred over to the First Nation at the time when the Land Claims were settled.

## MISSISSAUGA FIRST NATION DAY SCHOOL (A BRIEF HISTORY)

TAKEN FROM: HISTORY OF MISSISSAUGA FIRST NATION (AUTHOR UNKNOWN)

The original Mississauga Day school began in early 1907 and burnt to the ground in 1946. Prior to this, there was no school or education system in place for the Reserve. It was a little white school house which was located on the site where Alex Stevens use to live and where Edwin Chiblow now resides. Then a new school house was built in the summer of 1946 to replace the one that had burnt to the ground. The first school teacher that taught at this school in 1907 was Miss Kehoe and some of her students included Dan Boyer (chief), Rose Gionette and others. Some of the equipment used for educating the students were little slate boards for writing and printing their answers to various questions given by the teacher. Then a new school was built, which is where our library is now housed. It is a one room school house, with one teacher, Miss Marie Rabishaw who taught grades 1 through 8. This school house also contained living quarters for the school teacher. A coal furnace was used to heat the school house with the coal Shute at the front of the school located to the left of the entrance to the school room. There were even 2 outhouses (boys & girls) located at the back of the school. This school house was eventually closed in 1966 and the students were transferred to St. Mary's Separate School in Blind River. A list of the school teachers who taught at these schools were:

Miss Kehoe (use to walk to Blind River on Friday and walk back early Monday morning to teach.)  
Miss Midormit  
Miss Addie  
Miss McKitches  
Miss Macnaulity  
Miss Merrand  
Miss Rechet  
Paul Berthelot  
Mr. Gaude  
Miss Bernadette Cyr  
Miss Rabbishaw

My experiences at the school was a brief 2 year stint, in a way that I had to repeat grade one (kindergarten was not available back then). I think I was 5 or 6 years old at the time. Grades 1 through 8 was taught at day school on the re-



serve. It was 2 years at the day school for me, and in 1966 the school was closed. All the students were then transferred to St. Mary's Separate School in Blind River. Don't know if this was an improvement, because we had to face a lot of racism at St. Mary's as well.

I vaguely remember my first day of my first year attending this school house. My 2 older sisters, brother and I were sent off to school for the first day. I remember coming to the school grounds and going directly to the swing set. My brother and I began playing on the swing set. We must have been playing for a good 5 to 10 minutes before the teacher stuck her head out the door and yells out to us, "you boys get in this class room right now". We stopped what we were doing right away and went into the school. We had no idea that we had to be in school.

I remember some of my lessons in grade one. The part I like best was the math books with all the colourful little pictures that you had to add together and put a number beside it. Grammar was a chore and fearful to learn, we were always afraid of saying something the wrong way and we would get hit by the

teacher if it was wrong. There were a few incidents where students would get hit by the teacher for saying their words improperly, use bad grammar or give a wrong answer to a math question asked by the teacher. There was also the dreaded biscuits and powdered milk that we were given each day, 5 days a week. Thank God for the weekends (you think TGIF was invented around this time). The best way to describe the biscuits would be dog biscuits and the milk still had powder in it when it was given to us. Just wasn't stirred long enough and the powder felt funny going down your throat, tickling it and making you cough and gag. When nature called, we had to use the outhouses in the back of the school, man!, it was cold when we had to use them in the winter time and in the summer, the stench was unbearable at times. Of course, back then there was no plumbing for the houses on the Reserve. We didn't get plumbing into the houses around the early 1970's.

Another incident that happened was, that the teacher had hit one of the younger students. 2 of the older students then went after the teacher and roughed her up a bit.

The Mississauga Day school is an important part of our history, it is a reminder of our past. A past that was marred, but gave us an education that we needed to advance ourselves into this new way of life. A past we would like to forget. There were good things as well as the bad, more bad than good. This article is not intended to bring up the past hurts for all that have gone through this, but to make us aware that this is the history of the Mississauga First Nation.

*"The best way to describe the biscuits would be dog biscuits and the milk still had powder in it when it was given to us"*

**MAKUMSA***By Susan Daybutch to Wanda Chiblow*

My Brother and I went to visit my grandfather, this one Sunday afternoon. My grandfather had lived quite a distance from where we lived. After my grandmother's death, grandfather had always stayed alone. He was very old, but had a very strong will power. We greeted grandfather with happiness, he invited us to a late supper with him. Since grandfather always thought of his own way of cooking up something good to eat, we decided to stay. He made this thick delicious stew, with potatoes and scone. As we were eating supper, grandfather started talking to us about the wild animals and what their meaning meant to Indians. He told us about when a new Indian baby was born, the baby would be named after the first animal which came around the camp at that time. He also told us that each animal represented the weakness or braveness of each warrior.

After supper we played cards, and sat around listening to grandfather telling us stories and old Indian tales from long time ago. Time had passed quickly. Before we knew it, night was already here. Grandfather offered to walk us close to home.

The earth's atmosphere was pitch black, and yet everything was seemed so still. But still walking, I was able to keep on the road without going in the ditch. The moon was out, it was a northern summer night, the shaded sky, gave very little light to the way we were going. Along the old dusty roads there were swampy marshes and a whole lot of little shrubs. When we came right near this area the frog's croaking became louder by the minute. Then as we went

over a little hill, we approached an open field along the road. Grandfather told us to stop. Then standing there, he told us to look into the field, the sky gave a dim light in the field, the grass in the field, was long, strings and high, but there seem to be very few shrubs. Grandfather stood a bit behind us, and a little between us. He then told us to watch the tree and as we did, a flickering light went up and down the tree a couple of times. It seemed so scary because nothing in the field seem to be alive except this light. I felt so hypnotized by what I saw, I was too afraid to turn around to grab grandfather, but it suddenly felt that grandfather wasn't there anymore. I wanted to be afraid, but something inside was giving me courage. We were about two houses away from home, after passing them we were about a couple of hundred feet from home. Reaching home I was very glad to be home. The thought of just stepping out of the darkness, and into safety, that feeling of security, just to be in your own bed.

There are many stories that people tell and there are some stories that are true. You can decide for yourself to see if it is true or not. There are some I want to believe in. Grandfather use to tell me about his brother, who lived about 100 miles away from where he did. He said he lived near an isolated reserve and across this lake was where he lived. He had a small cabin, made out of wood and the furniture was hand made. My grandfather had said that he paddled across this lake many times at night. On beautiful moonlit night, when the water was nice and calm and the reflection off the stars made a sparkling movement, he

crossed the lake that night. Then all of a sudden, something went wrong. He was unable to control himself. He started to paddle faster and faster. It seemed like someone else was paddling, instead of him, he was very terrified..His canoe was found the next morning, but not him.

There was also a man, who lived in the deepest part of the woods. He had to walk through these woods so many nights because he was working in a little village. This one night, when the moon was out bright and shining, the stars were giving their glittering shine. The breeze was very gentle as he walked about a mile or two before he reached the woods. He had walked about a mile or two before he reached the woods. He had walked there so many nights before and the stars seemed brighter than before. The moon was so bright, he could see the shadows of the trees and the stones he walked on. He walked home that night and his wife never saw him after that.

There are many stories written about the north. There are so many things misconstrued and misunderstood. Indian people know such things as for instance, Bees don't bother anybody who bother them. Beavers are playing instead of working. Bears run away from you. Squirrels being noisy rather than gathering nuts. The leaves on strawberry plants are turned up rather than down. Sky in the evening is red, the following day is going to be nice.

Indian people have lived for so many centuries, being able to recognize the signs of the sky, the turn of the flowers. Indian people have been an embarrasment to weathermen and them men of medicine.





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