

MATAWA FIRST NATIONS



**Community and
Life Experiences Volume 1 (South)**



Constance Lake First Nation

John Paul Jacasum



**Ojibway and Cree
Cultural Centre**

MATAWA FIRST NATIONS Community and Life Experiences Volume 1 (South)



John Paul Jacasum

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Preface

The purpose of this book is to highlight the past and present life experiences of elders and youth in the Matawa communities. This book identifies the aspirations of these communities and reserves as described by the participants. Information found in this book may then be used by these communities and reserves for the future development of cultural, educational, social, and economic activities. This information may also be used to promote greater understandings between the Matawa and surrounding non-Native communities.

Information on life experiences and aspirations was gathered through audio-taped interviews collected from two elders and one youth of the Aroland, Constance Lake, Ginoogaming, Hornepayne, and Long Lake #58 First Nations of the Matawa Tribal Council.

These interviews were developed around three general statements given to the participants:

- (1) Describe your life in your community or reserve in the past.
- (2) Describe your life in your community today.
- and (3) Describe what your life might be like in your community or reserve in the future.

Following these interviews, community information was researched from a variety of sources. This information was used to complement the collected elders and youth stories and frame their words in context.

The opinions expressed in this book are those of the participants interviewed and not of the Ojibway and Cree Cultural Centre or the Chiefs and Councils of the Matawa First Nations.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank the following people and organizations who made this book possible. The elders and youth of the Matawa First Nations who participated by contributing their personal stories and sharing their individual and collective hopes and dreams.

Second, the support of the Chiefs and Councils of the Matawa First Nations, who provided their support and commitment for this book, and in making their communities a better place to live.

Third, the staff of the Ojibway and Cree Cultural Centre, particularly Diane Riopel who provided administrative support, Kathy Perreault who researched the community profiles and collected the photographs, and Jim Hollander who edited the manuscript and prepared the maps.

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To all those who worked and contributed to this book a sincere *meegwetch*.

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Introduction

The name 'Matawa' was originally chosen by the Chiefs because in the Ojibway and Cree languages, it is used to refer to the meeting of the rivers. All of the Matawa First Nations inhabit areas on or near one of the major rivers that flow in the vast Nishnawbe Aski Nation.

Matawa First Nations Management Corporate Profile

Matawa First Nations Management, was formed in 1988 as a Tribal Council to provide technical advisory services to its member communities. The Tribal Council has two office locations. The head office is located in Ginoogaming First Nation, while the branch office is located in the city of Thunder Bay, Ontario.

Today, Matawa First Nations Management provides advisory services in the areas of governance, finance, health, economic development, education, and technical services. While advisory services are the core business of Matawa First Nations Management, the organization co-ordinates and delivers other programs and services. Other demands are often placed on the organization in times of crisis or when new programs are introduced.

Currently, there are ten (10) communities that are members of Matawa First Nations Management. The communities are dispersed over a very large geographic area. Five (5) of the communities are remote, accessible by air, water and winter roads, while the other five (5) are accessible by highways and close to non native communities. The ten (10) communities include; Neskantaga First Nation, Webequie First Nation, Constance Lake First Nation, Ginoogaming First Nation, Long Lake #58 First Nation, Hornepayne First Nation, Aroland First Nation, Eabametoong First Nation, Nibinamik First Nation and Marten Falls First Nation. All Matawa First Nation communities inhabit areas on or near a major river system.

Over the past 17 years, Matawa has witnessed and experienced many positive and rewarding changes through the growth and development of its member communities. Presently, the communities are at varying levels of development, both economically and socially, and face many different challenges. Many of Matawa's and the communities' past achievements can be attributed to the collective commitment to progress, for the

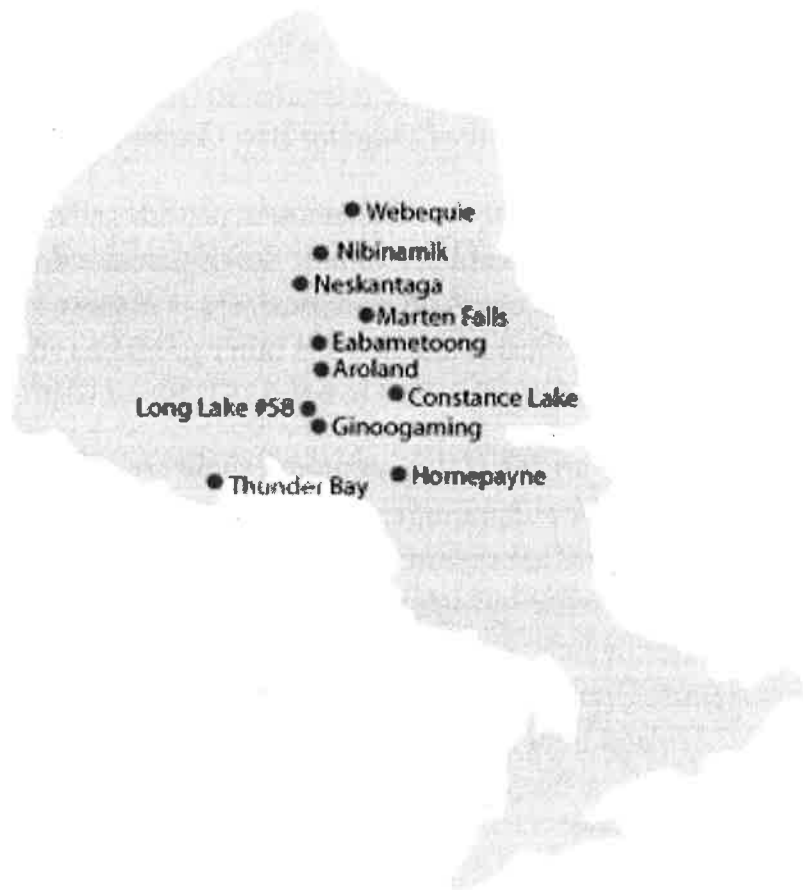
improvement of the lives of members through the delivery of advisory services and other programs and services, developed over a relatively short time.

At Matawa First Nations Management, our strategy is to continue to build foundations for the future. This means evolving and adapting to meet the needs of the member communities, while providing the highest level of service and leadership for all our members.

Matawa First Nations Management Member Communities

The Matawa First Nation communities are situated within the geographic boundaries as described in the James Bay Treaty #9 and the Robinson Superior 1850 Treaty. The total population of Matawa First Nation communities is approximately 7500 people. The current on-reserve populations range from 250 to 1800 and increasing.

In all of the remote communities both English and the local native language are spoken. In the road access communities, some of the younger people only speak English. The preservation and promotion of traditional native languages and culture is a priority in most of the Matawa First Nation communities.



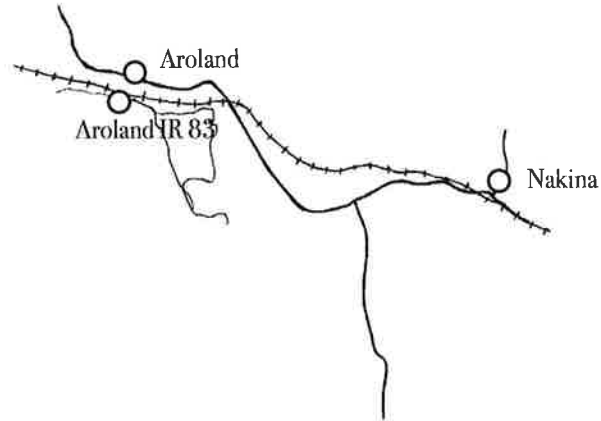
—from

<http://www.matawa.on.ca/>
[Matawa Tribal Council
Website, 2006]

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Aroland First Nation

P.O. Box 10
Aroland, ON
P0T 1G0



The Aroland First Nation is located on Aroland Indian Reserve 83 approximately 20 kilometres west of Nakina, Ontario. This reserve, established in 1991, is about 19,420 hectares (75 square miles) in size. Most of the population lives in the community of Aroland north of Highway 634. The original settlement, Aroland Indian Reserve 83, lies between the Kawashkagama River and the Canadian National Railway line. The traditional territory of Aroland First Nation lies around Esnagami Lake that is found within the area described by the Robinson-Superior Treaty (1850) and Treaty No. 9 (1906). However, due to treaty boundary issues the Esnagami Indians were listed as members of the Long Lake 77, Long Lake 58, Fort Hope, or Fort William bands. The Aroland First Nation received band status in 1985 as part of a group of six other Nishnawbe Aski Nation First Nations.

Population: 766 registered band members with 571 people living on-reserve (March, 2003)

Languages: English and Ojibway

The Aroland First Nation's past and current economic development projects include the construction of the Johnny Therriault Memorial School, a senior citizen's complex, a health centre, a band office/business center, and on-reserve housing. In addition, several local area businesses such a gas bar and store and a tourist outfitters have appeared in recent years.

“The elders in the community say that they are the direct descendents of the Esnagami Indians, and that their ancestors' economy was based on the fur trade.”

—from *Aroland Is Our Home*, p. 25

The Hudson's Bay Company built a post at Cavell, "which is less than four kilometres from Aroland's present location. The Esnagami Indians, the elders say, formed a close relationship with the new post. Rather than sell furs to independent traders, they set up a "new" camp adjacent to the post at Cavell."

—from *Aroland Is Our Home*, p. 25

In 1933, "the Arrow Land and Logging Company set up a saw mill near what was then the east end of the community."

—from *Aroland Is Our Home*, p. 34

Julia Towledo



(recorded August 11,
2003)

Community or reserve life in the past

*1) Describe your life
in your community or
reserve in the past.*

I lived here all my life. I didn't do much.

When I had kids, I looked after my kids, that's what I did, my best. I went fishing. I didn't do any work. Just looked after my kids, that's what I did.

Where were you born?

[I was born] not very far from here [at a place called] Cavell.

Is that a small community?

It's a small place. It's not a reserve.

Are there any people living there?

Not now, most of them have passed away.

How many brothers and sister did you have?

Four brothers and two sisters. There's only one living now.

Were your parents living here all their lives?

Yeah, but my parents died a long time ago.

When you were growing up there, did you do any hunting, trapping, or fishing?

Yeah, that's what we did all the time: fish and trap.

What kind of animals did you trap?

Beaver, marten, and all kinds of animals, I didn't even know.

Biographic Information

Name: Julia Mary Towledo

Date of Birth: May 22, 1933

Place of Birth: Cavell

Present Address: Nakina

Former Name: Shabogamik

Name of Spouse: Anthony Towledo

Number of Children: 11

Grandchildren: 30+

Great-grandchildren: 12

Number of Years Married: 40

Education: None

Did you eat the animals that you killed?

Yeah, we ate rabbit, fish, and moose. My parents died when I was very young. My granny looked after me.

When you were fishing, did you set nets?

Yes.

Did you smoke fish?

My granny did.

Did she teach you how to do it?

Yeah, but I didn't smoke fish. I never tried.

Did you live in a tent in Cavell before there were houses?

Yes, I lived in a tent in wintertime with my granny. I remember living in a tent in wintertime and in summertime in the bush. There was no reserve here, only one store, the Hudson Bay store, that I remember.

Is that where people took their furs?

Yeah.

Do you know if they got good money for their furs?

I don't know, yeah, used to be, but not right now.

When you started living here was this place a reserve?

No, they didn't have a reserve, [they] just had people living here.

Is this place a reserve right now?

I don't think it's a reserve yet.

Where did all of these people come from?

I don't know. They were living here all their lives.

Are there a lot of animals around here?

Yeah, I used to trap before, but now [I'm] too old to trap now.

Is there a lake around here?

Wawong Lake

Did your parents ever want you to go to school?

There was no school in those days. [We were] living in the bush all the time. There was no school here at that time.

Were there any residential schools?

I remember my dad took us to a boarding school in Thunder Bay for just one year. I was about maybe eight years old. I just went there for one year. My brother took care of us because my dad was sick. He was in the hospital.

Which hospital was he in?

I don't know which hospital.

Was your mother sick also?

Uh huh, my mother died before dad. My dad was a half-breed guy. They were not married. My dad's last name was Macready. One year after my mom died, my dad died. After one year at St. Joseph's boarding school, my brother came and got us. He never took us back again.

What was the boarding school called again?

St. Joseph's boarding school. We went by train to Longlac. There was no highway at that time. [We] took a train to Thunder Bay.

Did your dad do any work besides hunting and trapping?

Not my dad, just my granny. My dad was working somewhere else.

What was your granny doing?

Just trapping and fishing. I had to teach myself to read and write. I didn't learn nothing when I went to school for one year. It was during the war, 1943, when I went to school. The Sisters were there. [We] hardly had anything to eat in that school.

When you were in the school there, did you go through any abuse or anything?

No, not really. I never did get hit. [It's] just that we didn't have enough to eat because it was during the war I guess.

This reserve here, this community, was it in another location before?

Yeah, down the river. That's where people used to live before, down the river here. I don't know how many miles, maybe about three or four miles down there. ... [We] used to live in a tent. Lots of people [lived there] in summertime.

What's the name of that river?

Kowkash River (Kawashkagama River). It must be in some township. Right now, they have the areas divided into townships, that's how they did it. I don't know, [there's] nobody living there now. They moved here after. Everybody moved here across the highway. ... They tore down all the houses, you know, our houses.

Do you know why they moved you here when you were living across the highway?

I don't know. Maybe ... there were old houses there. They gave us these houses.

Did you live together with your brothers and sisters in the community?

A long time ago when we were small. My granny looked after us ... when we were young.

A long time ago, did the people live a spiritual life, like did they ever drum?

No, I don't remember doing that. No, I never saw pow wows in those days.

When you ate wild food, did it seem to make you strong?

Yeah, yeah I liked wild food. ... My brother used to always hunt for food. He used to hunt all the time. He was over seventy. I think he was seventy-eight when he died. He passed away two years ago.

When you used to trap, did somebody teach you how to skin animals?

Yeah, my husband used to skin animals, that's how I learned.

When you ate beaver, did you cook them in different ways?

[I] used to boil it. [I] didn't eat that much beaver. A long time ago, I used to eat all kinds of wild food when my granny used to feed us.

Did the people pick up berries a long time ago?

Uh huh, yeah.

Did they ever make any jam or something from those berries?

Yeah, they did.

Did they have any churches in the community a long time ago?

[A] priest used to come from Longlac. His name was Father Couture. (Fr. Joseph Couture was a Jesuit missionary.) Yeah. He was from Longlac at that time. He told us to get baptized. I remember the ... old people used to get baptized Anglican or Catholic. We never had a church when we used to live down the river. We prayed in somebody's home.

That's where they had mass. Every month I think that priest used to come, pray, baptize, and teach us catechism.

Did your parents ever talk to you in their language?

I remember people only talked Ojibway in those days. My dad never spoke Ojibway, ... just my granny and my mom talked Ojibway.

Do you speak Ojibwa?

Uh huh, that's all I speak. I don't talk very good English.

How about your children, do they speak Ojibway too?

Yeah, before, all my kids used to speak Ojibway. Now my grandchildren don't even talk Ojibway. They don't even understand me when I talk Ojibway to them. Some of them understand some words. I try to talk to them in Ojibway. All of my kids talk Ojibway. All my kids are living.

When you used to kill moose a long time ago, did you smoke the hide or make anything from the hide?

My mother used to make moose hide, snowshoes, and moccasins. I remember she used to make moose hide.

Did she ever teach you that?

I know how they used to do that. I used to watch them doing moose hide in wintertime.

Were there times when you ran out of food?

I don't remember.

Were there always animals around?

Yeah, there was food. Sometimes I ran out of white food in the bush like flour.

When you were living in the bush, did you use anything from the bush for medicinal purposes?

My granny used to make something for us when we were sick like cedar branches. She used to boil it, I remember.

Did you ever use anything yourself?

Not now.

I mean when you were living in the bush, did you ever use anything from the bush when somebody got sick, did you ever use anything from the bush to make them feel better again?

Yeah, we used cedar branches. We boiled cedar branches when someone got a cold.

Did you ever use anything from the animals for medicines?

No, I don't remember, no.

Community or reserve life today

2) Describe your life in your community today.

[I] just stay home. I was sick for a while, [but I'm] getting better. I had cancer.

You had cancer?

Yeah.

Is it gone now?

Yeah.

Do you still go for check-ups?

Yeah, I go tomorrow.

If you need to go see a doctor, where do you go?

They take me by medical cab to Thunder Bay for my appointment.

Is there a health centre here in the community?

There is a clinic. They just make appointments.

When did you move into this house?

[I] don't remember what year. We were the first ones to move here. They made these four houses for elders—small houses. I don't know, nineteen ninety or something, I don't know.

Do they have a senior citizens house here?

Yeah. I didn't want to stay over there because the ... kids they don't want to go over there.



Aroland Health Centre

Are there people that take care of the seniors?

Yeah, they got some ladies working for the elders. They come here and clean the place once a week. [There are a] couple of ladies cleaning places for the elders. Some of them cook for the ones who can't cook for themselves.

Do they have pow wows around here?

Yeah, they have pow wows every year.

Do you go there and watch?

Yeah, sometimes when I'm home. I go and visit my kids all the time.

Do they have a church in the community?

Yeah, they used to have a church there other side of the highway, but they tore it down. It was getting old. They have a little church back here in a trailer. They bought the trailer for the church. They are going to build a church in the future, I don't know when. A priest comes only on Sundays, every Sunday, from Geraldton.

Do you know his name?

Father Robert Higgins. He's a new priest. Lots of priests keep coming [and going]. [There] used to be nuns here too, but they are not here now.

Community or reserve life in the future

3) Describe what your life might be like in your community or reserve in the future.

More houses and more people.



Aroland First Nation

Do they have a sawmill?

Yeah.

Do they have anything else here?

Yeah, they have a sawmill in Nakina.

What do you think it's going to be like for you in the future?

I'll end up being in an old folks home I guess.

Do you find that this is a good location for this community?

I don't mind. It doesn't bother me. I just worry about my grandchildren all the time.

Does this lake have fish in it?

Yeah, they got fish there.

Do you know what kind of fish they catch?

Pike, mostly pike, and white fish. [There] used to be trout there, but not too many now.

Did you ever eat sturgeon?

Yeah.

Where do you have to go and catch them?

Way back to the Ogoki River. That's where we used to go for sturgeon.

Did you use fishing hooks or a net?

A net.

Do you know if people still catch sturgeon there?

Yeah, some people still go there to the Ogoki River, way back there.

Do you know if anybody in the community is teaching the Ojibway language?

Yeah, they have some in the school there. They teach kids the Native language.

Do they have a school here in the community?

They just use some houses. They asked for a school, but they didn't get a school yet.

So, do they go to school here in the community?

The young ones [do], but the older ones go to school in Geraldton by bus. This [school] here goes up to Grade seven I think, but for Grade eight they go to high school in Geraldton.

Does a bus come here from Geraldton to pick them up?

No, I think one bus runs here with the small kids and takes them to school and another bus goes to Geraldton. They take the kids to school.

Do you make any crafts?

Yeah ... but I don't really work anymore ... I used to do beadwork and make quilts. [I] used to do lots of beadwork before, but my hands are numb now. I'm diabetic too. This hand is always numb. I can't do anything anymore. I can't even wash my floor. ... [My] hands used to get numb, but they're getting better now.

Did you make moccasins?

Yeah, I used to make beads and sew moccasins before.

Do you think it would be good for the young people to try to learn their Ojibway language?

Yeah, it would be good. There are some that understand English good. We, elders, just know how to talk a little bit of English ourselves. Our grandchildren don't understand when we talk Indian to them. When you tell them to bring something, they don't know what you're talking about.

Sam Megan



(recorded August 11,
2003)

Community or reserve life in the past

*1) Describe your life
in your community or
reserve in the past.*

Biographic Information

Name: Sam Megan (Meganageeshik)
Date of Birth: October 2, 1917
Place of Birth: O'Sullivan Lake
Present Address: Aroland
Name of Spouse: Mary
Number of Children: 3
Grandchildren: 12
Great-grandchildren: 20+
Number of Years Married: Can't Remember
Education: None

Well, this reserve life is good, I think, because I don't go too far to drive ... The way I live in this reserve now, it's good. I wouldn't go back any more. That's finished. ... I like the reserve because it gives me a place to live. This is why I'm gonna live here until I get to really get old. I'm only eighty-five years old, ... so I know I can't do anything. I can't go too far. I just walk around this building. I feel lucky enough to walk around this road here even though I am eighty-five. Sometimes I take my chair to go to store. I still go to the school ... I still go to store when I get my cheque. I like to watch my television. I listen to the news on it. I like the good life. Yeah.

Where were you born?

O'Sullivan Lake ... I was born over there. I don't remember. I was too young.

Is that where your parents lived all the time?

Yah, yah, that's right. I don't remember too much of my dad. Only one time I remember my dad was when he carried me somewhere, maybe when I was too young to walk. That's all I can remember of my dad. My dad passed away.

Did you do any hunting, trapping, or fishing?

Yah, that's what made my life. [I] set nets in the lake to catch fish. When I got old enough to hunt, I killed a moose. ... There were not many deer in this place. Maybe I hear two or three deer at Caribou Lake. In summertime, we go to some place you call Ilene Falls, below O'Sullivan Lake. When I got old enough and when I got my wife, we went and hunted a bear. I killed a bear. ...

What's that place called again?

Ilene Falls is [near] a little road below O'Sullivan Lake.

What was Aroland called a long time ago?

The [Arrow Land and Logging] Company put a name in this place, in the post office ... and that's where we got just one r in Aroland. That's why we called it Aroland. In the old Indian [language], they called it Wongaming [that means] portage. That's what it is in English.

When you were growing up, did you do any trapping?

[I] trapped in wintertime and I worked in summertime. I worked in many places, some on the railroad, that they called sections. I worked in lots of places. I worked for the Ministry of Natural Resources. ... I worked 14 summers with them [during fire season]. Then I bought that old truck. I used to drive them to work in Geraldton and come back again here for the night. ... Sometimes I worked until there were no more fires, but I spent my time in the bush doing traps. [There was] not much to catch, just mink and muskrat. There were no beaver at that time. Later the Ministry brought some beaver ... They landed in an airplane and then they gave us four beaver. They asked us, "Do do you know what to do with this beaver?" "No," we replied. "Well, carry them over there in that river ... right over there and make a place for them to live," they said. There were only four beaver and I still don't know how many years when there were lots of beaver. ... But they say there are lots of beaver now. You start to catching them now.

What kind of fish did you catch when you were setting a net?

Sucker, whitefish, pike, and pickerel. We gotta go to different places to catch lake trout. The only time we catch lake trout is when they're spawning. ... That's where we set a net, a big one at O'Sullivan Lake.

Who taught you how to set a net?

Nobody ... I just saw my mother and others set a net. So, that's how I learned ... The same thing when I go and hunt ducks. ... I saw someone doing the same thing. ... Anytime I got short of meat I [would] go and hunt moose. I [would] get them for sure. [It is] easy to find a moose.

What was your family doing when you were growing up?

I don't remember. When I'm not old enough to go hunt, my mom, my mother used to go set rabbit snares and set nets. Someone gave us moose meat in wintertime.

When you were trapping and killed mink and muskrat, did you eat them?

Not the mink, no. We ate muskrat in the springtime. We caught muskrat in the springtime from April to May.

When you killed moose, did you ever smoke the meat?

Yah, yah, in the summer. Yah, we smoked the meat. [We made a] little bit of smoke and a hung it over a big fire, cooked it, and dried it. Then [we] hung it up again and let it dry a little bit [more]. [We] make a [birch bark] box and that's where we kept it. Yah, and when we wanted to eat, we took some of that meat, and cooked it. ... We boiled that meat and made a soup. Sometimes we [would] just take the little bit and chew on it. Yah, we had a good life. I should say I had a good life because I don't remember any hard times when I was growing up. I don't remember too much drinking. Sometime my stepfather [would] go in a place where they're drinking, once or maybe twice in the summer that's all. ... Nobody was making a beer, home-brew, or anything. Sometimes they [would] get whisky.

How about fish, did you ever smoke fish?

Yah. We smoked white fish ... and ... lake trout. ...

Did you crush the fish?

No. We just ate it, cooked it, and maybe sometimes boiled it. We just ate them like that.

Well, was this reserve here all the time or was it somewhere else before?

Yah, we lived all over like Aroland ... and O'Sullivan Lake. We came back and forth and lived over there. We just lived that way. Well, I don't remember any bad things. Nobody was hurting each other or anything like that. ...

Did you have your own house a long time ago?

Yah, I built my own house, a log house. That's the time I had one house when I got married. It was a log house. All the time we lived in a tent. [It was] easy to buy a tent for \$19.00 or maybe \$17.00. I got my own tent when I was 18 years or 17 years old. ... One time I bought a gramophone, it was \$11.25. Today it's \$200.00 or \$300.00. Everything was cheaper. When I was 14 years old, ... I started to chew snuff, Copenhagen. At that time, it was sixteen or fifteen cents a box. I bought some cigarettes for the girls too, sometimes when I had money. A small package of ten cigarettes cost 10¢. A little bigger box of 20 cigarettes was 20¢.

Community or reserve life today

2) Describe your life in your community today.

I like to live here. Every once in a while my family comes and visits. When I want I can cook up something so I can eat. I can make my own tea. Someone gets water. We have to pay a guy to get us good tea water from Angus Lake.

When did you move here in this building?

Over ten years [ago], I guess

To go back to your family there, are they still alive today? Your brothers and sisters?

I don't have my little brother here. I don't have my sister anymore. Jules my brother died. Jean died. I'm still alive.

So, what I was talking about ... before ... working. The doctor found out that I got a short wind in my chest at the last place I worked for forestry. ... The doctor said you can't work anymore in forestry because sometimes ... there's too much smoke when you put out a fire. ... We can't let you go in that place. So I ... started up the pay the phone right away and retired from work. Yah, that's the last place I worked. I worked in a lot of different places. I worked at a fishing camp where they had good fishing.

Was that the CNR you worked for?

Yah, I worked for the CNR too. The last [place] I worked at the Ministry [of Natural Resources]. I went all over before the highway [was built] before we went to that Indian Reserve ...

Community or reserve life in the future

3) Describe what your life might be like in your community or reserve in the future.

I really wouldn't know what's it like ... I just live the way I should live. I have a good time, I think. [I'm] having a good time now. [I'm] not lonesome or anything like that. ...

Do you still eat wild meat?

Yes, yes. That's all I wanted to eat today. I wish someone could cook fish. ... I like moose meat.

Do you eat geese too?

Yah, that's another good food. ... I'll eat geese.

Do you smoke geese too?

No. I don't get that much. I mean we don't get too many geese here to smoke. We just throw them in the freezer. When the time comes to cook them, I take a goose out the night before and cook them the next day.



O'Sullivan Lake Gas Bar and Variety

Did you have anything else that you wanted to say?

... I sing a little bit, yah. I don't go too many pow wows, but I still like it. I'm not a pow wow man, but I could sing. I got four songs to sing. An old lady gave to us ... gave them to me. When I was a boy, we sang at the place where we stayed. She said, "You'll have this song today. ... I give you this so you can sing for me. Our secret little plan." I still remember what it sounded like.

Did you pow wow sing a long time ago?

Yah, yah, the place where they get inside a wigwam. We make a fire ... Sometimes we get our drums ... Sometimes they just made it with a trunk. Not everybody got drums.

When you were a young small boy, did they do that too?

Yah, yah. That was long ago and I still remember it good. ...

Did you go to the Catholic Church?

Yes, Catholic Church.

Here in Nakina?

No, I don't go there. A Priest comes here [every] Sunday. You know, I try to tell the people that a Priest is coming. Nobody comes, just three of us. Five of us [came] yesterday, Baptise, Clement, me, and two boys. [There were only] five of us in the church. So, when things are like that it makes me worried that they are going some place else maybe to church in Nakina.

Ian Magiskan



(recorded August 11,
2003)

Community or reserve life in the past

1) Describe your life in your community or reserve in the past.

Okay, well, I was born in Geraldton, Ontario on July 26, 1974. I was originally born there, but I was raised in Aroland. I came from a big family with nine people. My dad was into logging. My mom passed away from cancer. I have one brother and six sisters. They all have children, except for me, my brother, and one of my sisters. While growing up it's a little harder back then because of housing was a problem. We didn't have good housing back then. There was no running water. We had to pretty much do everything outside like getting firewood and water. We used to haul water by hand. There is a river down there where we used to live, where the reserve is now. It was moved. It used to be down this way. That's where we used to get our water from to do everything, to keep clean, to do laundry, to drink, everything. That's how it was in the past. It was kind of harder, I think. It's not really as hard, but you had to do more. There's no water on the reserve. ... It's kind of different from now anyway, like today.

What was that river called?

Kowkash. It's still there. That's the way I knew it was called, but ... the older people had a different way of calling it (Kawashkagama River). That's what it's called and that's why it's called Kowkash River. There's a lake there. We used to go camping there a lot with my family when I was younger. But I don't think hardly anybody goes out there anymore as much as they used to. I think the community was more involved in doing things together because we're all bunched up so close. Now it's not really as much as it used to be. So I guess it's kind of good and a little bad.

Is that river on the map there?

Yeah, it should be.

Do you know how it's spelled?

K o w k a s h. Kowkash. I guess it goes down to where there's a lake called Lucy Lake. It goes down to our community. It goes down quite a way, like a long way. There are a lot of portages or ways you can get around. You can ... just get anywhere you want to go down

Biographic Information

Name: Ian Stuart Magiskan

Date of Birth: July 26, 1974

Place of Birth: Geraldton

Present Address: Aroland

Education: Grade 11

Interests/Hobbies: Sports, Hockey, and
Outdoor Activities

fishing or whatever. I've been down there, but not recently. I've been down that river, maybe three years ago was the last time. It seems like it's kind of changed when I'm getting older. I guess the family is doing other things and this is why we're slowly forgetting that about that side when doing these things. I guess or maybe it's just personal. But I know I noticed a lot of things changed when my parents got older and stuff. ... They want to go camping and stuff like that.

What's the name of the lake the river flows into?

Lucy Lake. It's not too bad there. It's got like, sucker, pike for sure, but it's a big lake to go camping [on]. It's a lot of work to get there though, portaging up and down, and up and down. It's different now than it was from the past for me anyway. ... My dad goes out of town. We're more into the city now, whatever that style of life is. I used to like doing all that stuff like hunting and trapping with him when I was young. Now we're not like that. It's pretty much stuff in the past. Growing up, I went to school in Nakina, Ontario at St. Bridget's School, a French elementary school. I went to high school in Geraldton, Ontario for maybe ... well I went for a year, but then we sort of went the wrong way for a while. I got in trouble after that. I went back. I kept failing, but I went back. We have a school here on our own reserve, but they offer independent [learning] courses. I was sort of taking them. I have just been working pretty much like that, but ... I had a little of bit trouble with the law, not anything serious. I've never been to jail or anything like that nor do I have a criminal record. I was raised by my grandmother too. [She] taught me a lot about what's right and wrong, I guess.

When you were growing up did you say you went with your dad trapping?

Yes, but I was mainly living with my grandparents. We used to go out camping a lot with my mother and my dad. I was always staying with my grandparents, living with them. We used to go out a lot. Pretty much everybody used to go camping a lot back then. Nowadays it's like, you really don't see that happening too much. Not like a lot of families going out at one time on this lake. I used to remember seeing that when I was younger. We had five or six families out there at once. And now you go out there, it's as if the lake is empty now. Anywhere you go it's kind of different.

So I guess it's mostly your grandparents who raised you?

My grandmother mainly, ever since I was maybe about four. I can remember I was probably about four, since I lived with her. She passed away a few years ago.

Who taught you to speak the Ojibway language?

My grandmother. My grandmother and grandfather. They always spoke that language to me when I was around. Even when I was a child, they never spoke English to me. That's where I picked it up. I could speak Ojibway and Cree and understand [it] good and all that. That's one thing I don't think I will lose. That part of me, like being Native, Ojibway, I [don't] think I'll lose my language anyway. I'm not going to let it happen, [I'm going to] keep speaking.

Did your siblings speak the language?

Nah, not as much, just my sister, my older sister speaks pretty good. My brother, right now, doesn't know how. He understands a few words here and there, but he can't speak it. Like, he understands Ojibway, but kind of has problems speaking it. But other than my brother, my brother-in-law, and my oldest sister, they speak it very good.

So what kind of animals did you trap?

Animals like marten and beaver, just marten and beaver, I guess, the main things.

Were you taught how to skin them too?

Yeah, we did pretty much everything, like trapping and hauling them and [learning] the easiest way of catching them and stuff like that. ... We ate beaver, like the meat of the beaver. But with marten, we never bothered with that. We just skinned it and that's about it with that. But with beaver, every time we got a beaver, we wouldn't sell the meat. It's just the pelt we took with the marten.

Do people still trap right now?

I don't know if anybody really does it anymore as much as they used to. I remember when I was younger; we used to go out a lot, maybe for months. Like, we would go out for a couple of months or something like that. We'd go trapping. We'd come back out and we go back in [again]. We never did that for a long time, maybe fifteen years. Like today when we go out trapping. ... I tried, but it's just not the same as it used to be, I guess. We go out camping and stuff like fishing and doing all that stuff, but not as much as I used to. I miss setting nets on ... a lake called Kash Lake (Kawashkagama Lake). We used to go out there and set a lot of nets. We used to get a lot of whitefish. We used to go moose hunting there with my dad too. We used to catch moose out there. I don't think nobody really does that any more though on this lake here. There's a trail that used to be there, but when we went there recently, we can't even walk through there anymore. It's not like we used to. There's a lot of hunting that still goes on in the spring like goose hunting and duck hunting, but you go by boat to get out there and by snow machine. I still remember when

we were kids and we used to haul all our camping gear over here to get to the boat launch. We hauled it right from our house. There would be a trail into the bush. We had to haul everything that we're taking like camping gear and stuff. I used to remember doing that. Now you can just throw the boat out wherever. It's kind of easy now. It makes it easier to get it done like that, but it seems like you still can't even do it, you know. There's not that push there like my parents used to do. We used to go and do whatever they said. You had to go out camping. We had to work hard to go out there and stuff like that.

When you were moose hunting, did you know how to skin them?

I went [hunting at a] young age, probably about twelve. I didn't actually do that until I was about sixteen. I watched how it was done for the first five times or so. Then I got a moose. There was nobody else there to do it but me, so I just did it. Yeah, I know how to do that. When I was younger, I used to [snare rabbits]. I noticed that like right now, when I go out in the winter for a walk snowshoeing that you can't even find one set of rabbit tracks out there nowadays. It's not like how it used to be back then. I think it has to do with the cutting: forestry. They cut so much that there's hardly anymore more bush now. The animals are not here. It's the same with my dad's trap line. You go out there now and it's like ten or fifteen minutes when you go there. It's just like nothing but bush, thick bush. You can drive in there and it's all cut over. There's nothing we could do to stop it. Those guys come there and cut it. I don't know that side of life. Like, I don't think you can use those things in the past as much as we can today or in the future.

A long time ago, do you remember if they had any drumming?

Yeah, I remember that, a lot of powwows and all that, but not like around here locally. Oh, they had things like sweat lodges and stuff like that. I don't remember seeing too much of that kind of stuff until later on, like when I got a little bit older. Everybody was going to church mainly. That's one thing I used to remember. We had a church here. We had priests, nuns, and everything. We had a church that got burned down here. It was a big white building. Kimberley-Clark put it there a long time ago when they were cutting wood. Nearly everybody used to go to mass every Sunday. The church was packed with everybody trying to get into one building. Now, when you think about it, there are only maybe five to four people tops at church. The drumming part there is coming around like drumming, powwows, and stuff. But the way of life, how we used to live like hunting, fishing and all that I don't know about. It's more recreational now, just to get out there. I don't think we can live like that, as we used to. I remember we used to live like that. Sometimes we used to run short because we had a big family. My dad and mom had to get out there and catch food for us to eat. We used to ... get by on it and stuff like that. Nowadays I don't think anybody would be able to get by like that.

Did you participate in any of the spiritual aspects of it?

I never really ... no ... no. I never danced. I never drummed. I never did any of those [things], but my dad went to events like that. Like, he'd been there watching it, but me I'm not too sure. I was raised up believing in the Christian side, because my dad, my parents, like they were so involved in the Christian side. It's like something near towards me, but I still know who I am and all that, being Aboriginal. There are a lot of things I still gotta learn about that, the powwow side and all that, and all that spiritual things there. Sometimes I go to these things, I'm doing something, and I don't know what I'm doing. Somebody tells me I'm doing something wrong you know. I don't know [how to] act at these things. I don't know that I shouldn't be doing that, you know. They'll tell me and I start to feel bad or something like that. ... It's kind of different, I think.

Is your dad still alive?

My dad, yah, he's alive, but he moved to the city. Well, he was in Jellico for a while and in Thunder Bay. He goes back and forth. He comes by occasionally to visit, but he's a very different person now too. He's not how he used to be. He's dealing with many things ... ever since my mom died. ... You see change. Everybody changed, I guess, in my family.

When they had this reserve, was it down the road somewhere?

It was just down the hill.

Do you know why they relocated here?

Well, there was housing down there in the past. There was a swamp there. They had housing around and a swamp in the middle, I think. I think that's why we moved the location up this way. It's on higher ground. I guess they're looking at ... other issues like ... environmental or health, I guess because there was a lot of swamp down there. That's where the houses were built. There was ... a little bit mould growing on them at the bottom there. It's the kind of houses that can do that too. It was chipboard housing. You could feel the wind, the cold wind, coming through [the walls] sometimes in winter back then. But right now, I think it's getting better anyway ... like the way we're living. We have running water and housing. We have more things like programs and stuff like that. I'd like to see more work though and more jobs for everybody. That would be good. That's the thing. Maybe a school would be nice. Somewhere kids can learn, I guess. I used to remember other things back then, like transportation, going back and forth on this road. The roads are very bad here in the winter. We got those big trucks hauling up and down the highway and you got a busload of kids in there. I used to go back and forth and back and forth, since probably Kindergarten right up to high school. You go through that all those years on and on and on. [It] kind of wears you down. It's a long ride. It shouldn't be

an excuse, but it's a rough ride. We gotta wake up at six o'clock just to get to school and you get over here by nine or something. You got your classes and stuff and when you're done school, you're so exhausted. Then you get on the bus and go through the same thing every day back and forth, back and forth. But right now, we got the school open for these kids and we still have to go through that. So it would be nice to see a school here, for kids in the future so they don't have to go through that. ... and have the opportunity of learning right on your reserve. I think it's getting a little bit better today. In the past there were more things happening.

Before the community relocated there, where did they get their water?

We used to transport water by truck or when we didn't have a truck, we had to walk. We had these pails, you know, like we had those kind of pails where you got your lard. ... [We would] grab a couple of those, walk down the river, just dip it in, and pull it out. That's where it's kind of hard because you gotta walk maybe a mile that way, maybe two miles that way, and two miles back. So altogether, you're walking about five, six miles with two pails of water. You did this just to get yourselves some water. Some people had vehicles, so they just loaded up all their pails and drove down the hill, filled them up, and brought them back up. If you didn't have that, you had to walk to get it. We had a couple of pumps, but the water through those pumps weren't [safe]. I don't think they were really safe to drink. They weren't electrical pumps. They were just like those old hand pumps there, the ones you compress by hand, I guess. We had a couple of those and that's about it. Later on they got those pump hoses, but they didn't really last too long. They were electrical.

Did you have a sewer system back then?

No. We made outhouses. We made them in the bush. That's about it. We dug up holes [for them].

Community or reserve life today

2) Describe your life in your community today.

Right now for me, it's not too bad. ... It could be a little better. I think it's pretty good, for me anyway, but ... some people could see it a lot or maybe different. I guess [we could] work on a few other things, like something for the youth. That's what I'm currently working on as a youth worker. I'm trying to work something out for the youth and be current. You can try to do something positive and maybe influence the youth to do something in the future too, and pass it on. Today ... it's kind of a roller coaster and it's not too bad. Some days are good; some days are bad, stuff like that. It's good to be alive, I guess. It's one way to work, but there are a lot of reserves too that have a lot of other things like suicide. That's one thing we don't have a problem with here on our reserve

today. Nobody ever wants to do that; nobody wants to go through with it. That's one thing about our reserve. I think there are a lot of people that are kind of educated pretty good about life and stuff [about] what's wrong and what's not. ... We have a lot of potential, I think, in my reserve to make it a better place in the future with the right people. Not just from people today, but from the youth and even from the old people. That's where I learned a lot of things through the older people like the way of life. Then there's a side where you have to know how to read, write, and understand what's going on in the world. You gotta learn that from somewhere else. I guess they'll show you one side of life, troubles of life and stuff like that. You know it kind of works out both ways, I think.

Is there anything on the reserve for youth to do, like, do they have a pool hall?

We had stuff like that like ... but it didn't really workout as much. ... I think it's just a participation thing. It's kind of hard to get the youth involved in things when they didn't want to do it. The only way to get them to do it is if you show them that you want to do something. They want to really do something instead of just sitting there and not doing anything at all, you know just watching. We had stuff like that when we were growing up, not really as much, but I think it's gonna change anyway.

Are there Native teachers teaching the Native language to the students?

Yeah. [We have a Native language teacher] at the elementary school. That's how far as we go right now. We have no high school here, but in Geraldton, they have a Native language teacher. Now we have one here for kids right now. Some of these kids speak pretty good.



Johnny Therriault Memorial School

I see a lot of logging trucks go by here, do you know where they come from?

No. ... It wasn't like that, you know, a long time ago. That's what I notice. You can probably count maybe ten to twenty trucks just riding down the road when they go back and forth. ... I used to remember driving down there. It was just bush, nothing but trees. ... It's pretty much almost all gone and the resources that were taken from there too, like from the land in here, there's just nothing coming back. You know, it's just as if they keep coming in here and taking the resources from here and barreling down [the road]. Who knows where all the money from that wood is going? Some of these [big] trucks that I see have Quebec licenses. I don't see them coming back to our community, any of them, or any reserve around here.

Do you know the places where they're logging and is that your traditional land?

It's hard to say because there are two ways you can look at it: from their way and from our way. In the past, there were people who were here a long time ago before all the logging and all the roads came. I believe that. I think that we used to go out there to go camping and do all kinds of stuff until the roads came and stuff like that. But we had no say or anything like that to stop them. ... There are a lot of places out there were our people used to remember going. ... I used to hear some of the older people talk and stuff like that. But that's just the way it is, I guess. They made the laws and stuff like that. But, I don't know. I think some of it should at least come into the local reserves. ... I think that's not right about logging and forestry. It's just like that all over, I think, where they're taking resources from nearby reserves or anything like that. There's nothing coming to these reserves. All the money's going down over there to some guy in some office. Later on after this is all gone, there's gonna be nothing here. There'll be no trees or things like that. We'll look at ourselves and wonder why we didn't do anything about it. But I think that's gonna change some day. It's gotta. [We] just gotta get the right people or something like that to unite them and get all these reserves together. I believe that. It's going on like this all across Canada, I think, not just here in Long Lake, like fishing rights up in New Brunswick or Nova Scotia. They went through things like that. You can see it on TV or even like Oka or stuff like that guy who was shot there at Ipperwash or something like that. ... After that, nobody wanted to do anything with them. Everybody got scared, I think, by [people] fighting for Native land and having so many Natives together doing something. I don't know. I think that's the future. We all gotta get together and unite and come up with one plan, like every reserve, and get everybody involved and stuff like that. I guess [we need] more education and finding a way to do other things for people to grow. That's the right thing. But we can't do that though unless we get everybody to ... inform everybody [about] what's going on around here. I'm still young. ... But there's not so much I can do because I'm a youth. I think that when you're a youth, people don't take

you seriously sometimes, they'll laugh at you because you're at a young age and things like that. It just comes with the territory.

Is Nakina Forest Products there?

There is Nakina Forest Products, but Buchanan [is who we have] a lot of disputes with in the past. But people around here, they pretty much like to fight and stand up for something because we had a few blockades and stuff like that. I don't know if anything really got resolved through it, but I think statements were made out of that. ...

If people want to work in the mill, do they need their high school education?

They usually go with their high school diploma or three years work experience. They give you an evaluation, an interview, and if you pass all these things, they give you a three-month probation period working there. Then they give you a drug test and if you pass that and clear all that stuff, then you climb aboard.

So there are some people from the community working there?

Right now there's some people working there, but I think there could be more, not half anyway, maybe about one third of the community, mostly male.

Did you ever see young ladies to do anything on the reserve here?

No. There's not really a place where they can go and do stuff like that. I think they want to find something to do together, like work with each other. I think there might be something there for them, like maybe a daycare centre or something like that where they can work in there, I don't know. It's kind of a little hard to be a female anywhere, I think. I don't know.

Does the reserve have its own policing?

Yah, NAPS (Nishnawbe Aski Police Service). Yah, we have our own police here. We [used to] have two police officers, but I'm not too sure right now. I think we just have one right now. I don't know what happened.

Is it good, when reserves have their own police?

It's kind of weird. It doesn't really work out, I don't think. I guess you can say, it's a little a bit better, but sometimes it could be more, I don't know. I think it was better with the old system we had, but I don't know. I think we just need different police officers from other reserves working here. It doesn't really work out when you have people working in communities as police officers.

Do those police officers live here on the reserve?

They live here. They're originally from here.

Where is the police office located?

The police detachment is in Nakina, Ontario.

Is that where they operate?

Yah, they come out here and ride around patrolling, but their office is in Nakina. It was originally an OPP police station, until NAPS got in here and the OPP left Nakina. I guess, they're in Geraldton though, but NAPS are, I guess you can say, still working in Nakina too.

Community or reserve life in the future

3) Describe what your life might be like in your community or reserve in the future.

I think it would be better than what it is now, but it's gonna be a lot of hard work anyway because it's kind of a slow process, I think. But you just keep going ... and I think it will get better. Right now, it's not too bad. I think it can be better. I think I see it. I think I see it's gonna get better for everybody. ... I guess things will get better, [if we] work with our surrounding communities, get to know them, get involved, and stuff like that. I think it will get better if we all work together. That's what I think about the future. But the way of life like hunting, trapping, and all that, I'm not too sure about that. Everything is kind of changing, I think. I don't know if hunting, trapping, and stuff like that are gonna be around too long. It will be more [of a] recreational thing I believe, but it would be nice to preserve that way of life. It's [not] only logging and things going on around here though, but pretty much up north. A lot of cutting [is] going on.

Do you think there are any minerals around this area?

Minerals? I'm not too sure about that around here.

So, they're not doing any drilling?

No drilling or stuff like that. No, it's all cutting pretty much around here. ... Maybe there are resources around here like that, but nobody gets involved. It's so focused on logging. Just about everybody wants to start a business in logging. But I think there's a lot of lakes and things around here that could be used instead of logging. Why not reserve them and maybe open up tourism camps or stuff like that and make money? [Why not] go that way instead of destroying the land around here ... preserve it and keep it there? ... This is what I think would be nice, but that's just my opinion. But to get people to see things like that, I think that would be good.

Do you think the community is going to get bigger?

I think it is getting bigger. ... There are a lot of children running around. I think it is a lot bigger than what it was in the past, but some people move. They leave the reserve. Some people come back when they get older. Some people don't come back. But I think the population is gonna get bigger. ... I think that it's not just for the reserve, but for everybody in Canada that's Aboriginal. ... Some day it's gonna be all multi-cultural people like half-breeds. They look like somebody from a different race. It's gonna get all mixed and we're gonna forget who's Aboriginal and who's this and that in thirty or forty years. That's just my thought. I'm not saying that this is what's gonna happen. We're not gonna know who's Aboriginal anymore.

What is your perspective on when they say that the youth are going to be our future leaders?

My perspective [is] I think that it will happen because when you look at it nowadays kids, the youth, are aware of what's going on. They see this and that at a younger age. I think they understand a lot of things that they shouldn't at an early age. I think it's gonna happen, stuff like that anyway. I think it's gonna change. I know there are people that wouldn't want to change, but I think it will change. Sometimes it is going to happen. I don't know when because I know it's done differently. ... The elders want things to go back to the way they used to be. I believe and I respect that. But then there's the youth who want to expand, you know, they wanna ... try things out and see what happens. Maybe it will get better or maybe it won't. Sometimes you gotta take chances I believe. Maybe it will be good for you or good for me. Now we'll grow I guess.

Are you involved in any kind of politics or in the youth councils?

I recently started this job last week, but [before that] I was involved nearly every day with youth counseling and stuff like that. When I was younger, I wasn't really paying attention to that, but when I got a little bit older like as we go on and on, you start to think more about these things. Not just things that's happening for the youth, but everything. I guess I'm involved in Aboriginal issues. ... I guess you could say that when I was a little bit younger I wasn't too involved in that. But as I got a little bit older, maybe when I was about 20 or 22, I started thinking more like what can I do to change this and that. But when you're at a young age, it's kind of hard to do that because ... you sort of have a group of older people and you respect these older people so much. ... I don't know how you can say it, like, you're not too sure what their reaction is gonna be to about what you want to do, you know, because they look at you like a child, because they watched you grow. To see you ... all of a sudden doing that and then to throw that in their faces is something new, I guess. You [don't] know what kind of reaction you're gonna get, maybe sometimes they'll listen to you or some will laugh, things like that. But it doesn't bother me as much

anymore. When I was younger, if somebody laughed at me when I tried to do something, I'd get mad, you know. ... And now when somebody does that, I just like let it go and just keep doing what I'm good at doing. I'll prove these people wrong. We'll try to do something like that. That's the way I think.

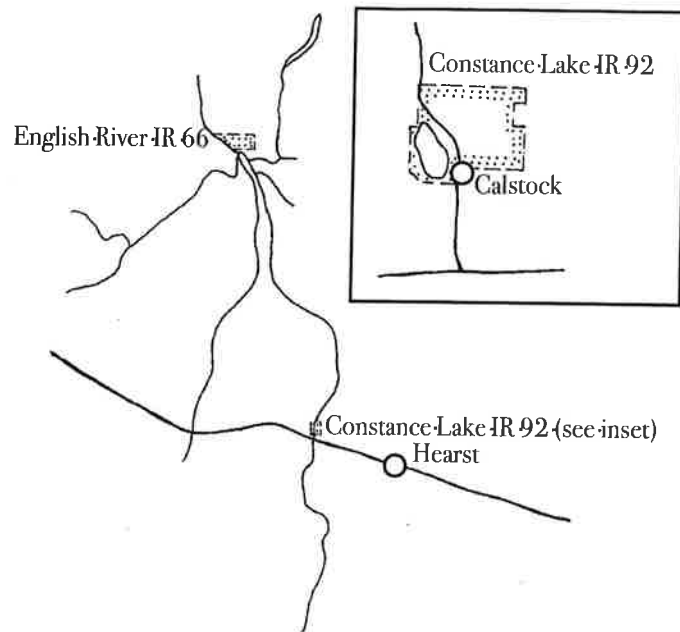


Aroland First Nation Band Office

3

Constance Lake First Nation

P.O. Box 4000
Calstock, ON
POL 1B0



The Constance First Nation is located on the Constance Lake Indian Reserve 92 approximately 32 kilometres west of Hearst, Ontario. This reserve, established in 1945, is about 3,110 hectares (12 square miles) in size. Most of the population lives in the community of Calstock found on Constance Lake Indian Reserve 92. The original reserve, English River Indian Reserve 66, was set aside as part of the James Bay Treaty (Treaty #9) made in 1905. This reserve, on the east bank of the Kenogami River, is approximately 3,108 hectares (12 square miles) in size. However, due to its remoteness and unsuitability of the land found there, the band members moved to Pagwa. The Constance Lake Indian Reserve 92 was formed for the people living at Pagwa and Calstock following negotiations with the Federal and Provincial governments.

Population: 1,432 registered band members with 702 people living on-reserve (March, 2006)

Languages: English, Cree, and Ojibway

The Constance Lake First Nation's past and current economic development projects include the construction of the Constance Lake Holistic Education Centre, a senior's complex, and on-reserve housing. In addition, several local area businesses such as Lecour's Lumber, a general store, a convenience store, and a gas bar have appeared in recent years.

Schedule of Reserves – Treaty No. 9 – 1905**English River**

“ In the province of Ontario, beginning at a point on the Kenogami or English river, three miles below the Hudson’s Bay Company’s post, known as English River post, on the east side of the river, thence down stream two miles and with sufficient depth to give an area of twelve square miles.”

—from *The James Bay Treaty (Treaty No. 9)*, 1964, pp. 12



English River Post, Hilton, E. George (photographer), 1976/128/177 (N8298), Hudson’s Bay Company Archives

Lottie Bird



(recorded June 13,
2001)

Community or reserve life in the past

*1) Describe your life
in your community or
reserve in the past.*

As far as I can remember, I was born in what is called Hawley Lake near Winisk. That's where I was born. We worked all the time, my parents and my siblings. We did not stay in the communities where the white people stayed; we stayed in the Native ones. There were ten of us in my family. We did what was done all the time when winter comes: hunting. That's what we were taught to do, to hunt, to survive on our own, all the girls and the boys too. It was very nice where we stayed during the winter. We made our house very good as our father had taught us. ... He made a wigwam as tall as tall as the trees. It was nice and warm. We split logs using them for the sides. Many years would go by when using the wigwam. It was never cold in the wintertime. We would sleep any place when we would be trapping. When we would set a net, we would just sleep anywhere in wintertime even when it was cold. We tried to help our father do things for us to survive. We never wished anything to eat. We never ran short of anything. All of us worked in a good way.

My father would salt many Snow geese in the fall. Sometimes he would fill up four big barrels when he would be salting [them]. They would [also] dry them and make smoke meat from them. They would freeze Snow geese whole and fish also. They would prepare things that would be used for winter that could be eaten and that dogs could eat. They killed seals. They would make a food cache where they put seals. Seals [would be used] for dogs to eat in winter. I never saw anything run short during that time of our lives. To wish something to eat, I was not like that during my life. I never knew [us] to run short of anything during the time we lived with my father.

I am eighty-one years old now. I got married when I was twenty-one. I got married in Attawapiskat. It never occurred to me that someone from far away would come, see me, and marry me. The one that I married came from Pagwa. He had seen me a long time ago

Biographic Information

Name: Lottie Bird
Date of Birth: September 22, 1912
Place of Birth: Attawapiskat (Ekwan River area)
Present Address: Constance Lake First Nation
Maiden Name: Chookomolin
Name of Spouse: Peter Bird
Number of Children: 8 (4 still alive)
Grandchildren: 15
Great-grandchildren: 19
Number of Years Married: 50
Education: none
Interests/Hobbies: Anything
note: Lottie Bird passed away on January 11, 2002

when I was young. I must have been around eighteen years old when I saw him. He had wanted me to marry him, but my mother and father did not let me. They told me I was too young. I was twenty-one years old when I got married. We went up north and stayed for two years at Kapuskao. I think it was nineteen thirty-seven when we were up the river at Kapuskao. We went far up the river. We lived throughout there and never wished for anything, even when we did that and lived in the bush.

There were a lot of moose where we went. There were no inhabitants and there was nothing that could be had for furs. There were not many mink, beaver, and otter. There was nothing much of that sort that could be had for furs. We always ate in a good way. When there were a lot of moose, there was plenty of meat. We came to Fort Albany after the ice broke up. We stayed for two months in Fort Albany at the time when the school was being constructed. My husband worked there. ... We came up the river when my son, who is in the hospital now, was a baby. He must have been two years old or three years old when we came up the river. I came down river twice. We came down river one time with a wide stern. We went with David Wynne who was going down river. [We] helped him with his things when he was taking them down river to make a store in Fort Albany. I came back up the river and I never went back [down] again. After I came back up the river ... we stayed at Pagwa.

We stayed in the bush at the onset of winter. We came over here around nineteen thirty-eight. I never left from there again after that. We stayed for a while, once, about six miles east of here where there was a sawmill. ... That's where my husband worked for four years. Then the company moved here to the reserve. This reserve was already taken around nineteen forty-one. I think it was nineteen forty-one when this reserve was taken. The reserve was over at place called Mammamattawa up the river. It was around nineteen thirty-eight when we came here. We only lived at Hawley Lake for a while. This is where we stayed and I think it was around nineteen forty-five when people from Pagwa began to come into the reserve to live. We didn't come here until ... nineteen forty-seven or nineteen forty-eight. We lived throughout. We didn't come here soon. We just stayed around here in the bush in the summer.

I think it was almost thirty years that my late husband worked for the MNR (Ministry of Natural Resources) in summertime. In winter, he trapped. Sometimes he staked claims trying to find minerals in the ground. He did that all over, up the river, down south, and to Mattice in the north. That's what he did. He made grids, small grids. He quit working in nineteen sixty-nine. He worked at the MNR watching out for fires and going up a tower. I think he worked there for twenty-five or maybe thirty summers. His daughter replaced

him once he left. His daughter replaced him for one year, one summer, and then the towers closed down. [Then] planes were used when on the look out for fires.

This is where my children went to school. My children tried to go to school in MacIntosh at the Native school. The Ojibways went to school in Winnipeg before that. My son was there for one year. He was there for one year and a half and my daughter, that's away right now, was there for a year. The other one was there for a year. The minister began to teach here all the time and my children began to go to school here until they reached Grade 8. They never were hit when they went to school, never. I don't know how they were treated when they were going to school at MacIntosh. My son would say children abused him. He said Ojibway children abused him when he was there. This is where they went to school. We put them in the high school. There was no help yet for children when they went to high school. The government did not pay for children when they went to school yet. He (the government) was giving them welfare and paying for books. We paid for books when they went in the hole and when they were going to school. We paid their way too when they came home for the holidays and went back again. We stood up to everything and they all went to high school. There were not very many other children who went to high school, [except] those whose parents had paid them through. Not many children went to high school at the time my children went to school. All of my children finished school. Then the children received help and had their way paid and received money ... The government wanted to help them after they had finished school. My children finished school already and we stood up for them when they were going to school. We paid for their return and went to pick them up. Two of them went to school in Thunder Bay, two in Geraldton, and one in Toronto. My son here did not go to school all the way. He did not go to high school. He helped us. He worked on the highway and is in the hospital now. He didn't go to school too much. I think he went as far as Grade eight.

When I got to be an old lady, I worked for the MNR. I don't know how many years I worked at the MNR. That's where I worked even though I did not go to school. That's the only place I worked. I did not work at any other place, however I would sometimes cook for people at a tourist camp. I would cook for tourists. That's what I did when we were at the lake where my late husband worked. There was a tourist camp there and I cooked for them. I made bread and fed them bread when the store was too far away or when they brought their own supplies and ran short. We would use a plane whenever we needed anything or when we were too lazy to paddle. It was twelve miles north of Hearst where we stayed in summertime. The lake was big and that's where I looked after my children. This was where I raised up my children in the summer. I taught them, we taught them, what to do in the bush, to paddle, to set snares, to put an axe head on a handle, and to play with

saws. That's what we did with them when they were small. They were about sixteen years old when we left them and we went to town. [Otherwise] they would have come in the boat that we paddled. They were good when they paddled when dealing with a boat.

Once we came in here, my husband worked out west. He was sent elsewhere. It did not seem far from where we were at the last place he worked. This is where we stayed. The government did not help us with anything too much. We were never given welfare at all. It wasn't until we got to the point when he was getting cheques. I was given seventy dollars when I was looking after one child. My children were living separately. I was given almost seventy dollars before I was to get a cheque. There were two of us.

Do you know Daniel Paulmartin?

Daniel Paulmartin, Joseph Paulmartin's son, that's the child I raised. I raised two boys that were small until they were grown men. We just kept them. They were not given any welfare either. I fed them. This is where I stayed up to now. I was given a house across the road. That was the first house I was given. There were just two [of us] when I was looking after seven children and they were going to school. It was in nineteen sixty-nine when I was given this house. I never got another one. We just fixed it up. I think it was fixed up twice since I have been here. They changed the thing that is here on the floor now. The government did not back me up after my husband passed away. I put everything here to keep my house warm inside and outside. We paid for everything here. We paid for the water lines when they put it in. We paid for the bathtub in the washroom. I never spent much through the government. The only time I spent anything through him (the government) was from the old age pension. The same thing happened to my father. I never, never heard my father talk about welfare, this thing called welfare, a long time ago. I never heard people long ago talk about this thing or ask the white people to help them out with things. I never saw any white people when I was young, only the Hudson's Bay manager. He's the only white person that we saw, the Hudson's Bay manager. The one who looks after the store. There were not very many white people to be seen where we stayed up north. Sometimes they would come there by dog team when they came from Attawapiskat ... collecting furs during the wintertime. They started from Attawapiskat and went as far as Winisk when they were going around the bay. I wonder how long they were gone. [The bay] is quite big.

That's how much I can talk about ... the people that lived long ago as far as I can remember. I never heard white people mentioned or the government mentioned in helping with things, never. People were on their own a long time ago. They never wished for anything that they could use. They were rich. They had money too. They had money

when they were Native people. We had money. My father and uncle had money too. They had money only when they trapped. They never worked and everyone would come to Attawapiskat in summertime. They would come from up north around June to Attawapiskat where they would have holy prayers. They would have holy prayers for two weeks. They would stay there for two months until the tenth of August. That's when everyone would go back. Everyone would go back to where they would spend their winter They stayed in the bush all year. They would take things with them that they used during the winter. When they ran short, they would get some more from far away. They walked far when they would go and get something.

A boat would go where my father loaded his things. He went to Winisk when there was a Hudson's Bay store there. A boat left from here to Kashechewan. That's where my father would load up his things. They would unload his things over where we stayed and it was to last us for a year. Flour, tea, sugar, and lard were used a long time ago and oats also. The other things that were eaten now were not seen a long time ago. Bologna, sausage, and wieners were not seen before, but there really was corned beef then. Corned beef was there and beans too. I think beans in the cans. Sometimes I would see them when they had them at the store. I never saw sweet stuff displayed like the way it is now. Maybe sometimes my father would open up one jar of jam a year. We were not given any sweet things, but sugar was used. Even though we did not run short of those things, we were not allowed to use much of those things like jam, syrup, and molasses. Those were at the store, but no [one] bought those things too much. We were fed meat. It is still the same for me today. I can't eat store food. I can't eat [store food] yet and I don't. I still haven't eaten eggs; maybe I might eat two eggs this year. I don't eat potatoes. I only eat meat moose, rabbits, and ducks. People give me those kinds of food that I eat. They give them to me. They bought in some Canada geese for me to eat yesterday. That's about all I can say, I can't say too much. When I was living then we made moose hides. When I sewed, I sold moccasins, mittens, and coats when I made them. I used beads. Sometimes when I sold them, they would come up to one thousand [dollars]. I still do that. I still sew and I still sell quilts. I still make moccasins even at my age. Pretty soon I will be eighty-nine. In one more month, I will be eighty-nine years old ... I can't hardly walk because I'm getting too old. That's why I can't walk around. I have sore legs. It's been a long time since I had sore legs. I can't walk around. I just use those steel things are over there when I walk around, when I walk around inside. I made bread too. I used to sell bread. It's been two weeks since I quit making bread The government doesn't help me much when I am sitting here. We pay for everything. We pay for the hydro, firewood, and water. I pay for the grass being cut. There is someone in the community who cuts the grass outside. I paid that person before it was done. I pay at the band office when I pay for the water.

And for my children, they are all living independently. Two of my daughters are in Thunder Bay. There are only four of [my] children who are living now. One of them, her husband passed away. It's been five [years] since she's been alone now and she is supporting herself. She works up north traveling to the reserves by plane. The youngest one works in Thunder Bay. She's the one married to Bentley Cheechoo. My other daughter's husband came from Mattice. He's half white and half Indian. ... She has six children. That's one of her daughters who's here with me while my daughter is away out west. My granddaughter is looking for work now that she is finished going to school. She has put on her cap trying to be a nurse. She is trying to find work at the school. She is not trying to find work at the clinic where there are nurses. That's all I can say.



Gas Bar

It was fun a long time ago when walking around, moving around, and getting up in the morning. Everyone living in tents could be heard when they prayed every day. You could hear people praying whenever they would get up in the morning in their tents. It was the same thing in the evening. They didn't wait to have prayer services. They prayed wherever they were in their homes. That's what was done long ago. There was no work done on Sunday a long time ago. They stayed home even if there were things to do. They rested on Sunday. They prayed three times on Sunday: in the morning, in the afternoon, and in the evening again. That's what was done a long time ago. Those things that the people did are missed—how they [were] taught. Now no one goes to church services. No one goes inside church of the people who [are] living now. Even when they are healthy they are not able to go to church. I don't know what's happening. Even when a priest comes in no one goes. There would be lots of people in church a long time ago. They would be packed in the

small church they had in Attawapiskat a long time ago before there was a church there. They could see peoples' heads looking inside through the windows while they were having a service. Sometimes they would have services three times a day when there wasn't enough room. Men would pray separately and the women would pray separately. Women prayed early. Men wouldn't pray until ten o'clock. One didn't eat before receiving communion. That's what was done too. ... That church which was destroyed would be emptied twice a long time ago. It was really nice inside that church. The bells sounded nice too. It would ring early in the morning. It rang at six o'clock. Everyone would jump out of bed making the sign of the cross at six o'clock. It was called waking each other up when they said the angelus individually in groups. Everyone would jump out of bed making the sign of the cross when the bell rang. It rang again [at noon] and it rang in the same way. Everyone would make the sign of the cross when it rang again at noon. And now, nothing. It's as if nothing is thought of when living now. Living together with someone that is being done now was not done a long time ago. Girls were not promiscuous a long time ago. They watched everything they did. Now it is not like that. Things look astray when living now. The people who are married just leave each other and then they go to someone else. They leave someone that they married. They do not adhere to what was said. Only when someone dies can they break what they had vowed. Now, they just leave each other behind. Then they go and live together with another man or woman, just to live together.

It is missed when reminiscing about the things that were done in the past about the people did that lived before. When you look at the way people live now, it's as if they don't know someone is looking at them. It seems life is crazy when living now. People leave each other and they go to someone else. It's as if they don't know what they vowed, what they said in church. That's how they look like now when living. They look pitiful. ... I dealt with many children when I raised them up. I raised three young men when I raised my own family. One called Joey; I took him when he was a baby and Daniel, Raphael Paulmartin's son. ... I think he was five years old when he was given to me. I took him. I looked after him. The government did not help me at all, nothing. I looked after them myself. It is the same thing for the other one. I was getting five dollars family allowance for the other one. Family allowance was five dollars a long time ago and it is big[ger] now. I looked after many children. I looked after children who were discarded also. I just did it. I felt good when I worked. The children that I looked after don't forget me. Daniel calls me. He is in Attawapiskat. He phones me. He tried to come back home but I am unable to support him. I couldn't look after him that's why I didn't agree with him when he wanted to come back home. That's enough. I'm tired.

Community or reserve life today*2) Describe your life in your community or reserve today.*

When we first came here to stay, it was a lot of fun. It was quiet when the reserve was first here. The children would not do things out of the ordinary. They did not play. They did not hang around on the road. The children played out in the bush when they played. They did not play on the road. It is not like when they stand around, playing on the road, and breaking things. They did not do that a long time ago. ... There were a lot of children here that the minister taught. There was a Native minister who had taught here. Now children are kind of mischievous, as if there was no one looking after them. The people coming in here are from the outside all over. It was very quiet here before the people started coming in here that are from elsewhere. Doors were never closed during the night in the homes. My door was always left open during the night when it was hot. The people never did anything to things or to steal. That was not there. ... It was never heard of the children doing anything out of the ordinary. The minister that taught them counseled them. They were talked to beforehand. When there a recreation day for them they were told not to do anything wrong. They were told don't bother with anything. They were told to play when it was recreation day. They would play at the first of November... . The minister would always remind them not to do anything bad. ... The minister who taught them cautioned them on that. The minister who taught here, taught very well. Now it is crazy. Nothing can't be left alone outside. Children are mischievous if they are not cared for. That's how children are. They are being jailed every so often. No one can talk to their children, [it is] not like the way it was a long time ago when someone had control over their children. It can't be done now. The police will appear when someone wants to go up against their children. They want to back up children who are doing the wrong thing. No one can talk to their children. Children get their mothers, their parents, in trouble when they do that. ... The police should not be here when that is done. ... That's what I think. The police should not be here when they just do things to the elders when they just want to look after their children in a good way. I knew that he did. He put a woman in jail when she wanted to control her child. The child got her mother in trouble and that should not happen. That's not how the law says that the Lord made. The law states that whoever looks after their children in a good way a child [will] respect their parents. That's what the law says when it was written. The government is breaking all the laws that Chrétien made when he backs up children that don't do anything right and when the people want to stop their children. That's what I think about all the time. How are the children supposed to live right when that is done? It is going to get worse. It will get worse. Maybe children will eventually kill their parents. That's what I think when I say that. When a child's parents reprimand them a little they go and tell the police. My children did not do that to me. My children are old now. The youngest one is almost forty, fifty years old. They all lived in a

good way when they supported me. The children lived in a good way that are of the age category of my children. Now they are all mischievous. No one can look after their children, even when one tries to look after them. When someone goes to look for them and they want to take their children home and when they don't want to go home they can't do anything when the police backs up the children. What does that look like? That's what I don't know.

A long time ago, the police used to help when looking after the children. I don't know what is being done today. I don't understand what is being done. It will get worse if no one is allowed to look after their children. It will only get crazier. No one can even leave their house alone. Children start breaking into a house when someone goes out for a while. No one can't even leave their house for one night. That can't be done anymore when someone wants to go somewhere and leave their house. Someone is required to look after the house when going out. The houses would be vacant for long periods of time. Sometimes our house would be vacant the whole summer when we left in May and wouldn't come back until October. We weren't bothered by anything about our house. That was after we came. ... If we had a tent set up and we left for a while even going into town for a while, someone would have taken off with the tent. That's where that comes from: the way the children are now. ... They don't care what they do or if something will come back to them when they do anything. That's how life is like when living today. After we came in here, no one bothered with anything that was left behind. Our house was standing all summer when we left it. When we left it without boarding up the windows, nothing was ever bothered [with]. And now if someone goes out for a while or when someone goes to town for a while, somebody will have already gone inside by the time they have returned home. That's true what I am telling about where I am residing. I wonder if that happens all over?



Constance Lake First Nation

Community or reserve life in the future

3) Describe what life might be like in your community or reserve in the future.

It will only get worse. The way I look at it, life [today it] will only get worse. One can't give anything to their children. The children don't listen when talked to and that's why that will be happening. Look at that when someone left for a while. No one broke anything or stole anything. That was not done a long time ago. No one grabbed anything here [that was outside]. That was not done a long time ago. That's why I say that it will only get worse. I know that's going to happen. It is going to get worse. That's what I see when I say that. I know that's going to happen. We may never find peace in our lifetime, like how it was for us in the past when things went well when we were living. Things went well for us when we living. Things were not hard for us. It was like that in the past, but it is not like that now. Everything is changing.



Constance Lake Holistic Education Centre

My grandson is giving me a hard time. He doesn't understand me when I am not able to speak English very well. He doesn't understand anything at all that is being spoken. He just looks at me when I talk to him, but he is not doing anything out of the ordinary yet. He must be almost thirty years old. I wonder what next. That's what I think. It used to be peaceful a long time ago when living. No one was seen to work on Sunday. [Today] no one knows when it's a Sunday. They don't even go to church. How is it going to be in the future? It is going to get crazier. That's what's going to happen when living. It is happening not only here. It is like that where the white people live. It is not only like that where the Native people live. That's it. I can't say anything [else].

Matthew Sutherland



(recorded June 13,
2001)

Community or reserve life in the past

*1) Describe your life
in your community or
reserve in the past.*

When we came here to stay at Calstock, we came from a place called Pagwa River by the railroad tracks. I came here to Calstock when I was young. I was maybe six or seven years old. There were a lot of people here. There was no reserve yet. People were living in tents then and that's what was done. There was a station by the tracks and people were cutting four-foot wood and peeling them during summer. During winter, people trapped. There started to be a lot of people who were living in tents by the railroad tracks at Calstock. From what I remember, people would always work during the summer, cutting wood. There eventually was a sawmill when the Frenchmen cut wood. Native people were hired to work at the sawmill. There began to be a lot of people at Calstock.

The Indian agent came and he decided a reserve would be [established] here and that's when we came here by the river. It is called Constance Lake. That's when the reserve was made and they began to build houses. There began to be many people living here. They began to have hydro wires and they began to have a school. I went to school for a while also. I only went as far as Grade seven or eight. I worked at the sawmill when I was a young man. That's where I worked. I worked for a long time at the sawmill and it began to grow. There were a lot of people who worked there at the sawmill: loggers and the ones who chopped trees down. They used horses a long time ago when they logged in the bush. That's what I did also when I worked in the bush. They were logging using handsaws. There were no chainsaws yet. We would only use handsaws when we worked in the bush.

There eventually began to be a lot of people that came here looking for work and they had work. That's what happened in the past from what I know when I was a young man. There eventually began to be a lot of people here and they made a road. There began to be lots of hydro wires and people worked at the sawmill all the time. A lot of the young people today that are from the community are working as loggers in the bush and things are going well for them. When they do that when they are supporting themselves and they make a lot of

Biographic Information

Name: Matthew Sutherland
Date of Birth: July 4, 1937
Place of Birth: Hearst
Present Address: Constance Lake First Nation
Name of Spouse: Juliet
Number of Children: 6
Grandchildren: 4
Number of Years Married: 22
Education: Grade 7
Interests/Hobbies: Fishing, Hunting Moose,
and Snaring Rabbits

money. A lot of the people have vehicles that they use to drive around. They have trucks for logging.

I think things went well for them when the white people gave the Native people opportunities. They could survive for themselves. People could look after their jobs in a good way, just like the way employers look after people.

I also think that the young people, who are living here today, are losing their language. There are no more [young people] who can speak the language. The young people always speak English all the time, but I think they understand when they are being spoken to. They don't want to speak Indian when being spoken to in the Native language. ... I don't want them to lose the way the people lived, the speaking of it anyway.

I know that they will always have white man's jobs when they work. It is not like the way our grandfathers did in the past when they survived in the bush, when they trapped and hunted. I don't think that is being done too much now. The young people now do white man's ways when somebody does something. They lose their language because they always speak in English, but I think things will go well for them in the future, employment wise, if anyone wants to work. I am sorry when the youth are not able to speak in Cree, when they always use the English language when they speak. I am going to make my story short this morning.



Lecours Lumber Company

Community or reserve life today

2) Describe your life in your community or reserve today.

I think life is easy now for everyone in the community when we have things: television and telephone. We also have a radio, Wawatay radio, if anyone within the community here in Constance Lake wants to say anything, they can speak, and it goes on air. I think life is good now.

When did you start interpreting?

Maybe about six years, I have interpreted about six years now for the court.

Community or reserve life in the future

3) Describe your life in your community or reserve in the future.

I think that now when I am getting older, I think about the youth in the future. I am hoping for things to go well for them. Right now, I think they are into alcohol and drugs. These are the things that are making it bad for them. Things would go well for people if they stop taking these things in the future. I hope things will go well for youth in the future and my grandchildren. [I hope they] have a good life.

Where is Pagwa River?

There was a railroad track there a long time ago. They used a train when they went to Nakina. It was about seventy-five miles up the tracks. ... There is a road there where vehicles can travel on. They stopped using the train that was there before and they made a road at Pagwa River.

There are some people living there at Pagwa River. Maybe four or five families are still there. They won't leave there. They were there all the time.

When did this reserve start?

I think it was in 1945 when the people first started to come here. 1945, 1950, that's when people started to live here on the reserve.

Is there a lake or river where people fish or set a net?

People set a net here on this lake and other lakes around here. They catch whitefish and pike. People fish at the river called Kabina River (Kabinakagami River). They catch big fish they call sturgeon. That's what they catch in the river. When the children go down to the river on Saturday, they would bring back sturgeon from the river. I think they sleep one night there. That's what people do here. They also go moose hunting and they kill

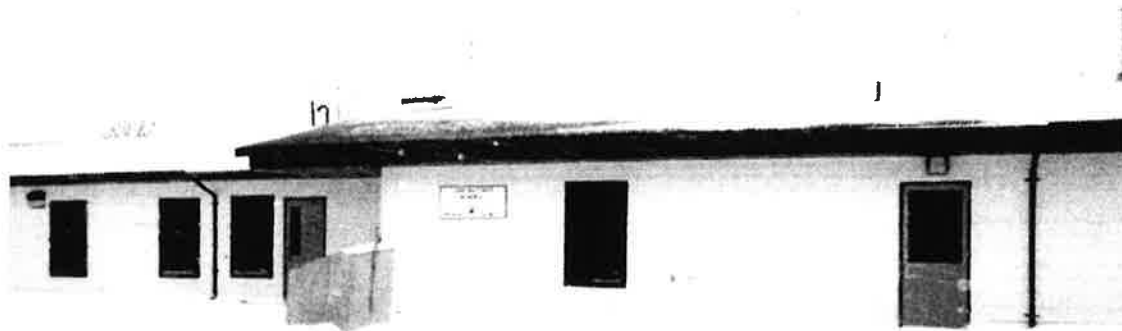
some moose. The people would bring back moose when they see them while driving around. That's when the young people would bring back some moose.

Can anyone get to the other communities by river from here?

There are people that come here from other reserves. They would be able to do that if they wanted to do it. [They could go to] places like Ogoki, Fort Albany, Kashechewan, Attawapiskat, and all the other communities up north. People would be able to do that by going down river. There is a landing about twenty miles from here. That's where they go on a boat, if they want to go by river.

How did you start interpreting?

I was asked when I was sitting here at home. I was not working. I was sick then. I had heart problems and I had an operation in 1985. That's when people used me like the elders who couldn't understand when they went to see the nurses or the doctors. I was asked to do that in the courts if anyone needed interpreting. That's where I got a hold of that work when I interpreted in the courts.



Jane Mattinas Health Centre

When you said you had an operation, was it on your leg?

Yes, that's the one. It's twice now [That operation] was done twice now to me. The first time that was done to me was in Toronto in 1985 and again in the summer of 1999 in Sudbury. I was operated on again because I was getting sick. Now I feel a little bit better after that. I think I feel stronger.

Did you trap?

Yes, my father-in-law taught me the way of trapping. My older brother taught me how trapping was done when we were walking around in the bush. I went with him in the bush. He taught me where to trap for beaver or muskrat when we were walking along the railroad tracks.

What is your father-in-law?

His name was David Puneesh. The money boss [Indian agent] was not able to write Puneesh and he was called Ineesh, David Ineesh. That's what they called him. That old man passed away a long time ago and he was good hunting in the bush. He was not able to speak English. He only spoke Ojibway. He was Ojibway and was good when speaking that.

What was your brother's name?

My brother, the one who taught me, his name was Andrew. He was the oldest brother. There were five of us in the family, five men, and one woman. My sister is still alive.

The people living in Constance Lake, do they speak different languages?

Yes, they speak in different languages: Omushkego and Ojibway. They are together. The first people to come here were the Omushkegowuk and they spoke Attawapiskat Cree. They are the ones from the James Bay area. The Ojibway people came here too. They came to be called Oji-cree when speaking both languages.

What were your parents called?

My father was called John Sutherland and my mother was Elizabeth. They were from Attawapiskat. They were from the Island (Akimiski), the Island that is there in Attawapiskat. That's where they said they were from. They paddled here by boat when they first came this way.

Rebecca Taylor



(recorded June 13,
2001)

Community or reserve life in the past

1) Describe your life in your community or reserve in the past.

Ok, I went to school I went down here first and then I went to Clayton Brown [Public School]. I got my education there [up to] Grade eight. Then I started attending Hearst High School and that's it.

[It's] been pretty normal I guess like every day, just hanging around with friends. ... It's pretty average I guess.

Did you go to school there all the time?

No, when I was younger, the school used to only go up to Grade two. When you went to Grade three you would go to that school in Hearst, from Grade three to Grade eight. If you passed Grade eight you [would] go to Grade nine at the high school.



Old Constance Lake Day School

Biographic Information

Name: Rebecca Beatrice Ann Taylor

Date of Birth: September 24, 1982

Place of Birth: Hearst

Present Address: Constance Lake First Nation

Education: Grade 12

Interests/Hobbies: Reading

Is there anything you like to do in the community?

Well, I help along with the youth committee. ... A bunch of us youth get together a couple times a month and have meetings and stuff like fundraising events to have a trip to Toronto for a week or just help out on gym nights.

Do you ever attend those?

Well, I was going to attend one that was for the youth committee ... but only me and someone else showed up, It was just worked [out that] way. After that, we never went to another one. I mean other general meetings.

What are your views on youth like yourself here?

Yeah, my friend and me were talking [about this] yesterday. All we ever do is walk around the reserve and see the same persons and the same buildings. We still keep on doing it every day because it's like boring. [There is] nothing really to do so we just hang around and play hacky [sack], football, or whatever. We just walk around and on weekends, practically everyone goes out to ... and does whatever.

Are you into that?

Well, I guess when I was like between eleven and sixteen. Now I don't really do it ... just once in a while.

Community or reserve life today

2) Describe your life in your community today.

There's more stuff ... since the reserve is getting bigger. Most of the kids do not really have much to do, but now you could go to gym nights and play football and baseball. There's a little basketball court down over there. Some kids play there. We just do the same thing, walk around, bike, and play hockey.

Is there anything you would like to do when you finish school?

I plan to go to university probably the University of Toronto. I was planning on becoming a psychiatrist. I have other stuff I want to do to. I'm so excited.

Are you planning to take time off when you finish high school?

Um, I don't think so because right now I can't go to school. I have like a medical problem with my stomach that prevents me from going to school on a regular basis. I don't like the time off because I see it's going to be farther and farther to reach my goals. Right after I get all my OAC credits, I'll probably go to university.

Is that problem you have like a handicap to you?

Um, sometimes it is because I really want to go to school. Then I can't because I have to go to the hospital and plug into that IV [to] stop the pain. [I'm] young but I have perseverance.

How long are you going to be in school?

I'll be short two credits. So, I'll have to go back. I'll be graduating next semester for sure. Then I'll be getting all my OAC credits.



Recreation Complex

Community or reserve life in the future

3) Describe what life might be like in your reserve or community in the future.

Well, because there was talk of the arena, and a high school here, I think that bringing the white English kids down to the reserve will open up the gap with all the racism going on. Occasionally, I think it would be better if people got to know each other. I know maybe we'll get jobs down here and get jobs over there. When you do it'll be easier for the teenagers around here to go to a school in the community rather than go to a highly populated French speaking high school. Right now, apparently there's only like six or eight of us from the reserve going to a French speaking high school. Three of them come from my family. ... It's pretty hard because you know you're different, Indian, in a highly populated white high school.

Do you find a lot of racism there?

Well there used to be, but it now it has died down because a couple of years back I think it was the Natives against the white and the French speaking [people]. I don't know. There

was like a big fight in the high school in Hearst. All the cops got involved and people got charged. I was right in there. I got punched by this white guy and the cop didn't want to press charges on him so, I don't know. I think ... there is a lot of conflict with the cops because the teenagers go out to town ... on weekends and go out to bars and whatever. They're always getting kicked out and thrown in jail. They're getting breeches (of probation) and going back to jail like Cecil (Fraser Institute) or wherever.

Do they have a community pool hall here?

Well, there used to be, but it was shut down. I don't know it seems to have to do with money problems. It used to be fun.

Do the chief and council invite the youth to attend general meetings?

Yeah, I'm pretty sure they invite youth and like encourage the youth to go there, but personally, I'm not a political person like my dad. I don't know. They can call me when they want to go because it's not of my interest. But then again I want to know what's going on. ... They talk so long for hours and hours about one topic and if there's another topic that you're really are interested in, you may never know what is. They might start talking [about something you're interested in] and you might not be there or you might wait there forever and they may never reach that topic.



Constance Lake Band Office

Do the older people in the community have a lot of respect for the youth?

I'd say that the youth do respect the elders ... and the adults. I guess, I don't know really.

Did you spend all your life on the reserve in the community? Did you ever go in the bush?
Ever since I was born, I was living on the reserve. Occasionally, there was a trip where the elders took the youth out to the Mammattawa River. It was a lot of fun cooking, fishing for sturgeon, and trying to skin them. It was gross, but it was fun. We all went boating. They took us to the old gravesites where the older people were buried. They showed us a few places. It was a lot of fun.

Do you do any traditional stuff?

I try to, but not really. I go to the annual pow wows, the traditional pow wows, and sometimes I go to a sweat lodge, but that's about it.

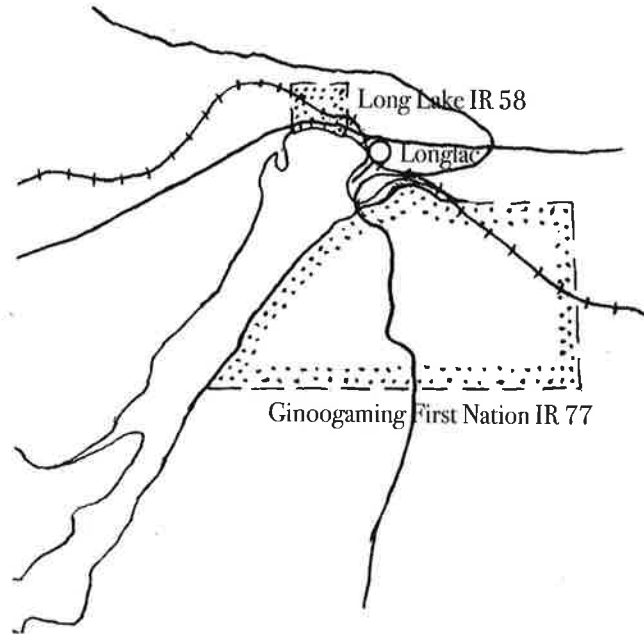
Do you eat any traditional food?

No, because I don't like [traditional food]. I prefer other food.

4

Ginoogaming First Nation

P.O. Box 89
Longlac, ON
P0T 2A0



The Ginoogaming First Nation is located on the Ginoogaming First Nation Indian Reserve 77 approximately 5 kilometres south of Longlac, Ontario. The Ginoogaming First Nation Indian Reserve 77 is approximately 6,978 hectares (27 square miles) in size. The original reserve, Long Lake Indian Reserve 77, was set aside as part of the James Bay Treaty (Treaty #9) made in 1906. In 1988, the name of the Long Lake Indian Reserve 77 was officially changed to the Ginoogaming First Nation Indian Reserve 77.

Population: 772 registered band members with 189 people living on-reserve (February, 2006)

Languages: English and Ojibway

The Ginoogaming First Nation's past and current economic development projects include the construction of the Mimikii Migizi High School, a day care centre, and on-reserve housing. The high school and day care centre have been operating for the last 3 years. In addition, several local area businesses such as a general store and gas bar, a restaurant, a logging company, and a gravel company have appeared in recent years.

In 1999, the Ginoogaming First Nation received compensation for underestimated and undervalued timber cut and sold in the 1930s. The compensation paid was deposited in a Trust Fund created and administered by the Ginoogaming First Nation (represented by 5 community trustees, 1 legal trustee, and 1 professional trustee).

—from http://ainc-inac.gc.ca/nr/prs/j-a2002/02136bk_e.html [Fact Sheet Ginoogaming First Nation Specific Claim]

Genevieve Echum



(recorded August 13,
2003)

Community or reserve life in the past

*1) Describe your life
in your community or
reserve in the past.*

I was born in Longlac. My grandparents lived here in Ginoogaming, but it used to be called Marten Falls. Then they changed it to Reserve 77, but now it's Ginoogaming. My grandparents were Joe and Louise Jappies and their daughter was Maryann, who's my mother. She married Duncan Nabigon from Reserve 58. So, before I got married I'm from Reserve 58. I married Roy Echum who is from Ginoogaming and we've been married for 42 years. As I remember how the reserve was here in Ginoogaming, there weren't that many families living here. I think there were only about 15 or 16 families living here. I don't remember ... but the reserve changed quite a bit from that time 42 years ago.

Biographic Information

Name: Genevieve Laura Echum
Date of Birth: March 30, 1942
Place of Birth: Longlac
Present Address: Longlac
Maiden Name: Nabigon
Name of Spouse: Roy Echum
Number of Children: 10
Number of Grandchildren: 30
Number of Great-grandchildren: 10
Number of Years Married: 42
Education: Grade 8 and Teacher's Aide
Certificate
Interests/Hobbies: Sewing, Knitting,
Cooking, and Camping

How many were there in your family? How many siblings did you have?

I had five sisters and five brothers. My mother had a set of twins also. My brothers were twins, two of my brothers. We lived on Reserve 58, but my grandparents lived here in Ginoogaming, so we would come and visit them. As I said before there were only a few families living here in Ginoogaming. My grandparents the Jappies were living here, the Echums were living here, the Charles were living here, and the Taylors, Alec Taylor. ... That's what I remember from Ginoogaming.

Did all of your siblings grow up in Longlac too?

We all grew up, my brothers and sisters, in Longlac. They married. Right now there's only four of us sisters left. All the rest have passed away. But we are a big family, the O'Nabignons. Some of us have been registered as O'Nabigon. That's why some of us are named O'Nabigon and some Nabigon. When I had my children, I had ten children. It was kind of as if we didn't have the money that we have now, not that we have a lot of money now. When my husband was working for the Kimberley-Clark sawmill ... his wages weren't very high. But somehow, we managed. I already had about five children when he

was making the low wages. They would get laid off, but we still had to go by what he had made. We managed. Now my children are all grown up now and they're all working, some are still going to school taking courses and stuff like that.

When you were growing up with your parents, did they ever go hunting, fishing or trapping?

Yes, my father did some hunting and trapping and [he] worked at the same time. Then he had to stop working because he was sick and my mother got sick too. [They went] back and forth to the hospital. She was a diabetic and she had TB. She was in a sanitarium and she died from cancer. From that time, as we were growing up, we had to go to the boarding school because our parents were both sick. So, they took us to boarding school. I think we all went to boarding school, my brothers, and my sisters. I remember I went to boarding school when I was seven years old. ... You know like, what they talk about the boarding school now, well I experienced some [of that]. I was in Grade one, and I don't know what happened or what I'd done. Anyway, my Grade one teacher put me in a supply room, like you know where the books are and turned the lights out. I had to sit in the dark for I don't know how long. It was so scary sitting in the dark, especially when you're only seven years old, and that's the first time being from home. I had my sisters there, but they weren't there at that time when this happened to me. My older sister Rachel was sick too, almost blind. She had to go for her treatments every Wednesday night. I would cry especially because she would leave me and I was only seven years old. She was only a year and a half older than me. That's one of the experiences I had at the boarding school. When we were at the boarding school, we couldn't speak our language and if we spoke our language, we were punished for that. So today, I couldn't teach my children my language. I could speak my language and understand my language, but I could not teach my children. The reason why I understand and speak my language is that when we came home in summertime from the boarding school we would stay with my grandparents because our mother was in the hospital. So, we would come and stay with our grandparents. My grandmother didn't talk English. She couldn't talk English to us because she would say that why should I speak English when I'm gonna have a broken mind. She says I'll just talk to you in Ojibway and that way you'll learn your language. So, that's how I know my language, but still I can't speak it fluently. I understand it and I get by far [enough] with the language I know. I know ... my children are suffering because I couldn't teach them the language. So now, I am learning the culture too and ... learning the traditional ways.

What was that boarding school you went to?

I went to St. Joseph's Boarding School in Fort William, but now it's called Thunder Bay. The last time I was in boarding school was 1957, but I was already in high school. That

experience I had in high school too. ... I was only in high school for six months, but I didn't stay in school. Native students were placed in the back of the room and the teacher would ask questions. Some of us would put our hands up, but our teacher ignored us. So thinking we didn't know the answer, she would pick the white non-Native students. That was one of our experiences in the high school. I was thinking that we didn't know what we are learning.

Where was the sanitarium where your mother was?

My mother was in the Fort William Sanitarium in Thunder Bay.

Does it still exist?

The building is there, but they don't call it the sanitarium anymore. It's Hogarth's Hospital or something where the old folks stay ... the seniors I guess. She was there for two and a half years in the sanitarium, but she passed away. She had cancer.

Did your dad do any trapping?

He did a little bit of trapping, but he still wasn't well either. I remember one time in the spring they went trapping. That was the only time I remember and then he worked here and there.

Do you know what kind of animals he trapped?

Beaver, wolf, and muskrat.

Do you remember if they ate the animals they trapped?

No, they did eat beaver and moose and I heard grandmother talk about eating porcupine. It's supposed to taste like chicken. They would eat moose and fish. They didn't do too much fishing.

Did they smoke fish then?

Yeah, they smoked fish and smoked moose meat. They had rabbits. They ate rabbits too.

Did make you feel different when you were eating wild meat? Did it make you feel stronger?

Well I know that people before weren't sick with diabetes as we are now. What's killing us now is that diabetes and then cancer. I guess at that time there wasn't alcohol involved. I don't remember my grandparents ever drinking alcohol. But I know my parents did.

When did you decide to go back to school and get your teacher's aide certificate?

Well, when I was 19. I started working as a teacher's aide in 1973. I've worked as a teacher's aide for twenty-one years. I left teaching in '94 to work as a family support worker here in Ginoogaming. I had one year off because of my sickness. I am diabetic and I had triple by-pass surgery.

When your parents or grandparents were living in the bush, did you use anything in the bush as medicine?

I remember my uncle Sam Jappies there. He had mentioned that he was using medicine from the bush because he had mentioned one time that his wife couldn't pass her water. She was pregnant at that time, but she couldn't pass her water. So, I guess what he went off in the bush and got some kind of root herb and boiled it for his wife and she was okay. They made her drink that medicine and it helped her. So, she peed and she was okay after. It's one of the times that I did try to ask him because he knew of some medicines. I did at that time try to ask him to show me and to teach me how to, but he kept telling me wait. He said, "I'll let you know some, I'll let you know sometimes." Then just before he passed away, he said, "I'll show you," but it was too late. He passed away so now I don't know what kind of medicine to use. Like I said, I'm learning a little bit of my medicines. Also, I went to a workshop on Indian herbal medicines. I do take medicine myself for my sickness.



Ginoogaming First Nation Clinic

Do your siblings still live around here or did they move away?

My three sisters live on Reserve 58. My oldest sister is Bertha. She's 70 years old and she has a heart problem. My sister Rachel is sick too. She had a stroke. It's going to be a year

ago in September when she turned 62. My sister and my youngest sister are not feeling too well. She had a stroke before too. She's not too well, not too good yet. ... We're all suffering from diabetes, but my younger sister doesn't have diabetes yet. So, I know that's what Native people are suffering from—diabetes and cancer.

Why do Native people tend to get diabetes more than non-Native people?

I don't know. I guess it's the foods we eat because all the food is processed now. In the past, it was pure and Native people ate wild food, which was not processed. The meat that we eat now it's all, how would you say it, not like moose because of how they spray the forest.

Did you do anything spiritual in the past?

No, no. I didn't lead a spiritual life, but now I am learning about the spiritual life and what I learn I teach my grandchildren. Some of my grandchildren I didn't teach. I do smudging with my grandchildren and they do that in the daycare.

Community or reserve life today

2) Describe your life in your community today.

What I see is now is that it's really changed. We have more families here in the community. The population has grown from before. More people are working whereas some of the people were not working before. We do have some families on welfare. ... There is a lot of alcohol abuse and drug abuse right in our community. I know we did have high alcohol in the past ... but we would stay in our homes. It is scary for our young children because ... our children are growing up with now, which is sad.

Do they have an elementary school here?

No, our children go to school at Reserve 58. That is where our elementary school is. In Ginoogaming, we have the high school were they register about 50 students. This year we have four graduates coming out of our high school.

Do the children on Reserve 58 attend the high school here?

Yeah, they do and our children are bused to Reserve 58 to go to the elementary school. The students from Reserve 58 are bused to Ginoogaming.

Do they catch the bus?

Every day. Well I think elementary goes first and then the high school comes back. Something like that anyway. At lunch here too, the children are bused back and forth.

Do you think it's good when they have their own schools on their reserves?

Yeah. It is I guess in a way. But I guess what they were talking about before was that our children were discriminated against. There's discrimination all over no matter where you go, because in the past, we had our children going to school on Reserve 58. You know where the church is. That is where we had our first school, our Indian Day School. That's where I went to school too at that Indian Day School. When some of our children were going to start school, they were integrated into Our Lady of Fatima School in town until about four or five years [ago]. Now, I think we have our own elementary school and high school.

What kind of church is that on the point over there?

It's a Catholic church.

Is that the only church they have?

Yeah, that's the only church. Yeah, the other religions or Christians feel they want to go off reserve. But right now ... the priest comes to say mass every second Sunday in Ginoogaming and in Reserve 58. They alternate.

What kind of police services do they have here on Ginoogaming?

Yeah, we have the APS, Anishinabek Police Service.

Is this reserve part of the Nishnawbe Aski?

Nishnawbe Aski, yeah, yeah.

Is it the same for Reserve 58?

I don't know about 58, if it's Nishnawbe Aski, but we're a Matawa First Nation here too, 58 is in the Robinson Superior [Treaty area]. Their treaty is Robinson Superior, but ours is Treaty 9 and that's all Nishnawbe Aski (Indian Land).

Do you find the police service is good?

Yeah, I guess, I never had any problems with them. They come when you call them.

Does Ginoogaming have a part in this sawmill here?

I really don't know, ... but I think they do because they say they hire Ginoogaming people first and then they hire out outside [people] after. That's what I heard.

That sawmill must have been around a long time, eh?

'93, I think, because I think that's the time my son started and he's still there. Now he's an electrician there. He went away for a course. He got his Grade 12. These [people] are the ones they recognize, the ones who have their diplomas. He went to school. He had to go to school in the Sault, in Sault Ste. Marie. Then he went to school in Hamilton. He took a course in Thunder Bay. He's doing electrical work.

Do people with lesser education have any chance of finding employment at the sawmill or other places?

Well there are people that already have lesser education, not Grade 12, and they do get hired around there, you know. I guess they upgrade if they want to continue and go higher. ... But they did hire the Ginoogaming people first. Then it was up to them to stay there, but a lot of them left, I don't know what the reasons were. ...

Community or reserve life in the future

3) Describe what your life might be like in your community or reserve in the future.

Yes, with our young children coming up, there are not too many of our elders left. ... Yes, it will be bigger. ... As an elder, I respect our young people because if we want respect back we have to respect our children and our young people, because they are our future. This is what I'm saying all the time that they are our future. They will be the ones when we can't do anything, because I'm close to retiring myself. They will be the ones to look after the reserve in the future.

Do you think it is important to get your education now?

It is important. Your education is important in that way you can have a job. Young people would be able to have jobs to live moderately. ... This was why I tried to make my children go to school, and explain to them, or express that education is important now. They know the meaning education and why education is important because qualifications are needed for their jobs. This is why we need people to work up in the office here with qualifications instead of hiring people off the reserve. We have people who are working here that are off the reserve. Our children should be getting their education to come and work for Ginoogaming. Meegwetch.

What would you recommend for people to keep the language alive especially the Ojibway language?

I guess to try to learn the language. Like I said at my age we hardly speak our language and so our children know that. So what we have to do is, I guess in whatever language we know, to teach our young people or go away, I guess to learn the language. ...



Ginoogaming First Nation Aboriginal Head Start

Do they have any Native language teachers in the schools here?

Yeah, we do have a Native language teacher who is from here.

Is there anything you'd like to say before we sign off?

No, I think I answered your questions. It is quite an experience for me to talk, especially when you're being recorded, but anyway, we have to go on in our lives. I said our children are most important in our lives now. They were always important to us. So, it's their future that we have to look upon and hope that they will continue the good work that they are doing. I said our teachings are respect, love, and caring and this is what I, as an elder, would like to teach them: to respect each other because some of our young people abuse their lives which, I know we did in our past too. You know, we have to try and stop them, stop the drugs and the alcohol. Sometimes we hear that too much in our communities. Maybe they will wake up some day with an alcohol-free and drug-free community. Meegwetch.

Before we sign off, you mentioned that you were a chief at one time.

Yes. I was [chief] from 1972-73. I was a chief here. At that time, there was too much politics. I wouldn't want to be chief again. Too much politics you know involved in being a chief, but at that time it was just like looking after a bunch of kids. I looked at it that way. I know that ... our lives have changed so much from that time.

Elzear Taylor



(recorded August 13,
2003)

Community or reserve life in the past

*1) Describe your life
in your community or
reserve in the past.*

Biographic Information

Name: Elzear Taylor
Date of Birth: June 20, 1938
Place of Birth: Ginoogaming
Present Address: Longlac
Name of Spouse: Rhonda Fisher
Number of Children: 3
Number of Grandchildren: 4
Number of Years Married: 10
Education: Grade 5
Interests/Hobbies: Trapping and Hunting

OK, meegwetch. My name is Elzear Taylor and I have lived in this community most of my life. I was born ... in 1938, on the 20th day of June, where the pow wow ground is now. All our lives that I remember in the past were trapping. My dad trapped in the winter months and I trapped in the winter months. In summertime, it was just summer jobs. In my childhood days, I ended up in the boarding school, the Fort William Boarding School. That was the biggest disaster being taken away from your home. Well, anyways I'm gonna stand in this community. The good times I remember, the best times were trapping, hunting, and fishing. My first language is always Ojibway or Oji-Cree. My dad was a Cree from James Bay. ... My Anishinawbe name, [the name] my dad used to call me was Gowensa. The white man changed our name to Taylor. As far as I can remember, I already had the name Taylor. My Anishinawbe name comes in from James Bay, Hudson Bay, up ... Moosonee way. Many years ago, as I said, when I can first remember, we were trapping. Also, at the time, we would leave from here, from this community, Ginoogaming. We used to paddle up 30 miles out of this long lake. This long lake I'm talking about is 60 miles long and it's south and north facing. We used to travel 30 miles to go trapping in the fall. They called it Halfway Island where our trap lines were, where my dad's trap line was. We used to trap east and west on Long Lake. We did this every [year]. ... We were gone for about three months. We went in September and in October and came back for Christmas. The place I'm talking about is our trap line. ... Of course, today, the company [Kimberly-Clark] went in there and cut everything. Today, my trap line looks like a baseball field. ... [My] life was just taken away from me when those things happened. I still go up there to my trap line today, the same trap line I owned since the fifties when I was in my teenager years. There were trees in the fifties. Today, there [are] no trees, no fir trees. You know there are buffer zones; they call them, ... where you're supposed to save moose and deer. It's too small ... who wants to hang around those kinds of places. It's over grown now, but it still doesn't look the way it used to look. I trapped there in my days with log traps. In fact, I still have them on my trap line. I leave them there. So, I can look at them now and

then. In those days as I said, we paddled up. Then in later years, ... we started with 3 hp and up to 5 hp outboard motors. We always travelled with canvas boats and canoes. We had a very good life, a good time out there. There were times of course, I remember back when I was taken away to boarding school in Fort William. It's about 300 km from here. Fort William is known as Thunder Bay now. ... I didn't learn too much there [for] my education. I even still have some off and on resentment over that, when I used to get a strapping. [They were] too busy to teach me an English education. They were busy beating me up. In those days there, I remember the crazies, the nuns and things like that. I couldn't even speak my language, my first language, and our Native language in this Native country, as I know it today. ... When they say Canada, United States, the so-called United States, and Mexico south, okay, to me, it's all Native country. I'm over 65 years old. My dad used to tell me this land was given to you by the Creator, looking up, and pointing to the sky. [He said that] it's your land, every inch of it when I was just a youngster, even before my boarding school days. I paid a big price for going to boarding school by being physically and mentally abused. That was a disaster for me. Anyways, my good times were trapping. In summertime, I was in Hornepayne, working, cutting fir trees down, and fighting fires. In those days you could get fired, quit ten times from one job, and find ten different jobs in one day. Jobs were all over. Jobs were no problem. But today, you can't do that. We did lots of lake trout fishing in this lake. It's only later on the years that we couldn't eat [them], because the lake trout were polluted. Kimberley-Clark would [tow wood] from the north of Longlac down to south end. [They were] towing wood because there were no roads. That's what ... polluted the lake, polluted the fish. [There] used to be sturgeon here, but there are no more sturgeon. You have to go a little north for sturgeon. There are so many dams here now like Hydro dams. We had good water to drink ... and good food to eat all these years in the forties and fifties. I remember that by the sixties, every body ended up with sugar diabetes. Because I ate wild food all my life and good water, [I didn't get diabetes]. Of course, today, you can't even drink a teaspoon of water or you'll get sick. You have to boil water. Those were my good days out there: trapping. I liked it. I could talk hours and hours to really describe the community. I still remember it really. Just a few people used to live around here. There used to be Hornepayne people here. They called them Hornepayne people. They're Rachel's sons—seven band members that moved away to the Hornepayne community, the Hornepayne First Nation. Some are still band members here on the Ginoogaming First Nation. They built log houses. We had log houses in those days, the thirties, twenties, and forties. There were no jobs for them here in summertime. ... Their trap lines are in Hornepayne. They are still down there. For me I stayed here off and on mostly in the winter months. When my parents stayed here in summertime, we lived in a tent, but out on the trap lines we had log cabins. We had a good life out there [in our] log cabin. On the reserve, we had

a few, but they began to rot away. The log cabins were at the old sawmill grounds. I can remember the first house I saw built here. We also had a school, some kind of school, before my school age. That was long ago because my sisters used to go there, my stepsister too. The first houses, the log [ones], I guess you could call them shacks, houses, whatever you call them, came up here. ... They were veteran's houses, I think, veteran's houses. During World War II, the veteran's built their houses. They had a few men's houses, not in ... up until, ... the fifties, the mid-fifties, there somewhere. I could be mistaken about the years. There were no roads here. There was a tow road here for horses. I remember my grandmother; she's sitting on a moose snare. There is a horse there like one time back in the forties. We used horses for transportation around here to town. We used to have a Hudson's Bay store in town here. Hundreds of tents used to be around town. ... [I] remember when there were only about three or four houses and the tracks. This was the town of Longlac. [They were] section houses, CN houses. These were good old steam engine days. I remember this time. Oh, I could go on and on and tell you these good stories ... in this community. [There were] lots of fishing and lots of hunting.

How do you know how you spell your Indian name?

I have a cousin in Hornepayne, who's about in her eighties. I'll have to visit her one-day and ask her exactly what it is ... she knew. Ahh ... maybe you'll run across her. Anyway, Gowensa, means "an old man." I went down to Moosonee recently, about five years ago to visit there. I couldn't find anybody who had an Indian name like Gowensa. Speaking in the Ojibway language it means "an old man." I never come across anybody who knows that name. It could be a different pronunciation. I'll have to check it out.

What kind of animals did you trap?

We trapped beaver, otter, fisher, lynx, mink, marten, squirrels, and weasels in those days. There were some deer there, and there were some caribou in those days. There were wolves. We trapped wolves too. We snared them.

Did you ever eat any of the animals that you trapped?

Yeah, we ate beaver meat. There was a good survival thing ... beaver meat, muskrats, ducks, and porcupines. Porcupine that tastes like a pork chop ... a good meal. [We ate] bear meat. We ate all of those healthy foods in them days. But [with] the conditions of the water today, you have to test them out. I haven't eaten them for over a few years back now because the water is so contaminated out there. Some moose I eat today, deer ... and geese. I still eat geese ... and loons. I still eat good fish when I get some like sturgeon, trout, and pickerel.

How big do lake trout get?

They had one more than fifty pounds in this lake here in those days. That's in the fifties.

Are they pretty much like big sturgeon?

Yeah, there still some here in Long Lake. The best fish you can get now. You go out to Long Lake, McKay Lake, or those smaller lakes there. You get better lake trout. They're smaller, but they're good. ... I don't know about Lake Nipigon.

That community, Ogoki, is also known as Marten Falls. Was Ginoogaming called Marten Falls a long time ago?

Some years ago, yeah. We used to call this reserve Marten Falls. Then they called it Long Lake 77 Reserve. [More] recently, [they called it] Ginoogaming. I remember a while back when they called it Marten Falls. I don't know at what time they changed it to 77 again, Long Lake 77. I remember, I was a councilor here in my community starting back in eighty ... I don't know, some place in '87 around there, twenty years ago. Anyway they changed it to Ginoogaming First Nation, because this lake, Long Lake, it's called Ginoogaming. Ginoogaming meaning long lake, sort of like that. So that's how it got it's name, this reserve, Ginoogaming, the same name as Long Lake, Ginoogaming, Ginoogaming Sakahiigan.

How many were there in your family?

Yeah, I had a three sisters. They're all younger than me and they all passed on. They're all gone. They all passed on about fifteen ... twenty years ago. I had three stepsisters [from] my dad's first marriage. His wife died some years ago and he married my mother. He had two daughters. One of my stepsisters is still living in this community. The other one is out in B.C., being looked after by her daughters out there. My mother's first husband died and she remarried my dad. My mother had two sons. One is still living and one is deceased. That's what I have. Of course, from my first marriage, I have three daughters and four granddaughters. In my second common-law marriage, I don't have any [children]. I've been living a sober life since 1982.

Did you ever live a spiritual life?

I have been living a spiritual cultural life. I had lots against my church. I was baptized as a Catholic. Today, I just go there for funerals and weddings or something. I do Native culture and ceremonies. ... Today, I got nothing against churches. I mostly do smudging. I'm dearly related to Mother Earth, like the trees, anything that grows out there. I deeply respect the animals. Lots of times the white man will call animals a nuisance like beavers. That's why I go after what they call culvert beavers. The beavers are not used to them and

the bears are not used to them. We're taking over their territory. Since we know that, why would they want to call it a nuisance when we're taking over their territories? Maybe something is wrong there somewhere to call them nuisance bears and nuisance beavers. But I don't call them that. If I do that, I couldn't live in harmony with animals, the birds out there, or the beautiful trees and water we got out there. That's how I go by. I sobered up myself back in '82. I had lots of problems with alcohol. I guess it's related back to the boarding school days. There was lots of anger there. I was very fortunate that I didn't lose my language. I could speak all day in my first language, the Native language, to people. I believe in the Creator, even all my ancestors in the spirit world. Out of respect, I would also pray in my second language, that I call English, to our white brothers out there.

At the time, you were on your trap line, when you said that it was clear-cut, did you ever get any compensation for it?

[I] never got anything. Nothing. Nothing at all. Cleared, especially my trap line, just clear-cut right through. This Lands for Life there, whatever they're called, what are they saving out there? The public, they don't even know about it. They save the old, burned rock where people can't camp, can't even walk, or can't even carry a gun. That's what they're saving. This is a gun matter ... so we're saving this. There's no way they're going to save the good trees. Yeah, this Ontario government thinks the MNR (Ministry of Natural Resources) is going to save the good trees out there. There are people out there surviving on that. ... I can't understand what they are saving. They tell the public we're saving good land. I said, you like moose hunting, eh. You have me going a little bit into politics, spray ... spray. You ever seen moose after it's sprayed out there. I've seen that in my trap line. They are gonna start to take out their signs at just about moose season and you see the poor moose hunter from down south sitting there waiting for the moose to come out. I told them there were signs here a couple of days ago, but [they] took them out. The MNR figured they could spray here. They say, they told us it was safe, when most of them go here, after they sprayed, they're out of the country. The poor guy, he may have spent five thousand dollars to come out. I saw that. Gee, I feel sorry for those white brothers. But I tell them straight what's going on.

Do you know when this sawmill got started?

Not exactly ... about ten years ago anyway, but there was a sawmill there before that. It was run by Kimberley-Clark. He closed down on it. They had a sawmill on the old pow wow grounds. Pulp and Supply had his sawmill there. It was run by water. They closed that down ten years ago. The Ginoogaming First Nation used the land there for some years.

What's the name of that sawmill company here now?

It could be the same company that's all over the place there. It starts with a B. I never worked in there.

Buchanan?

Buchanan, he's got a bunch of sawmills all over, but I think they're called [Longlac] Wood Industries or something like that. It's non-union. That's why it is surviving. Wages are a little bit low. If it were a union, it wouldn't survive. If you make forty or fifty bucks an hour, they cut you off right away.

Whatever happened to the horse that was snared?

I think we fed it to the dogs. They cleaned it up and used it to feed the dogs used on the sleds. We had a lot of dog sleds here too, long before snow machines arrived. So, they used that for logging at Kimberley-Clark or Pulp and Supply. They used that for their skidder, that was a skidder, of course, with horses.

Community or reserve life today

2) Describe your life in your community today.

Today, in the community, we have water. That just came on in. I won't be lying if I said in the sixties, yeah, some place there, that water and electricity just came in here not too long ago. We're behind. I thought people way up north, way up north, don't have lights and water. Geez, we had ours pretty late in this reserve. I don't know, I could never say [that it is] a hundred percent rosy in the reserve, in this community. I will always like bush life. I have a cabin and a truck and I go there. Two of us are still doing it around this reserve. The Charles family and myself still live on trapping. I go out at trapping time. I still go out on my trap line [but with a truck]. We still do that. Well, it's pretty fair living in this community. I mean, health wise, we have a medical van. We have a high school here. It could be a lot better. We don't have a store here. We should have a good store. We should have [more] houses. It's only a small community, of course. [There is] not much here. It's a quiet community, around this end, you would say, at the north end of this little community. We have a pow wow every year for David Charles. I find, for my own use, it could be better. We should have a store here, our own store, but they don't have that. We don't have [a building for] people who are aging in here. We should have community buildings. Otherwise, it's not too bad. It could be a lot better.

Was David Charles an elder?

He was an elder, yeah. That's what they use me for sometimes, as an elder. I like doing this; it comes natural to pray to the Creator for them. I love doing that. It's like one, two,

three. [It] comes right from the heart. If you want it, pray. Now when you open that prayer for meetings or anything, you'll be one or two minutes. [It] comes from your heart and that's it. You know whether you are with your Creator, whatever they call him, whatever everybody calls him, you know Jesus, God, and you know, the Great Creator, Mishaymundo. There's a lot of religion out there. So, be careful with that. That's why I say Great Creator. So, it's up to them what they want to call him. Today, I notice that. I travel around. I like doing it. My greatest teachings, of course, go back to our grandmothers. That's what I said. I left that and threw [it] out the window some years ago when I was drinking. When I sobered up in '82, I took all that back. I use it today ever since. So today, I teach it. All the visions they told me were right, everything was right.

Where do the people go swimming?

Well, at the pow wow grounds a little bit. This water there is not too healthy. Our kids just don't have a swimming pool. In fact, there's just no swimming in town. I don't know if the town of Longlac has a swimming pool or not. Just beginning to think about it, I'm not a swimmer.

Community or reserve life in the future

3) Describe what your life might be like in your community or reserve in the future.

Well, in the future, I think that if we have good leadership, these people will go ahead. I think we could live a pretty good life here in this community. You know, there are lots of things we could do to go forward. We have this trust. We could build a new store because when you go with the trust, it's for the whole community. The whole band membership has to agree. I see it growing, you know, for our own people. It's mostly for our young people. That's all I remember. That's how things could be built.

Are they making any more houses here?

We are planning to build more houses, but there's just no funds coming in. So, we just can't go forward. I don't know how much we're allowed, but we're allowed one house a year or something. Lots of people want houses. It's supposed to be one a year. We just spend all of our trust. I don't buy that. I'm a trustee myself, you know. Why can't we buy something or make something, so that money can make money for itself. The trust can't make money for itself, could it? That's how I feel. See, our trust is around \$800,000.00 or \$600,000 a year or something. You can't do too much with that kind of money.



Ginoogaming First Nation Complex

When you were living in the bush did you or your parents or your grandparents ever use anything in the bush for medicinal purposes?

Mostly animal and it's of course, bear grease. Anybody can use it. It's good for arthritis pains and joints. Our white brothers, I always tell them, why don't you just get some bear grease and it will help you. It's got something there that could fix up your arthritis pains. It works and it's wonderful. Anybody can make it. That's how I feel. Then there are plants out there people to use for arthritis and heart conditions, but we mostly use bear grease. That's good.

Did you ever smoke fish or smoke any of the animals?

Yeah, we smoked fish. That's how we kept them in my deep freeze for a long time. We smoked bear meat and moose meat to keep them for the winter months. Of course, we're doing it to keep the meat a long time too. During summertime, we keep smoking things fresh. A lot of people still do that. We do that now and then, just for our own purposes. [They don't smoke meat] in their community, they go out somewhere. I don't know why, but they have better results out there. ... Wherever they take fish that's where they do it.

I guess they must have crushed the fish into tiny pieces. Do they still do that?

I know they used to do it some years ago. My grandmother made that nice bannock ... ever good. I don't know how I would make it like that.

What do you think of about services they have here today?

I think it's okay. I know a lot of people do complain about it. I think it's good related to the culture. I think we have to teach our young people right from the start to stay away from drugs and alcohol. That's where the problem is.

Do you think it's important to get an education?

Education is set up like that. The school system is not 100% right for Native people that's for sure. Because there are some people [white people] growing up that don't even know that this is a Native country. They should know it. [We were] here thousands and thousands of years. ...

Do you feel that it's a problem to keep the Native language alive?

Very much so, yes. ... I think that's where racism comes from, you know. You see they don't teach these kids who we are as Native people. This is Indian country. ... They don't learn that until they're very old. It's too bad for that education system. I didn't sign the treaty, our grandfathers did. That's too bad. Anybody who tells me this is Canada, I tell them this is not Canada, pilgrim, this is Native country. That's what I intend to do, walk proud out there. I don't care what kind of laws they put in.

Is there anything else you'd like to say before we close off?

Well, today I'm just a proud Anishnawbe, a proud Indian to be living. I'm thankful for a lot of the things good things I can do. I'm sixty-five years [old], but I still live and do a lot of things. ... As far as [things] money wise goes, when you're at an old age, it's kind of tough. You cannot live on a thousand dollars a month. What can you do if you don't have a company pension? Now, I understand, how the elders feel, getting a thousand dollars a month for old age. It's almost gone before you even get to pay your rent and food payments there. So, the government should give us old age people who are over sixty-five, no matter who we are, five thousand dollars a month, and then we'd put it in our wallet. ... Then maybe we'd quit gambling. That's what I told my wife. I'm sixty-five years old now, it's only a couple of months to go [until I'm] sixty-five. I only get four hundred and sixty-one dollars this month in old age pension; the other one didn't come in [yet], the Canada Pension Benefits. I'm just going slow. ... Well, I want to go back to work. I want to retrain on the track train and go back to work for at least another five years. Most all of us are not healthy. I might be a little bit healthy. I like to live one day at time in church and in doing chores. I like to see the youth learn about life, learn from the elders and go back. Many today are still proud Indians. Chief Sitting Bull and all those people, I'm proud of those people. They fought trying to save their land and they'll die for it, lots of them. I'm proud. They're trying to do that for us today as we're sitting here.

Dee-Anne Taylor



(recorded August 13, 2003)

Community or reserve life in the past

1) Describe your life

in your community or reserve in the past.

My name is Dee-Ann Taylor. I was born on February 6, 1985. I was born in Geraldton, Ontario. I was born and raised in Ginoogaming. I have lived there for eighteen years of my life and so far since then it's been not so good, trouble left and right. ...

Biographic Information

Name: Dee-Anne Francis Marie Taylor

Date of Birth: February 6, 1985

Place of Birth: Geraldton

Present Address: Longlac

Education: Grade 11

Interests/Hobbies: Writing, Reading, Sports, and Outdoor Activities (Hunting, Trapping, and Fishing)



Ginoogaming First Nation

When I was young, I can remember we'd all go to my grandpa's camp in Hillsport. My entire family, everybody, was there. ... My past it hurts me so much and I don't ever want to go back to it, not once. My grandma took my brother and me all the time to Hornepayne. We would love it. She would take us to the bush, just for a little night in the bush. We'd love it so much. The thing that kept me going [was being] with my grandma. My grandma had her baby toe cut off due to diabetes. She can't go anywhere anymore. It's been two years ago and she can't do nothing. She can't take us nowhere and that's what I miss. I miss my grandma, but the hardest part is that you always have faith in yourself to carry on through the good and the bad.

I started drinking when I was thirteen years old. I would drink and I'd go home and sleep, get up, and drink again. I would break into places, steal, and take money off my mom. ...

I finally got caught when I was fifteen. [For] all the break and enters I did, I got computers and thirty-five hundred in cash. Ever since then, it's not enough. I put it away all the alcohol, all the drugs. I said I don't want my life like this anymore. I want a change, ever since then I've been going to all kinds of workshops, and that's just in the Longlac area. I mainly got help from my mom. She helped get through all the rough times. I get help from the kid's help lines. I would go over to my teachers. She made me see the light that I never saw before. That's when I found that I could be best. She saw it when I was in her June class. She saw it in me and that's how I smartened up because of her. I had finished Grade nine and ten, well, Grade nine and half of Grade ten. At that time, a high school was built. That's when I started slacking off and that's when my friends would all come back from the reserve. I'd come home for the summer and that's how I messed up again. I always remember that there are people out there that will do something for you no matter what time and that's how I learned what I learned today. I finally saw it after how many years, five years. Now, I just want to go back to school and live a life that I want to live. I need more help. ... Ever since I was fifteen, I had a better life. By the time I was sixteen, my dream was coming true I was getting published in the Times Star and in Dilico [Child and Family Services]. What makes me feel happy is writing. It makes me feel free as if I have no boundaries to cross. You could be yourself and do that, enjoy your life as it comes, not roughly like what I went through.

Nobody wants to give you a chance. They always judge a book by the cover, not by what's inside. They say just get up and start doing something about it, but you can't because nobody wants to mention [it] to you because all of the stuff you've done in the past.

Community or reserve life today

2) Describe your life in your community today.

Well, my life today, it's kind of rotten, but it's still I think it's still bearable. Today I try so hard to go back to school. I miss it. I applied for the three-year journalism program at First Nations Technical Institution, but they denied me because I needed mature student testing. I applied for Ginoogaming's Youth Council Workers, but I got denied there too because of my age. Today, I just want what's best for my youth. I don't want them being in jail for the rest of their lives and what most people have done around here. I want them to have a place where they could go and just relax, be themselves, and stay away from drugs and alcohol.

When the school opened, we had this man come from Winnipeg. He had a dream one time with a turtle and all white society, coloured people, Chinese people, everybody, they all came to that one turtle. They all lived life freely and there was no criticism, no racism. ... I was thinking in my mind, well, why did they pull us Natives from the white reserve, from the white schools, if they want us to all come together. I didn't say anything when I heard that. He tells me that's my problem, I have to fight it in some way. I have been trying to fight it in some way. I have been trying to fight it but no, they don't listen. I gave Dilico a letter one time for some help for our youth and all of that. The supervisor said he'll help us out in any way he can, but he can't get the help because we don't have a facility for us to grow up in, to share our experiences and to share ... That's one big mistake this reserve ever did. They built all these schools. The high school is not in here. Now my sister, my baby sister, is ten years old and she can't even read a complete book by herself. She's got asthma. When I was growing up, I went to a white school. I was reading novels by the time I was ten years old. The whole community has to be involved, but we don't see that. ... We all need people, older people, to guide us in the right direction ... and all the drugs and alcohol that's in our lives today.

When the kids want to go swimming around here, where do they go?

They go right in the swampy area. All of this water here is polluted. There's nothing, nothing whatsoever. Once or twice a week, once every two weeks maybe Colin would take a big bunch load of kids in his truck on his own. He'd buy pop, chips, everything, for all the little kids. He'd take everybody out to Pamela Lake that's about half an hour drive from here on the highway.

Community or reserve life in the future

3) Describe what your life might be like in your community or reserve in the future.

Um, my future. I'm going off to school for at least thirteen months and then I'm going to come back here. Then I'm going to go to school to be a journalist and a publisher. I'm going to come back here. I'm going to open my own office for all the youth, for all the children, to write what they want here. I'll publish it anywhere. Well, I'm going to open my own newspaper corporation. I want to have my own newspaper on this reserve where everybody across Ontario can feel what we're feeling and how bad we've been hurt. I want my people to write in my own newspaper and to work in a building. I want them to do the same thing. I want all the youth to come in and feel free to write anything they want. I want to come back and prove to them that we need it. Then I want to come back and show them or give them help. Don't make them waste their time on what I did. I want the best for them and then I'll get the best for me. I want to give them the opportunities that are out there, to show them that there are a lot, there's a whole world out there, and that they

could get there. I want to be the person that will [not] leave them behind. I want to be the person that will put them in front of me first. That's what I want to do when I come back.

I hope to see a youth centre, a children's centre, a playground, bigger and better schools, more houses, and [I want] them do something. I want to see this reserve get bigger. I want it to grow economically. I want things in there half of them don't even think of. Then I want an arena. That's when everybody would be happy because everybody plays hockey, I played hockey since I was nine years old. I have been playing for nine years now. All my brothers and sisters played hockey too. I'm sure all of the other kids play hockey. I think what would be best for this reserve would be a hockey arena. That's what I think should be the best two main goals. If they build the arena, they should put a nice big playground where all the kids could play and have a little [space] where parents could watch their kids from, but that's only my dream. I don't think anybody else dreams like that for their kids, the youth, but that's what I would like to see in my future. I'd probably come back if it's not done right. I'd probably do it myself.

Do you like to do anything traditional?

Oh yeah, well my grandpa he used to take us to pow wows all the time. We would come back here and have community meetings. We would share our experiences with the older people. Once a year they have an annual pow wow here that runs in the third week of August every year. That's just a memorial pow wow for David Charles.

Did you ever try eating any traditional food?

Oh yeah, I cook it at home all the time. The favourite [food] I like eating is moose meat stir-fry with wild rice. Pow wow times are the best time that you can enjoy other people's traditional cooking.

How is the attendance for these pow wows? Do the people come from all over?

To tell you the truth, it's dropping. Even our honourable guests who come from the United States haven't come for like three years now. ... The most people I ever counted were thirty-seven hundred people. The least I counted were six hundred and fifty. I think it was last year that it rained all weekend. They had the pow wow in the high school. There was not even like three hundred people in there tops. Our high school is very small too; it's very small. It's only made for only fifty students I think or seventy-five students. Our high school is very small and they had the pow wow in there. I didn't go and all because I was sick. I had the stomach flu. My brother Brian went and that's how many people he said were there.

... This year I'm hoping the pow wow will be big as I used to see it. ... Sunday is the biggest day of the pow wow, [there were] eleven hundred people when I was dancing. All the bleachers were packed and people were walking all over. You couldn't even leave a kid alone. You'd be lost in the crowd. That's how big I used to remember it was. The whole thing was packed. You must have walked down to that pow wow grounds yourself. It's like a small area, but it was covered with all kinds of people.



Ginoogaming Pow Wow Grounds

Do you know if your parents speak their language?

My mom does all the time, but I don't think my dad knows how. My grandmother, she always speaks it to us, but we can't speak it back to her. We understand it, but just can't speak it ourselves because we grew up in the English way. We grew up in the white society and that's when we lost touch of it I guess.

Do you ever learn anything from the elders?

Ah, the only elder I communicate with is my grandpa. He taught me everything he knows about the bush ... and our seven grandfathers. He taught me to survive in the bush. My grandpa taught me everything there is to know. He taught me how to skin a moose and clean a moose. He taught me how to shoot a moose, skin a rabbit, and clean a duck and a goose. He taught me everything that I think I was supposed to know, but there's probably more out there. He taught me everything that he knew and that's where I learned, where us kids, my family and my older brothers and sisters, learned from was my grandpa. I always loved the bush and whenever they would go out in the bush I would go with them. I'd even take off without my parents knowing because they were at work all day. I'd just go in the bush with them and leave them a little note saying that I'm gone with granny and

grandpa in the bush. That's who taught me everything I need to know about being in the bush. [He] told me how to fish, shoot, trap, build a log house, make fire without a lighter, how to skin and clean, and cook. ... [He] taught me to run a motorboat, how to paddle, how to drive a skidoo, and how to swim. Yeah, my grandpa taught me everything that I need. I'm usually shy. I was a shy little girl when I was growing up, so I really couldn't ask elders what to do. But I did ask my grandpa a lot. That's the only person I have talked to as an elder. Back then my elders used to sit down with me they tell me all the same things that I already knew, but I still sit there and listen to them because it's rude to get up and walk away when everybody else does because a story is too boring. A story from an elder is never supposed to be boring. ... I learned most of my stories from my grandpa.

Do you think getting your education is important?

Yes, it's very important for every Native to get educated because there you could take education as far as you want. You could go study three or four subjects if you want in one year. I think education is very important to everybody because you won't get anywhere without it. It'd be good to go to college or university for tons and tons of years. Study the same things there, just to be smarter, come back and have a higher degree for your First Nation and show them what you've done college or university. You got to get your high school diploma first which really is too simple. You won't get far with that and I think high school and college are the most important things that a person needs to get by in life.

Do you think keeping your language is important and what could be done to help retain the language?

Well, for people that speak it now ... those people could come and show us how to speak it. It would be hard for us to understand because we have no idea what they're saying, but when you have an English and Native speaker that could explain the words, translate the word back to you, you could learn from there. There are books to go with the Aboriginal language too. That's what I'm reading, language books, and Native language books too. I'm trying to get my Native language back because I see other people and they're talking this naturally. I'm a Native and I'm supposed to talk like that too. I feel like a little insect that needs to talk like that. These days in white society, English and French is trying to take over our language. ... My white teacher was working at this high school here. He was trying to help us to get our language back. He's was the one that gave me all those books. He gave me a lot of books. Right now, I just try to write the Aboriginal language, well my language. We're all Anglican and my mom speaks Cree, I think, and I don't know how to speak it at all. I'm learning just to write it so far. The day will come when I will speak it. I'll have to know how to write it first before I can speak it. That's what I think. Other people think different.

I don't have anything else to ask you so, if that's all you want to say we'll be finished with this interview.

[I'll] tell you what I want, I wanna write a poetry book, but I have nothing else to write for. I need experience around the world to help me finish it because so far I'm halfway through. I'd say about eight hundred and twelve pages. I need more experience and more opportunities to help me finish it and that made me stop touching this stuff. I found my identity and my identity is to write, to write about the world, to write about the world that I have in my own hands and share it with everybody. To share it with the world through my eyes, that's my main goal. By the time I'm twenty-one, I wanna have a book out and published. I'm working on a book too. Before I did it all by hand, did all the writing by hand, but now I'm translating it into the computer that I have at home. It's going to take me longer, but it would give more time too to get myself ready for the world, to write more experiences. I would have to say, that's what I want to do. I want to write my book and finish it. I want everybody to experience my life I guess. That's why I want to write a book. That's all I have to say.

Is There Anybody There

Each day of life is full of experiences,
but we don't know the differences.
At least 50% of Ginoogaming is influenced,
the other 50 % is enhanced.
No matter where you go,
it will never stop it's flow.
Many of us are scared,
but as well many of us are dared.
When you walk down the streets,
there is so much that creeps.
If you try to change,
what is your range.
Why does everyone blame the youth,
when they can't listen to the truth.
No one thinks of us,
so what's all the fuss.
Until older realize,
this is what really lies.
If you want us to do better,
get us all together.
If you don't know what will hit,
until you get with it.
We all have highs and lows,
but look what shows.
All youths have lots of dreams,
so please help us fulfil these streams.
People always stare,
because we get no where.
We have a major problem,
but who is going to solve' em.
Listen to what we have to say,
then we will choose the other way.
Till that day comes,
we are still the ones.
Don't wait for any day,
because there is more on the way.

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If you don't get this poem, it's about drugs and alcohol, and why we use them. [It's] because we are surrounded by them and there is nothing for us youth to do. One day my baby sister asked me why I do that. I had no choice but to tell her the truth because of the influences in our daily lifestyles.

5

Hornepayne First Nation

P.O. Box 1553 , 274 Front Street
Hornepayne, ON
P0M 1Z0

The Hornepayne First Nation has no reserve land base. The Band Office is located in Hornepayne where most of the band members live. The majority of these band members are registered with the Ginoogaming First Nation without ever having been affiliated with that band. The Hornepayne First Nation's traditional territory is located in the Nagagamisis Lake and Shekak River areas. This territory lies within the boundaries described by Treaty No. 9. The Hornepayne First Nation, recognized as a First Nation by the Matawa Tribal Council, the Nishnawbe Aski Nation, and the Chiefs of Ontario, is currently seeking recognition of land and band status with the Federal and Provincial governments.

Population: approximately 140 band members (1992)

The Hornepayne First Nation offers administration services to the members of the Hornepayne First Nation through the band office located in Hornepayne.

Languages: English, Ojibway, Oji-Cree, and Cree

Delores Zacharie



(recorded August 14,
2003)

Community or reserve life in the past

*1) Describe your life
in your community or
reserve in the past.*

Biographic Information

Name: Delores Lulu Zacharie
Date of Birth: February 17, 1936
Place of Birth: Morse River
Present Address: Hornepayne
Maiden Name: Taylor
Name of Spouse Thomas Zacharie
Number of Children: 8
Number of Grandchildren: 18+
Number of Great-grandchildren: 2
Number of Years Married: 40

... When I was about nine years old, we came up to Hornepayne. We didn't go no place. We stayed in Hornepayne. We grew up in the bush all the time, my dad and my mom, when I was young. My mom passed away in my first year. Now, I'm all alone with just my grandkids. It's only me that's all alone. I have my daughters. My husband died a year ago. ... In the past, I looked after my kids. That's what I did. ... That's all I know.

When you were living in the bush, did you do any hunting or trapping?

... My dad took us hunting. I stayed ... My mom [was at] home and then [he would] come [back] at night. ... Sometimes my dad went two nights in the bush. I stayed with my mom. He told us my mommy was going to take us to the bush to walk around. We lived all the time in the bush when we were small. Now we can't do nothing. ... Sometimes I'd like to go in the bush with my grandkids. Now we can't do nothing. [Its] as if ... somebody else has to boss you around like the game warden. You can't go make a fire. You can't do that. ... You can't even do what you wanted to do before. We grew up in the bush. My dad kept us in the bush. ... We ate bush food all the time. Now I never see bush food. Once in a while I see bush food that people give me ... my uncle and my cousins. Before, we never did that. My dad, even when we're short, sometimes would go in the bush hunting. Nobody was a boss. Now you can't do nothing. Everything is changed now. It's just the white man's ways now. Kids can't talk Indian now ... [they speak] English all the time. Kids now, all they do are all kinds of things. Us, when we were growing up, we never did bad things; even my brothers never did bad things. We never drank. We never smoked up. Now that's what you see. Now every time that white man starts everything. Now it's too easy for kids. They get married and they're separated now. You know why they're separated? The government helps them all out. People get money ... and the government helps women too. When my daddy married my mom, she never separated. I don't believe married life now. I see people don't get married. People only get married for a ... couple of years or a couple of months. That's the way it is. That's what I see now. I see so many

things changing now. That's their life now. People ... kids want to live in town all the time. That's where they want to be. ... They don't want to go in the bush. We lived in the bush all the time. ... Everything is changed now.

Did your dad trap?

Yah, ... that's how we lived. My dad trapped muskrat and in the fall [he trapped] beaver and marten. My dad never worked ... just in summertime, a little bit. Sometimes when we can get any kind of job, we work in the summer. [In the] fall we went into the bush until spring and then we came back home. We went out all the time in the bush. I never went to school.

What did your dad do in the summer?

Sometimes he got job and helped the people. ... They didn't seem to get any help making houses and camps. Sometimes he worked at different kinds of jobs. ... He didn't take any steady jobs.

The guy I married, my husband Tom Zacharie, he worked over thirty years on the railway track. ... He was working all the time.

Is that for the CNR?

Yeah, he worked for 32 years. He worked 2 years for the ONR.

Did he retire?

Eh eh, like two years ago. ... He stopped working, got sick, and died. [He was] a good guy working all the time. He supported his kids.

Did you eat the animals that your dad killed?

We ate moose meat, rabbit, beaver, partridge, and fish. We don't eat marten, we just ... threw it out. There were only four of us in the family. I have two brothers and two girls there's four of us.

Did you catch a lot of fish a long time ago?

Eh eh. ... My dad put up the net for fishing. My dad killed a moose, we didn't. Now we can't do it, eh. There has to be a game warden all the time. We can't even put a net in now. That's what people do. The government won't let [us]. ... Now the people have to work each week for food. ... Everything's changed, kids too ... [they] can't talk Indian and lost their language. That's sad. The kids now all start drinking and the girls start fooling around. ... When I first met my boyfriend, I was thirteen years old. I never used to drink. I

never used to smoke. We just went out for a while and came back home. I never had no trouble. [It was] the same thing with my brother. My brother was working on the railroad for about 18 or 19 years. I never saw my brother to go to jail. I never saw my brother to go to court. Now, what do you see? Kids in court. Something is wrong today with the family. Some one needs to know what happened ... and what's going on. People don't need that. The only thing is that they come and go with white piece of paper. ... [They] usually come and take you to court. The people still here ... they boss everything.

Did you smoke the fish that you caught too?

No. My dad did everything. He froze them in the fall. He smoked them and put them away. He did moose meat too. He froze rabbits and two small pike. In the spring, he didn't kill moose because we didn't have a deep freeze. We just used what we killed and collected. We collected in the fall until we got nothing left. We get fresh fish or have to go and set rabbit snares. We took whatever was there. I guess you know everybody lived on bush food.

When you buy your meat from the store, what does it do to you compared to bush food a long time ago?

Bush food is better. I always think that. Because when we were growing up ... we never get sick. I never saw my mom to go back here. I never saw my dad go and see a doctor. Now what do we get? ... pills and needles everyday now. I never saw one before. When my mom had babies too, nobody went to the hospital ... [They] just have a baby and go home. ... Sometimes I think I'll never change my life. I always believed this because my mother says, "Why did everybody have to change our life?" We shouldn't be changing our life. We should be staying in the bush yet. Kids would be nice staying in the bush. I had a hard life. Now I lost two of my grandkids. ... I find it hard for me anyway. Before you never saw it happen that way. Never never, do you never hear about it. Now when the people die it's different. Now half [of the] people are gone now. Bad things are going on. ... Bad people are around smoking up. The kids are doing all kinds of things. That's kind of too bad. ... When I was married, I stayed at home. I stayed with my husband all the time. I never fooled around. I used to drink ... but did not to go out overnight ... and did not fool around. I came back home, stayed home, and slept. It was my life.

Are your brothers and sisters still alive today?

No, my brother died. I have my sister, who's chief in Hornepayne. [I have another] one in Haileybury. That's my younger sister. I have my stepbrother. My mom also raised a boy, Hank Turner from Thunder Bay. He was only two weeks old when my mom got him. Now

he's forty. ... He's still in the reserve. He stays in the home over there. I love to call him my brother because he stayed with me since he was a baby.

When you were living in the bush, what did you live in?

Some kind of tent, some kind of house. My dad made an old log house. We lived there.

Did you live in the same place all the time?

Yah, at the one place my dad went trapping. After that, we moved to Hornepayne. We came here every summer.

Did your dad want to move to Hornepayne?

Yah, everybody came to Hornepayne after my grandpa died. I didn't know why. After my grandpa died we would come over to Hornepayne and we never went back. We never went anywhere.

Did your husband support you all the time?

Eh, eh. He supported his six kids.

How was Hornepayne a long time ago?

As far as I know, I think it's changed just a little bit.

Where did your parents come from?

My mom was from Kabina (Kabinakagami) or McClyde. That's what she told me. She used to talk in Cree. I don't remember Kabina or McClyde. My mom used to speak nice Cree. My dad was born in Osnaburgh. That's where my dad's from. He died here too.

Do you speak in your language all the time?

Ojibway? When I was very small, I started to talk in English.

How about your brothers and sisters, do they speak Ojibway too?

Eh, eh. I talk in Indian to Laura, my sister and my brothers, Sandy and my stepbrother too. We talk Indian ... in our language.

Community or reserve life today

2) Describe your life in your community today.

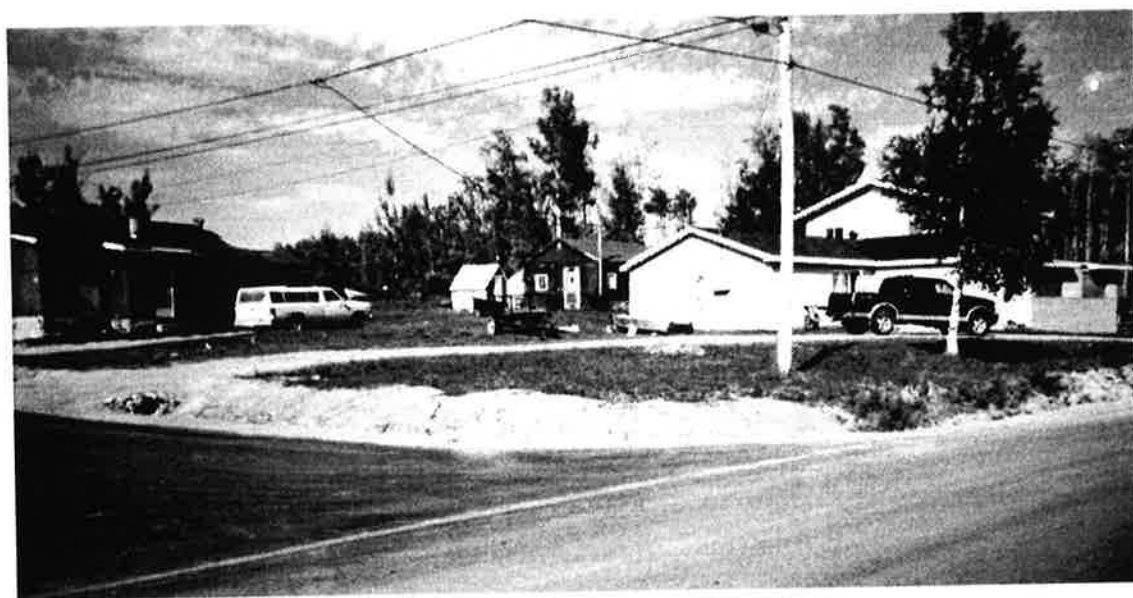
Um, not too bad. I find that nobody bothers me. Everybody is good with me. I don't bother nobody.

Is it good living in town?

Eh, eh, most of the time. I didn't have a place for a while. I just rented this place ... after my husband died.

Were you living on the reserve a long time ago?

No, just on top of the hill. There was no Indian village. ... People just settled in. I used to live there too. We did everything. We never stayed on Anishnawbe Aski (Indian land) ... never, never. We were living all the time on the hilltop. We would like to get one in Hornepayne, but it's five years now. Even Moose Factory still can't get one. We would like to have one here for the kids.



Hornepayne

Do they have a school in town?

These kids are going to school at the white people's school and in the high school too. My chief wants to make a high school here. ... They get picked on all the time. I just don't know how I'm gonna learn [why] the kids behave the way that they do. ... I really find it different when you go somewhere. All my kids don't stay here in Hornepayne. All my daughters moved from here. There is just me here. I can't leave Hornepayne. All my kids are trying to come back for me. I wish to ... go back with them. One is living in North Bay right now. Maybe I will go to North Bay and live with them. My daughter Leonne has been living in Sudbury a long time. ... That's the way it goes now. The kids live in their own places.

Do you go out sometimes?

No. You know what, I can't go all over ... my feet. I have casts. I can't go cleaning the floor. I hate traveling. I don't want to travel.

When you live here in town, do you go out sometimes?

Yeah, sometimes I go shopping. Sometimes I go to the Sault (Sault Ste. Marie). When I go to the Sault sometimes I go to the store ... or for a doctor's appointment.

Do you get a chance to see your daughter when you go to the Sault?

Eh, eh. I'm hoping it too. I started to go visit there before school started, but I'm gonna go to the pow wow first.

Who takes you to the pow wow?

Sometimes I get my cousin Daisy. She takes me over there. I have to clean my trailer out to pay for my trip. I need about a hundred [dollars] to go to these. ... I could go with my son-in-law. ... I could go and then he can take me and stay at the camp. I can't do nothing. In the morning I can't get up, I have to pull myself out of the bed. If I sleep on the ground who's gonna pull me up? I don't trust myself to go in a tent. ... We live in a small tent. ... Maybe I'll meet my cousins out there. Maybe I'll go overnight. I have my cousins over there in Heron Bay.

When did you start going to pow wows?

I started going about three years now. I went to the pow wow over in Hornepayne. I never go to Longlac. I don't like Longlac. I never go to the pow wow in Longlac.

How far is Heron Bay from here?

You gotta pass by White River and Mobert.

Is that the first one?

No, that's the second time with my sister. We had the first one in the bush. This year we had it in Hornepayne.

Did a lot of people come there?

Only about a hundred people came.

Alec Taylor



(recorded August 14,
2003)

Community or reserve life in the past

1) Describe your life in your community or reserve in the past.

Well, when I started growing up, I stayed with my dad trapping.

Some of the time I was not old enough to work. There was no place to work, no highway, just the CNR road. That's all [there] was here and as I saying the CN, yeah, that's all [there] was. There was no highway there. Yeah, not long ago they made a highway here. ... I worked in the main highway there too. Those people they lived at Nagagamisii. They lived there. There was no highway, no railroad, nothing. They started a train going through here in Hornepayne that came out of Thunder Bay ... It goes to Winnipeg. ... They used to get by the train just to load the groceries ... from here about 40 miles at Nagagamisish. They [used to] take those groceries to Ginoogamisii Lake. They put a Hudson's Bay store there. The Hudson Bay's manager there could read and write English. He used his own language ... to run that Hudson Bay store. I remember he made his own portable sawmill, maybe to help the ordinary saw to make lumber. It didn't need gas; it just had an ordinary blade, a saw blade, a big long one. ... That's the way it started here Hornepayne. Everybody, all the Indians and half-Indians were here. Longlac, Aroland, and Calstock, are all Indian reserves. Ginoogamisii is just where they find the good place for wild animals, moose, and fish. That's the place you go up [and find] about eight or ten families. I seen my brother ... already grown up, just like a man, working. He had been taken. They put him on a farm. That's for everybody to have potatoes at least. They were that poor. Now after that work everybody started to grow up, and everybody scattered around. They started to make an Indian reserve. We got ours at Indian Reserve #77. ... All those Indian reserves around here began to be settled after a time with people. We got a sawmill and then we got lumber. We didn't have to make a portable sawmill. That's the way it goes. You see logs a long time ago. We had no railroad, no highway nothing. [We went] by birch bark canoe. There was no factory yet. ... We lived pretty good. I remember, of course, I remember 75 years ago that one man [had] two wives each and had 20 kids, 22 kids in the family. That's a government gift to start. Then we started to get homes—little ones. Yes, lots of fur that time before the forest started to burn. [There] was nothing used to kill a fire. Yeah, the government has no plans or nothing. When a fire was going we had to grab our canoes to go to a fire. We had to kill a fire with

Biographic Information

Name: Alec Bell Taylor

Date of Birth: April 27, 1913

Place of Birth: Nagagamisish

Present Address: Hornepayne

Name of Spouse: Isabelle Taylor

Number of Children: 8

Number of Years Married: 55 Years

wide jacks and a waterproof backpack. [You] fill your backpack with water. There was a big fire right here. It was 200, two by three in size and that's by a hundred. Lots of million of miles were burned. ... That fire was all over Longlac. ... There used to be an old road, a contract road that belonged to the CNR, going from Hearst [to] Nakina. He (the government) took that off not long ago and made this highway. I didn't tell anyone anything, but we really had a hard time, [making] a living. Yeah, before that we had lots of fur. ... At places like Nagagamisis and Shekak, where there were once Indians and Indian villages. ... He (the manager) was pretty good too. He had a good price for fur. Lots of fur at that time too.

Did you do any trapping a long time ago?

We lived good, lots of moose. Not like today. Yeah, I trapped. I always say since I was a little boy. I worked after I grew up. Well, maybe I was only about 20 years old. In 1930, sometime, I got married. Yeah, a little old. It didn't take me long to get a white hat. I was a white hat for 35 years. ... After I decided to do something, so I made my camps: a fishing camp and a moose hunting camp. Yah, [I] made a few hundred dollars there. ... In summer and in fall [we would come] here at Nagagamisi for trapping and go back to Longlac in spring after trapping muskrat. ... I made a few hundred dollars working in summertime. Yeah, in Longlac we made a garden. We got a garden place. We were gonna make it inside the Indian reserve. The reserve used big logs to make log houses. There was a lot of lumber. We had a sawmill that already looked nice and big. That's how we lived. ... Yeah, I went all over right up to Winnipeg, Manitoba, to Quebec, and Niagara Falls, New York. That's the place with big farms. There's only one place you get fruit in Niagara Falls.

What kind of animals did you trap?

It's open from November to March. ... In between that time we don't kill no furs. We get wolves, fox, fisher, beaver, otter, marten, and mink—all the kinds that are out here.

Where did you sell your furs?

[At the] Hudson Bay store. ...

Community or reserve life today

2) Describe your life in your community today.

Today, I'm eighty-seven. ... After 65, I got an Old Age Pension, Canada Pension, CNR [Pension], and GST. ... I got four anyway. ... [The government] charges me close to ten hundred dollars a month. I have to pay every month. You look like you are getting money, but it's taken back. That's good for a month there. I quit trapping a little bit early too, as soon as I got my old age pension. I gave up after my wife passed away and after my kids

[left]. They went all over ... scattered. My house is getting old. Nobody gave me hand. I'm sick in one my leg in the joint. I use my wheelchair to go around.

How long have you been living here?

At this place here? Five years. Five years I just eat, sit, and drink a little bit of beer. That's what I did in the last five years.



Hornepayne

Where did you live before that?

Shekak. Yeah, Shekak and Hornepayne. Of course, I had a job in Hornepayne on the CNR. Later I had a white hat and so I could go to a better place and be a foreman myself. I had three guys with me and myself, four men working every ten miles or something. ... You have to look after your track good to keep the job. Yeah, we made a pretty good life, my wife and me.

How many brothers and sisters did you have?

Seven brothers out of twenty-two, the rest are all girls.

Is that your family? (pointing to a picture)

That's me as a little boy. That's the George family, but it's not all of them. My dad and me built our own church in Shekak. We had no sawmill around there at that time, nothing. That's when they went and took the pictures, eh. That's in 1930. You can see our church. It's there. Our church was just a big ordinary church. It's, what, about twelve miles east from here to Shekak. Oh, it was a nice church. We ordered ... that [church] from Manitoba.

Who is that? (pointing to a picture)

My sister, my older sister.

What's her name?

Adeline [Taylor]. [All kinds of] strange people come to see her. Yeah, a hundred and three. Yeah, she can [still] feed herself. We eat and sit down with her in the lounge and the rest in here. You gotta push her in a wheelchair. Yeah, that's a pretty good age, eh, a hundred and three. That's why people come to see her. Different people, they come from far away.

Yeah, my brother never worked, [he was] always busy preaching. That's why it makes the best church. In summertime, all the people came. He stayed with us in a tent, yeah, but I was only nine years old at that time. ...

Ross Shaganash

(recorded August 14,
2003)



Community or reserve life in the past

1) Describe your life in your community or reserve in the past.

My name is Ross Shaganash. I was born in Hearst, Ontario. ... I have three sisters. I grew up with my grandparents. ... I was raised by my mom for a bit. It was good though ... growing up with them. I went to school here in town, in this community here (Hornepayne). I went to the Catholic school over there. I only attended school to about Grade 8.

Did you say there were only four of you in your family?

Well, my mother she had three of us, two girls and me, but I never grow up with them. I grew up with my grandparents.

Are your grandparents still alive?

My grandmother is [still] alive. She lives in Ginoogaming. My grandpa is deceased. He died in 1997 or '96.

Did your grandparents raise you since you were small?

Yes, ever since I can remember. Ever since I was a baby, we lived here Hornepayne. We moved to Ginoogaming. I was there for a bit, but I didn't like it there so I came back here. I don't know, it's just better for me, I guess.

When you were growing up did you ever live in the bush before living in the community?

No, we'd go in the bush on weekends, with my grandfather after he finished work, because we had a trap ground [there]. We still do, up by Innesburg. Yah, we used to go over there for the weekends. He used to set some traps for marten and beaver.

So, did your grandfather teach how to trap, hunt, and fish?

Yah, he taught us how to trap, hunt, and fish.

Biographic Information

Name: Ross Ernest Shaganash

Date of Birth: March 28, 1975

Place of Birth: Hearst

Present Address: Hornepayne

Education: Grade 10

Interests/Hobbies: Sports, Reading, and Fishing

Was this all done in Innesburg?

Yah, when ... my great-grandfather passed away my grandmother got his trap ground and from there we started going to Ellesford not too far from Innesburg. We usually go out there.

Do you know if those campgrounds have a name right now?

Awww, no, I'm not sure. ... I just know where it is. I know it's by Innesburg.

What kind of animals did you trap?

We trapped marten, mostly marten, [some] beaver, and lynx ... and that's about it.

Where do you sell your furs?

We sold our first furs down here in town at the Northern [store].

What kind of fish did you catch when you went fishing?

Well, walleye, I eat walleye

Did you catch any sturgeon?

Sturgeon ... no, no, I don't remember. I remember one time we were on this canoe trip when I was young and I went to Big Trout Lake and Fort Severn. I was up there. I must have been about sixteen. That was a good experience for me ... getting out of here, going somewhere else, and trying something new. So, I did that and over there, we were eating sturgeon. I didn't really like it because it tasted too rubbery, you know.

Did you ever get along with your sisters even though you didn't grow up with them?

Actually, my younger sister lives in town here now. I used to go visit them. They used to live in Wawa, so we used to go visit them over there, visit my parents and my sisters.

Are your parents living in Wawa now?

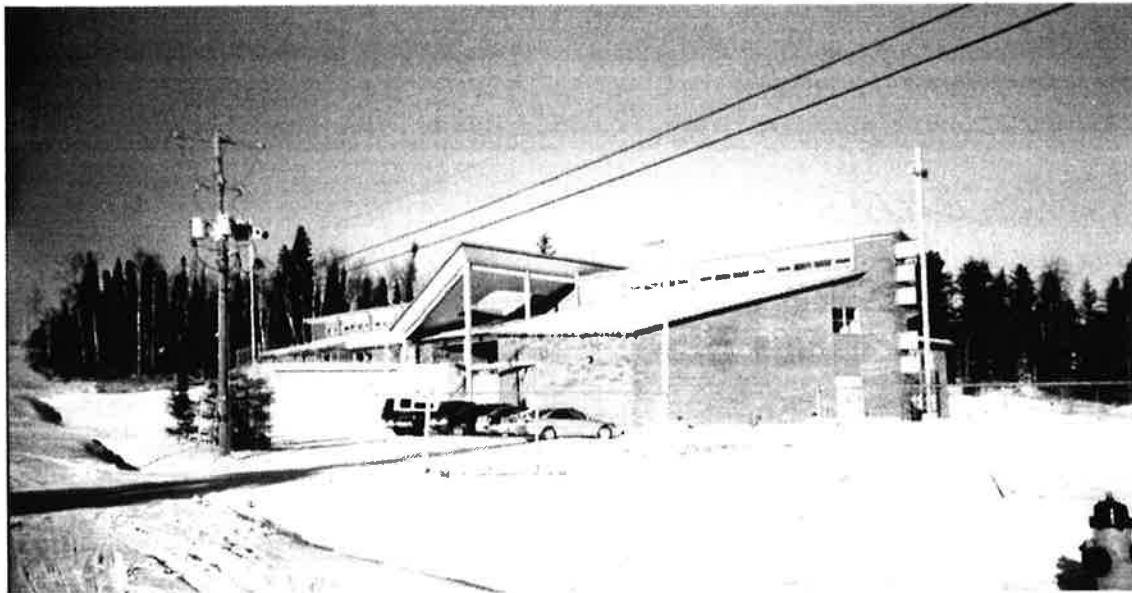
No, everybody's living back here pretty much.

Are they all staying in Hornepayne?

No. ... There's just that one road and some of the Native people around town are just down the road here ... Some [are] up by the arena. Like there's no reserve here, so we're pretty much scattered around all over.

Did you go to school here all the time?

Well, I went to school throughout elementary here and then when I got to high school there I went for a while and did odd jobs. Now I got a day job and started working. I went back to school for a while. I tried ... when I was in school ... but I didn't finish. I quit. I dropped out. I took some job training courses, firefighting courses, and all that, just to better my education. I just took upgrading courses.



Hornepayne High School

Did you find it hard going to school?

Well, not really. I found I couldn't concentrate. When I took these job-training courses there's more involvement with the training. You're training for the job and you don't have to sit in the classroom all day and worry about a book or worry about doing the work. So, I guess for me that's how it was when I was growing up. I started going to job training courses when I was eighteen. ... I found out that was an easier way to learn. ... Most of the questions are like 25% on the class unit and 75% on the on-hand job training.

When you were living with your grandparents, did they talk to you in their language?

They taught me, but I never tried to talk. I understand them when they were talking. I never got to pick it up.

Do your own parents know the language?

Oh yes, some. I know they don't know that much.

How about your sisters?

No, I don't even know if they understand it a bit.

Did you ever learn anything from your grandparents about using things from the bush for medicine?

Oh no. The only thing we did in the bush was to go trapping and that's it. ... I don't think there was that kind of thing. Over here too, we're just starting to know our traditional culture right now, you know. We're starting to learn about medicine men. We're starting to learn about pow wows. Like not too long ago, we had our second annual pow wow here. So, just right now, we're just trying to get things going so we could get all that information and pass it on to our younger generation or younger youth that are growing up: the kids growing up there now, so that way everything won't be left behind.

Do you know if they had any mining around this area?

No. I don't think they did.

What was the main industry in the town?

In Hornepayne? There is a timber company and CN Rail. Those are the two main [industries].

What's the name of the timber company?

[Olav] Haavaldsrud Timber Company. See that company out there? Now the other one is just CN Rail. Those are the two main [industries] ... from this day. Now everybody works either at Harvey's, the Hallmark Hornepayne Centre, or CN Rail now.



Hallmark Hornepayne Centre

Did you ever look for work there as a student?

Oh no. I did correspondence there once and that was just for school.

When you were growing up there did you ever see any fish being smoked?
... My grandmother used to smoke her moose meat and that's about it. No.

What did they do to keep the meat from being spoiled other than smoking it?
They froze it, yeah [they] put it in a freezer.

Did you do that when you were living in the bush?

We only used to go there ... on weekends. We only stayed out there so my grandpa could do work or he'd take a week off and we'd go in the bush and set our traps. [We would] just go back every weekend. On the weekends, that's when we caught beaver. On weekends, we would take the traps out on Sunday. We'll check them, leave them overnight ... two nights maybe, go check them, take them back out on Sunday, and go home for the whole week.

Were you taught how to skin animals?

Yah. My grandfather used to throw weasels out. He told me to practice with those weasels. Then after that I saw the way he skinned marten and beavers. It wasn't that hard as I used to do the small ones.

Did you do any hunting for geese or ducks?

Oh yah, with my uncle Jeff, yah. We used to go out hunting, but not much though.

Where would you go for that?

We'd go around the trap grounds or where most of my uncles live along Longlac. ... So, we would go around wherever they wanted to go around there. I'm not sure of the spots they went around there, but that's where we used to go. See, most of my family now live off the land. They all live in Ginoogaming.

Did you get a chance to eat their fish too?

Oh yeah, but I can't eat it though. I get an allergic reaction a bit. I break out ... get really sick. I'm not sure why that is.

Was this community the same size a long time ago as it is today?

Pretty much, yah ... once the younger generation grows up they take off. They go to school because there's nothing around here. There's no school. We're right in the middle of both highways. So they take off like to the city or something to go to school. I did that when I was young too. I used to mess around when I was seventeen. I looked for funding and I took off for school. I couldn't find no funding, so I just went anyway. I went on

welfare assistance and in the fall. I went to school. That's the only way I could've stayed in school. At least I did the job training.

Where you old enough to remember if they had the any roads built in the community?

As long as I remember, there were roads here, yeah.

How is it for picking berries around here?

Oh ... not much. I'm not one to pick berries ... too many flies. I remember when we were kids; we'd go pick berries. I remember the family would come over and visit my grandmother and we'd all go out and pick some berries. I don't know how now. I haven't picked berries for a long time.

Did you ever make bannock?

No, every time I try to make bannock the dough is very sticky. ... I made dumplings once and my dumplings were rock hard in the middle. It was nice on the outside and when you get to the middle there, it was like a little rock in there. So, I tried.

Did anybody teach you or did you just learn on your own?

I just watched what she was doing sitting around with my grandmother at the table there. So when I grew up, yeah, I tried it, you know, give it a shot ... tried.

Do you have relatives living here?

Yah, I have relatives here.

What did you do in the past for entertainment?

We usually played hockey. We had quite a few of his kids around here when I was growing up. So we used to all play hockey or hang out in the gym there. We used to hang out for road hockey or floor hockey in there ... [We would] go sliding and things like that.

What kind of books did you like reading?

Mostly comics. I like Superman comics and all that junk going around. I just like reading comic books.

Was there any particular comic character that you liked?

All of them. All of them I guess. ... I read a good book, actually not too long ago, maybe a couple of months ago. You may have heard of it ... [In Search of] April Raintree. Have you heard of that one by Beatrice? ... Her last name was Campbell (Culleton) or something. She's from Winnipeg, I believe. Read that book. She's well known in Winnipeg.

Have you ever had any train derailments around here?

Oh, you know it happens at least it happens a couple of times not right in town, but maybe five miles out of town or whatever. The only way to get out of town is if you have your own vehicle or by train. I don't even think the airport around here runs anymore too. I know when I was younger it used to run. But I'm not sure now. ... They only do it for emergencies like an ambulance or something when stuff that happens. I think that's how they use the airport for now. I'm not sure though. I could be mistaken.

Are there any settlements there?

Oh no, they used to live just down by there ... way before I was born actually. My aunt and uncle used to live ... just down the hill over there. Then maybe after a while I guess that water got no good to drink. So, they moved them on top of the hill. ... I don't remember that though, but my grandmother told me stories about that, eh. Those two, they used to stay across the track.

Did they have their own band office a long time ago?

I don't remember. I think they just opened it up ... maybe seven or eight years ago, I could be mistaken again, but I'm not too sure when it was that [the band office] opened up. I went away for school myself to get out of town because there's nothing there. I remember the chief over the years had something to help out the Native people. There was something going on, but it wasn't real, like a band office or anything. It was just their own personal little office. ... [They are] trying to set something up.



Hornepayne First Nation Band Office

Did you ever go to any pow wows before they started having pow wows here?

Yeah, when I was a kid, we used to go to pow wows just around the Hornepayne area. That's about it. I remember going to those ones when I was young.

Do you ever do any dancing?

Oh no, I haven't.

Did you ever do any traditional things like a sweat lodge?

I've been to a sweat once. That was it.

What did you think about it?

I thought it was really something. ... The experience was really good. It's different, but I thought it was really nice.

Do you know if your parents or your grandparents were into those kinds of things?

I'm not sure.

Do you know if they were spiritual?

No, I don't think so.

Community or reserve life today

2) Describe your life in your community today.

Today, it is like when I was growing up. We went over to school [much] like I see what is going on now. There's nothing here now organized or being offered. There's a high school that only has main classes to take. They didn't have no small engines [course] ... or no other fields to get into. They don't offer that course here or whatever course you want. They don't offer too much in the school. So that's why everybody usually looks for funding because you have bigger schools and they can have more things to chose from, get in the direction that they want to go in, or take the courses they want to take. That's the way I see it. I see children leaving here. They return in the summer, sure, to see their family and all that during the holidays. ... Sure, they graduate everybody ... but they don't offer some of those courses. ...

Are the youth going to be our future leaders?

Oh yeah, you know, they are and it's good to see our youth around North Bay. ... They are all encouraged to get an education and go to school. You know it's really hard to get funding sometimes through our school. ... They're ready to go. I think it's really great that

you're going out to get your education, come back to your community and help everybody out. I think it's great what they do in there.

Did you ever did any chances attend any of the chiefs' meetings they have?

I attended one chiefs' meeting not too long ago, an election one, that they had at Ginoogaming.

Did the chief take you all there or did you go on your own?

I went on my own. They just sent me over there, so I went. I went over there as a guest to watch them.

Does Hornepayne First Nation have a youth council?

No. As I was saying, everybody moves out of town. ... There are more elders than youth around this community because once the youth grow up they go to school somewhere else because there's nothing here to offer them.

Some of the Native people are living on top of the hill there. Is that a village?

Yeah, that's Hornepayne. ... They just made that place over there and it's all Indian.

Would you know what the purpose for that was?

I wouldn't know. I'm sure one of the elders would know.

Do you think the living conditions would be better for the Natives over on this side than across the tracks?

Oh yeah, for sure. Over there, it's like damp all over the edge and that. Their water was on the river or something. They're drinking water that is not good to use.

Did you live over there across the tracks?

No, not myself, no. My parents and uncles did though when I was growing up. When I grew up my grandparents had a house.

Do you find that people who live here have diabetes and that?

As far as I can see, my health is good. Yeah, I'm good. I can do a lot of things. I'm pretty active.

How about for your family, your grandparents, your parents?

My mom there, Joanne, has like convulsions or seizures. She has high blood pressure and all that. My sisters are both healthy. They're active. My grandmother she's just had like ... measles and all that.

When you used to eat animals did you find there was a difference in eating wild meats and meats from the store?

I don't know, not really. I just ate. I didn't care. I guess it didn't bother me.

Do you think that wild meat makes you strong?

I think it's more fresh and everything. It's not all packaged. It's nice and fresh. It's got a better texture and taste, sure.

Community or reserve life in the future

3) Describe what your life might be like in your community or reserve in the future.

... I'm starting right now. I'm putting on a computer course for everyone on trial to get them involved in computers, you know, so that they can have access to the Internet and things like that. So I think it will be really great if we all work together as each community and stick through it ... [Then] everything in our community will turn out all right.

Do you think they'll ever get their own reserve land?

Ah, it's a long time we've waited, to be honest, you know I really don't know nothing about that. I just started working here last year. It seems like a long ways away. ... Ever since I lived there, you know, nothing. Not too long ago maybe last year, we used go to Nagagamisis at the park over there. We had a pow wow out there just last year. They say our ancestors are there. [They] were buried over there. There are a lot of Native people from Hornepayne that are buried over there ... where they have that Provincial Park now. Just last year we just went over there. They finally let us put our pow wow in there, but the thing is, once we put it up we have to take everything all down. We had to take down our arbor and everything else. They told us we'll let you guys stay here ... and have the event for three days and after that you have to take everything down. You know the arbor looked really nice too. We made it look like the one outside here all natural. I don't see what the problem was; they could have just slapped it up. It could have been a nice little attraction for the tourists in the park, if they saw something like that. This is like the first time in a long time that the Ontario government who runs the park finally let us go on there and do something. That's where everybody mostly used to live in Nagagami. Then they moved them all over here across the tracks as I was saying to Hornepayne. Some people went to Constance Lake.

Do you know if the First Nation is looking at areas where they might have reserve land if they got it?

I won't be able to tell you that either. I know we're looking at a place in Nagagami to have our pow wow at all times. They were talking to the park ranger over there. ... We were all looking and discussing things about where we're going to have our pow wow, so we can have it and leave it there without taking it apart and doing it all over every year. So, we went out there and we're discussing to have our pow wow grounds at a main spot at the park. It's a step closer, you know

What did say that area is called?

Nagagamisis. That's where all our [ancestors are] back there around the river. You can see crosses around the lake.

Did you ever hear of a place called Shekak?

Yeah, that's where we used to go. They were going to build something over there I believe.

Do you know where that is?

It's on Highway 11, going towards Hearst, not too far from this highway. It is the first bridge I believe.

Is that the Shekak River?

Yeah.

Is there anybody living there?

No.

Were people living there a long time ago?

Yeah, a long time ago. It's the same thing with Nagagami there. That's where we used to live. People used to travel up the river by there.

Do you know if the chiefs of communities like Longlac, Constance Lake, and here, work together?

Yeah. The chiefs were discussing a plan for building some kind of tourist thing to take people down the river, show them where we lived, and take them to Nagagamisis Lake. ... I don't know what to find there now. I haven't heard anything in a while now.

Do you think if they ever constructed anything that it will benefit this First Nation?

Well, when I was at that meeting, I didn't think there were many jobs for our First Nations. In the long run, it won't be making money. Because they pay, like, minimum wage, seven dollars, for minimum wages. Just getting from Hornepayne to Shekak everyday for two weeks we spend like 200 hundred bucks, just by going back and forth to work. So in the long run, I don't think it will benefit us. If they had another plan to build a [log] cabin out there, maybe then, it will benefit for our community. ... I would work seven days and get three days off. But I don't think so.

Do you think that the pow wow is getting bigger?

I don't know ... it just stayed around the same size. Last year we had our pow wow at Nagagami. ... The white people there came too and checked it out. There were quite a few people over there, but we had our pow wow at the same time as Mobert. ... I found this one wasn't as good. We should have it on a different date and then we would have had a better turnout.

Do you think you'll get the opportunity to finish off your high school?

Actually, I was going to take that GED, General Equivalency Diploma. It's just like a High School Diploma. I took three months of studying before. So that's what I was going to do.

Would you encourage the youth to continue with their education?

Yeah, you know, staying in school is the best. ... I'm trying to go back to school. It's hard to find funding out there. So yeah, ... I encourage youth to just stay in school. Use what you get out of it. That's what I always say. I realize I made a mistake too. I made a mistake by quitting school, you know.

What do you think should be done to retain the language?

To retain it? I think schools should have a [Native language] class. See when you go to school, they have a French teacher, what's wrong with a Native teacher? I think the schools around Ontario should offer a Native class in elementary schools, high schools, colleges, and universities. ... Most of us in this community don't know our language. I would like to know it, you know. I would like to speak it. You hear French people talking, you know what they're talking about ... you understand some words. It would be nice to talk, you know ... to talk with your Native buddy there and have them look at you and try to figure out what you're saying. You know what I mean. I'd like that. Actually, I think schools should Native classes in schools. It would be great. Kids would benefit from that a lot.

6

Long Lake #58 First Nation

P.O. Box 609
Longlac, ON
P0T 2A0

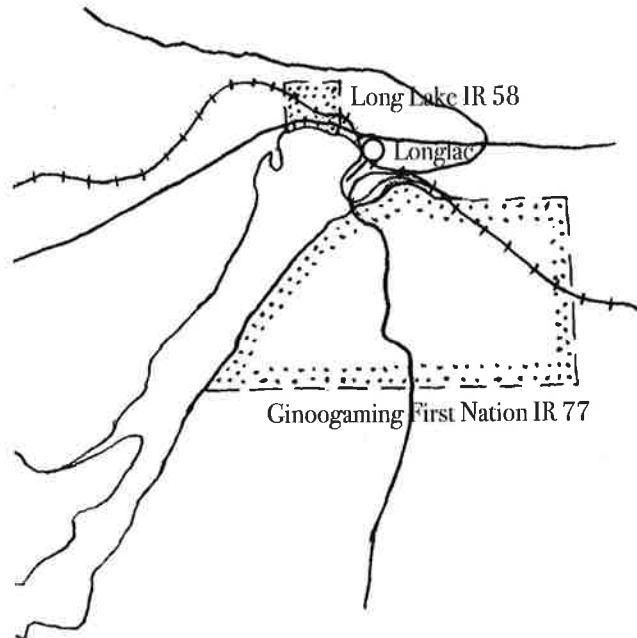
The Long Lake #58 First Nation is located on the Long Lake Indian Reserve 58 approximately 35 kilometres northeast of Geraldton,

Ontario. This reserve is 217 hectares (0.8 square miles) in size. The Long Lake 58 Indian Reserve, found within the area described by the Robinson-Superior Treaty (1850) and Treaty No. 9 (1906), was created in 1914. The Long Lake #58 First Nation is affiliated with the Anishinabek Nation–Northern Superior region and the Matawa Tribal Council.

Population: 1,203 registered band members with 432 people living on-reserve (June, 2006)

Languages: English and Ojibway

The Long Lake #58 First Nation's past and current economic development projects include the construction of the Migizi Wazisin Eagle Nest Elementary School, an Aboriginal Head Start centre, and on-reserve housing. In addition, several local area businesses such as a community general store and gas bar and those related to the forestry industry have appeared in recent years.



Schedule of Reserves – Treaty No. 9 – 1906
Long Lake

“ In the province of Ontario, beginning at a point where the “Suicide” or Little Albany river enters Long lake, thence in a southerly direction four miles, following the lake frontage, of a sufficient depth to give an area of twenty-seven square miles.”

–from *The James Bay Treaty (Treaty No. 9)*, 1964, pp. 12



Hudson Co–Lake Long, August 1906, James Bay Treaty Tour, C275-1-0-3, S7641, Archives of Ontario

Emily Wesley



(recorded August 12,
2003)

Community or reserve life in the past

*1) Describe your life
in your community or
reserve in the past.*

I remember ... my dad and my mom, all of my family together. There were eight of us: four girls, four boys, my mother, and my dad. I worked all summer since I was old, since I was twenty-nine years old. After that, I got married. I went with my dad trapping. ... My dad showed me how to go trapping in the morning. ... I was young at that time.

Biographic Information

Name: Emily Wesley
Date of Birth: March 13, 1914
Place of Birth: Lynx
Present Address: Longlac
Former Name: Fisher
Name of Spouse: Sinclair Wesley
Number of Children: 6
Grandchildren: 15
Great-grandchildren: 21
Number of Years Married: 56
Education: none
Interests/Hobbies: Cooking



At Long Lake, August 1906, James Bay Treaty Tour, C275-T-0-5, S7645, Archives of Ontario

Where were you born?

In the woods, by the tracks over there. ...

How far was that from here?

Oh, you go right through from there, lots of roads, you go far ...

Is there anybody living there now?

Nobody, just fishermen go there sometimes.

You mean Lynx used to be a small town?

No a station, a section man worked there.

Did you do any hunting or fishing there?

Oh yeah I went there with my older brother. My husband went fishing there too.

What kind of fish you catch?

We caught pike in a large net. [There are] not too many fish there. [We caught] whitefish in the other lake over there.

What kind of animals did you trap?

Muskrat, beaver, and lynx.

When you trapped animals, did you eat them too?

Oh, I don't like to eat lynx. I don't like that. I eat moose meat and rabbits. I like fish.

Did you eat beaver too?

Oh yeah, I like beaver. I smoked them. My old man and me ... smoked beaver. My old man was a good trapper, number one. I'm always thinking about it. I wish I could see him sometimes I wait for him to come. All the time I'm alone here. ...

Where did you do all this trapping and hunting?

Oh, there were not too many animals over there at that time. [There was] not much to do, just my old man and me trapping. [There is] no more trap line there. My brother told me that I could have his trap line. There were lots of beaver and mink. That's right, [there were] lots of beaver when I went with baba, my old man. We went trapping like three days ago in the bush. We went trapping all day. There were lots of beaver.

Did you live in the bush all the time?

No. When I got married, I stayed in town on this side of reserve.

Did you go to school?

Me? No, nobody went to school in those days, even my youngest brother. ...

Were there any schools back then a long time ago?

No, not here. [There was one in] Thunder Bay.

Your mom and dad didn't send you over there?

No.

When you were living with your mother and father, what did you do together?

Oh, I worked with my mother when I was young. When I was young, I stayed with them. ... I worked hard. I washed dishes, washed [clothes] there with a washboard, and melted snow to make water. ...

Did you have lots to eat that time?

Oh yeah, sometimes there was lots to eat and sometimes there was nothing to eat. ... [There weren't] many fish at that time.

Did you or your husband ever use anything from the bush as medicine?

Medicine? No nothing. ... We lived in the bush far away.

Where did you meet your husband?

In Longlac.

What was he doing in Longlac?

Oh, [he] worked sometimes cutting poplar. ... He used to cut wood all the time.



Long Lake Forest Products

Did he work in the bush all the time?

Oh no, not all the time, he worked once in a while.

Where did he get money to support you and him there?

Just by him working, just sometimes. I don't remember very much.

Did your husband pick cones?

Yeah, all summer. ... He takes my grandchildren in bush. ...

Did you pick cones too?

Yeah, I like it.

Where did you pick cones?

Oh, in the bush where they are cutting. I went with my kids and my grandchildren in the morning and afternoon. My kids were all grown up at that time.

When you started having babies, did you have them in the bush?

Yeah.

And there was no doctor?

No doctor.

Who delivered the babies?

My mom.

Did you pick any berries a long time ago?

Yeah, blueberries.

Were there any strawberries or raspberries?

Oh sometimes, but there weren't very many.

What did you use blueberries for?

We used to have somebody pick them up in a basket. I don't know how much.

Did you make jam or something?

Oh yeah, my mother made jam, made nice jam. ...

Did you make moccasins?

Yes.

How about mitts?

Yeah, I made them too.

Did you make anything from rabbit skins?

I made blankets ... and [rabbit] skin jackets

Were there lots of rabbits that time?

Oh yeah, [there were] lots of rabbits before you know, lots. We used to go out and set snares. My grandmother would always go with me. She asked me to go with them and check their rabbit snares. ...

Community or reserve life today

2) Describe your life in your community today.

Um, I don't do very much. I try to cook for myself. ... [Homemakers] clean my place, everything. They come in the morning and in the afternoon, yeah.

Does somebody live with you here?

No, sometimes, do you mean all the time? Once in a while, I get someone like my grandchildren.

Where did you live before you moved into this house?

Over there in the long trailer. I lived five months one time in Thunder Bay.

Did you stay with somebody in Thunder Bay?

[I stayed with] my daughter. ... My daughter used to live on Manitoulin Island. Now she lives in Sault Ste. Marie. There's another daughter going to live in North Bay.

Do you remember when this reserve was started?

Oh, I don't know. ... George Benson was the chief; he was going to make a reserve here. ... My husband came from Constance Lake. He changed reserves after that.

Didn't your husband come from Fort Albany?

Yeah, maybe when he was young.

When did you move into this house?

On December 3, December, the third of December I think.

And you were living in a trailer before?

Yeah, over there, that big trailer, the long one ...

(Trina Ferris)

The other house got torn down because of mould. They tore it down and built this new one. In the mean time, she was living in that trailer until this house was built. She lived in Thunder Bay because of mould. They got her a trailer and when this house was built, she moved there in December. She's only been in this new house since December.

Were a lot of houses mouldy?

Yeah, there were forty of them. They tore down the ones that were all mouldy and built new ones, forty of them.

Did they ever find a cause for that?

Ah, I don't know, I think it was because of the swamp. The land is on a swamp.

Community or reserve life in the future

3) Describe what your life might be like in your community or reserve in the future.

I don't know ... I'm too old for that.

Do you think more people will come here to make it bigger?

I guess so ... maybe it will get bigger. ...

Willie Legarde



(recorded August 12,
2003)

Community or reserve life in the past

*1) Describe your life
in your community or
reserve in the past.*

Biographic Information

Name: Willie Legarde
Date of Birth: December 13, 1927
Place of Birth: McKay Lake
Present Address: Longlac
Name of Spouse: Charlotte Legarde
(Matawgin)
Number of Children: 8
Grandchildren: 23
Great-grandchildren: 11
Number of Years Married: 55 Years

[I was born at a place] we called Sandbar (Sandlink Lakes?). That's where I was born.

How far is that from here?

It's about ten miles or twelve miles from Longlac. ... We called it Sandbar. ... I was born in 1927 on December [13].

How many are there in your family? How many brothers and sisters did you have?

Well, I had two brothers and four sisters. There was Mary Ann, Marie, Brandy, and Sarah. There were six of us.

What did you do when you were growing up?

When I was growing up, I knew what to do. My mother was smart enough to put a net in the water, so she ate fish. We set up rabbit snares. ... That's all we had to eat, fish, dried fish. ...

Do you remember what kind of fish you caught at that time?

We caught fish during the fall. When there was ice, we fished under the ice. [We set a] net through the ice and caught lots of fresh fish after that. ... That's all we ate fish and rabbits. That's all there was too. That's all there was to eat, nothing else.

Did you do any trapping when you were growing up?

Yeah.

What kind of animals did you trap?

There was only mink, no marten, no fisher, no beaver, nothing.

Where did you sell your furs?

Over at the Hudson's Bay [store].

Was that here in Longlac?

Yeah, we had to walk. Sometimes the train goes by, but [we had] no money to go [on it.] A ticket cost ten cents ... to Longlac. In those days, that was big money, ten cents ay. ...

Did you do a lot of walking when you wanted to go somewhere? Did you always have to walk?

Yeah, [when we went] trapping, we walked. In the fall when you're tired, you go by boat. After it's frozen you got to go by the ice. ...

Did you use snowshoes?

Oh yeah.

Did you make them?

Yes, my mother used babiche. [She] made small snowshoes just like years ago. She made snowshoes and babiche, but most of the time she had to use string ... no hide like moose hide now used [to make] babiche. ...

Did you kill moose and deer too?

Yeah.

Did you dry or smoke the meat?

Oh yes.

We kept the meat ... and dried fish too. We dried, smoked, and cooked it that way.

When you dried meat, did you keep it somewhere where it wouldn't spoil?

Yeah, we used to make like what you call a birch bark basket. They used spruce roots to sew it and that's where she put meat. It won't spoil because it's all dry. It was full. ... It's the same thing for fish. We dried fish in summertime too.

Did you do any work a long time ago?

Only my brother and me. He was working on the lake over there. That's when he was about seventeen or sixteen years old. My mother and I took bark off pulpwood.

What did he do with the pulpwood?

They towed it to Terrace Bay with a big boat down river. They towed it in summertime in from Longlac.

Did you or your brothers and sisters go to school?

Just my sister, my youngest sister. The other [ones] they were in school for one year.

Where did they go to school?

They went to Fort William at St. Joseph's boarding school.

Was that a residential school?

There were nuns, ay, school teachers, nuns. [It was a] Catholic school.

Do you know why your mother never sent you to school?

I was too young then. I was too young to go with them back then. There was no school around here. ...

How long were you living in the bush?

Well I don't know. We only came here in summertime. We moved back to the bush there at the lake. That's where I was raised.

When you came here to town, did you have to walk?

No, we paddled. People come by boat on the river there.

Did you ever have a dog team or ski-doos after?

No, no ski-doos. There were dog teams. Yeah, I remember that.

Were you were using a dog team too?

Yeah. [I was] just playing around with dogs.

Did those dogs pull a sleigh?

Yeah. [We] hauled wood with a dog team and just played around at the same time.

What kind of place did you live in when you were living in the bush?

A tent mostly. Later, the Hudson's Bay Company got some tarpaper and made a house, some kind of log house. You had to live in a tent, that's the only way.

Did you live there during the winter too?

Oh yes. Yeah, [it was] cold. There was frost inside the tent.

Did you ever live in a teepee or a wigwam?

No.

Did they you have any jobs when you were growing up?

... When my brother was younger, he had a job cutting pulp. That's the only job he had.

Were you too young to work there at that time?

Yeah I was young. My mother used to go and help them. That's the only time they went and cut pulp. They took the bark off, dried it, and put it in the water. In summertime, they towed it over there by the water.

Did they have sections around here on the train tracks?

Yeah, they only took so many men. There were three sections: one goes to Thunder Bay, one goes to Nakina, and the other one goes to Hornepayne. I was sixteen years old when I started, fifteen a half when I worked for the CNR.

You worked for the CNR?

Yeah, I was fifteen and a half. That was in nineteen forty-three.

How long did you work there?

Oh, [I was] good for every summer, of course you could go for a year. ... [There were] lots of men. The track was all rust.

Did the train ever go off the tracks there?

Yeah, in springtime when the track washed away, the train jumped off the tracks.

Did you work there?

Oh yeah.

Which railway company was that?

The CNR. Yeah, that's all that was here the CNR.

Did you work when you were older too?

I was working there until sixty or sixty-four years old. I worked every summer.

Are you getting a pension?

Not until sixty-five. When I was sixty-five I got a pension. I was disabled first. Yeah, I got a sore leg. My knee was swelling up, my arms were kind of crippled, and they are still numb now. I got disabled one year before I was sixty-five. After that, I got a pension.



Long Lake #58 Clinic

Was there a war on at that time?

Yeah, in nineteen forty-three my bother went in the army for almost one year. He was fit enough and old enough to be a soldier. He was a soldier for almost a year.

Community or reserve life today

2) Describe your life in your community today.

... I'm on a little bit pension right now. I pay for our lot, house, and something like that. You know we have to pay for our house where we live, not that much but we still have to pay. I [still] want to go out fishing, catch a moose, set a net in the summer, and bring in fish.

Did your kids go to school?

Yeah. They all went to school.

Before you moved into this house, where did you live?

My mother said on the other side of the tracks. There were supposed to be nearly ten families over there.

When you stayed at McKay Lake, did you move to this house?

Not this house. There was some kind of house over there on the point by the big church.

There were houses all around the point. Some of the houses there were evacuated so we came to where we are living now. ...

When did you move to this house?

Nineteen forty-six I guess, sometimes around there, forty-five, forty-six, forty-seven.

Community or reserve life in the future

3) Describe what your life might be like in your community or reserve in the future.

Uh, that's pretty hard to answer. All my family lives on their own. There are two of them who are going to school all right, but they [don't] know anything, I don't know how come they not trying to read and write but they're not. ... They know how to talk English and Indian; I don't know how come the two of them are like that. We never hit them or anything like that. They were just born that way that's all. They know everything all right. They know what to do here.



Migizi Wazisin Eagle Nest Elementary School

Do you know if they speak the language or if they are trying to learn to speak Ojibway?

Not now, it's all different. Everybody talks English now. They don't understand Ojibway when you talk to them. You have to talk in English to them. Just after they went to school, they all changed like my own kids here. They understand Indian, but they can't talk it back.

Do you think this reserve is going to get bigger in the future?

Well it will get bigger every year. Yeah, more people putting up more houses.

Do you think more people are going to be moving back here like people living off reserve?

There are not too many people out on the reserve now. All the people live out in Geraldton there. There were a lot people over there a long time ago. Then they all moved away someplace [else.] After that, they didn't know how to talk English were they live now, not like a bunch of Indians. Like I was saying [before] there were about ten or twelve families over there. There was a whole bunch of Indians, just like Aroland. They have a new reserve over there in Aroland. You can't move them in here because they belong to this reserve and they don't want to move. [It's the] same thing with #77. ... Half of them belong to Indian Reserve #77. They don't want to move this way. ... They all have their own reserves over there. Looks like we have to move out of there. There is not enough language.

To go back a bit there, when you were living in the bush with your family or with your parents, did you use anything from the bush like medicine?

Well not me but my mother did you know. ... There used to be people a long time ago like a medicine man. A lot of old people were like that. They knew what to use for a bad cold, headache, or toothache.

A long time ago when you were small, did you remember if people were having pow wows, or if they were singing and drumming?

I heard some time ago when I was young that they played a drum and sang. Yeah, singing Indian, Indian songs, yeah, I remember that.

Did your mother and father do that?

No. They only knew one song or something like that ... Some had all kinds of drums eh.

Angel Waboose



(recorded August 12, 2003)

Community or reserve life in the past

1) Describe your life in your community or reserve in the past.

I was born in Thunder Bay. I went through the elementary school here in Long Lac, off reserve. The Native kids were separated from the white kids, so we didn't get along that well. But we got along with each other. I was close with my cousins, because we live in such a small reserve and, like, everyone knows everybody. So, I was pretty close with my family members. We didn't have a culture growing up, like bringing in traditional Native teachers. I didn't know about a sweat lodge when I was a kid, maybe not until I was twelve years old. They finally started bringing in medicine people. They started working with people with past issues. So, that's how we kind of got into Native culture, like learning to heal within ourselves and using spiritual medicines and sacred items.

How many are you in your family?

Well, yeah, I have two older brothers. One is in his early thirties. I don't really know, but my sister is the second oldest. She's twenty-seven. There's my other brother, he's twenty-five, and my extended family. I don't know that, but ... when my granny passed away, they asked like how many there were actually in the family. I think it was calculated up to 170 or something. I'm not too sure, but I have a lot of relatives. That's just on one side. I don't know how much is on the other side.

Do you know the Ojibway language? Does anybody in your family know?

My mom can speak some, and my aunts. All of them can speak. The older ones can speak it really good. The younger ones they understand what they're being told and they can answer back in some ways, but I can't. I understand, but I can't speak it. When I learned it in the Grade 11 Ojibway class, I got 80%, but that's just for people working on writing it.

How about your siblings?

They're at the same level. They learn through classes and stuff.

Biographic Information

Name: Angel Gabrielle Waboose

Date of Birth: December 2, 1982

Place of Birth: Thunder Bay

Present Address: Longlac

Education: Grade 12, College (1 year)

Interests/Hobbies: Walking, Exercising, Sports, and Reading

Do you think keeping the language is important?

Yeah. It's pretty sad that. I won't get to teach my kids how to speak it. I really wish I can learn so I can talk to my kids in the Ojibway language.

Did your parents teach you to do hunting or fishing or anything like that?

Yeah, my dad always. We'd always go out into our campgrounds, my granny's trap ground. My brother inherited it from my granny. It's called Fernow Lake. ... He'd take us out in the bush and then [show us] how to fish. I learned how to shoot a pellet gun. I learned how to cut wood and make a fire for myself. I know how to do that. No one would teach us how to cook.

What did you say that lake was called?

Fernow Lake.

How far is it from here?

It's about a 40 mile drive. Well, I'm not sure.

Did you ever have the opportunity to try trapping or fishing?

I know how to fish. I'm a really good fisher ... woman. I can pull in a good-sized fish. I just don't know how to, like, set a net. I never really took the time to set a net or a trap. But I remember when I was a kid, we used to have groups and they'd show us how to snare. I did that before, but I never went back to check the snares. I just set them and that was it. That's the only kind of trapping I did.

Who taught you to do these things?

They used to have a group who worked with kids. I can't remember really. It was a long time ago. I was just a kid. I can't remember. The reserve would have workers and activities with children, you know that kind of thing.

Where were you living when you were growing up?

Well, on the reserve, Long Lake. I've lived here all my life.

Do you know when this reserve came into existence or was it always here when you were growing up?

Yeah, way before. It was here when my dad was a kid. My mom used to live at the point. I don't know if there were people living here already, but that's where my mom lived at the point with her parents. My dad lived here.

Do you what the houses were like when you first started living here? Did they have water and sewer facilities?

Yeah.

Do you know where they got water?

Long Lake, I think.

Is that where the drinking water comes from?

Yeah, must be because they have a dam: Longlac Dam. I don't know where it is though. I went there, but I can't describe it to you. I'm pretty sure that's where they got their water. They have their own water supply system.

Did you ever live in the bush before?

No.

Do you ever go camping?

Yeah, we have our own campground out at my brother's trap ground.

Do you still go there often?

We're going there this weekend. [We're] going fishing.

Did Long Lake ever have their own gatherings or pow wows or stuff like that?

Yeah. I can't remember, but they always have pow wows. I remember they were pretty good, but I don't remember the dates. They're just starting to work on the new pow wow grounds that will be located on this side of the lake because we have Longlac there. We quit that for a while, but Ginoogaming always have their powwows on the reserve across the lake.

Do you practice singing or drumming?

We have Dave Courshene coming in there. He comes in with his group from Manitoba. They come to our youth gathering and we break into groups. We have sharing circles, teachings on the seven teachings of life, and drumming. This is where the boys go to drum. We go to warrior dances and warrior ceremonies and they go and fast for four days. We dance until the sun goes down ... at the camp out there. The songs that are sung out there are ceremonial songs. They're different from pow wow songs, I guess. That's where I learned how to sing anyway from Dave Courshene's group. They're called the Red Shadow Singers.

Do you lead a spiritual life?

Well now that I am pregnant, it's easier for me to stay away from alcohol. When I quit drinking, I mean smoking; I started going into sweat lodges. It felt that I've lost all my friends because that's all we used to do with each other. So, I started hanging around my auntie, going into counseling, and learning about spirituality. I turned to that to overcome my addictions to drugs because I was a heavy smoker when I was younger. Once I quit and started going into spirituality and learning more and more, I started to have respect for the culture. I knew I couldn't do drugs and lead that kind of life. It's pretty much like that in my community. We just got a sweat lodge in the community. We didn't have that [before]. The only cultural activities we have are when Dave Courshene comes into town and teaches us. We'd go to warrior dances and sun dances. That's when we live a spiritual life, for me anyway, but now we have our sweat lodge. It would be easier because we could, how would I say this, go into a sweat lodge twice a week, and pray. It's easier to have that support from our elders.

What did you think about the sweat lodge when you first experienced it?

It was warm. It felt safe even though it was dark once the door was shut. I didn't feel like something wrong was going to happen or something like that because the door was shut and it was dark. I saw colors. It was nice. I love it when I'm in there. I still love it in the sweat lodge. You know, it was hot, but my auntie always told me breathe it anyway. [She told me to] breathe the steam because it's healing. I couldn't sleep [after that].

What do you think of native pow wows?

Yeah, I like pow wows, ... if I ever started dancing again, I wouldn't compete like in a competition. I would just dance because I enjoy putting on my regalia, dancing, and meeting other people at the gathering. I wouldn't compete for the crown or whatever. I would just be there because I enjoy the people and the feeling of coming together. I used to dance when I was a little girl. I never liked competing because I never won. I felt sad because I didn't win.

How did you get started doing that?

It's funny because all my friends were getting like their jingle outfits. My parents said I cried the whole day for my outfit, jumping around, crying, and screaming for that jingle dress. Finally, they got it for me and I danced. Even though I didn't dance too well, I still danced.

Did you ever eat any traditional food?

No. I tried it. I ate some moose meat. I tried stew, but I never really tried like birds, geese, and beaver. I didn't really, just moose, moose meat.

What about fish?

Yeah, I eat fish. I like it when it's mixed with shake and bake. Nice and spicy.

Community or reserve life today

2) Describe your life in your community today.

Well, I'm working right now as a summer student. I went to college for one year and I'm back now for the summer. I'm not going back next year. I'm taking a year off. I was thinking of finding a job, but I'm gonna have my baby. I'm gonna take the time to breastfeed my baby and then go back to college next year. For the time being, I was going to work, but I don't think so. We are trying to get the youth interested in Native traditional beliefs, you know. Every year we have a youth gathering called the "Voices of Tomorrow Youth Gathering." This is our fourth annual [gathering]. We have teachings and once again this is where Dave Courshene comes in. He facilitates and we host it at Long Lake #58. My aunt, she just put up her sweat lodge, so community members will get a chance to go and do a sweat. We have our own high school now in Ginoogaming. That's where I graduated from. Just this year there were three or four graduates. I'm sure there'll be more. We have our own elementary [school] just back here on the reserve.

Do they have anything on the reserve itself for the youth to do?

No. It's boring. [You] see if there was a place I could go, I would. That's why I go for walks at night. I exercise around the reserve a couple of times. There is a community worker and he has movie nights for the younger youth. But nothing seems to happen, like, ... nobody really attends these kinds of things, like say, baseball night.

Do you know what happened to the houses here?

Well, I know we went through a mould crisis. We had to be evacuated. Then the houses got fixed. It was because of poor construction, so they renovated the houses that could be saved. ... They tore down the ones that were condemned. ... I'm not sure how many houses they built but newer ones were built. They're building ten more houses right now. I'm not too sure how many they built. People have moved into the ones that are up already.

What's going to happen if you want to make more housing or other buildings on the reserve? Is the reserve big enough to accommodate with that?

Yeah. I think it will expand too. I think we will be getting more land claims. I'm not too sure about that, but there's enough room. It's just that it's squishy. I don't like being squished, but that's the way we have to live, I guess.



Long Lake #58 Band Office

Community or reserve life in the future

3) Describe what your life might be like in your community or reserve in the future.

Hopefully it might get bigger. As for life in my community, I hope to work with the youth and show them what I've learned about spirituality and the culture. I'd like to take them to pow wows. That's what I would like to do when I'm a youth worker. That's when there'll be more job opportunities available in the community and more resources, I guess, like a cultural centre. That's why I'm going back to school, to be a youth worker. That's how I see my life, working with the youth ... on the reserve. I'm always gonna come back and help my community become stronger. ...

What do you think about the services they have here on your reserve like policing?

They just drive around twice sometimes. Well, I sit outside and I see the cruiser go by twice and then they'll go to the other reserve. I'm pretty sure they're getting their job done. They're always on the scene whenever people need help. I guess I like it.

Do you have your own reserve police here?

Anishnapay (Anishinabek) Police Service?

Do they have their office here on the reserve?

Yeah.

Do they live on the reserve?

We share. It's for our reserve and Ginoogaming. So, I know there are three police officers living in the other reserve.

And do they look after this reserve too?

Yeah.



Anishnabek Police Service

Do you know if this reserve is part of the Nishnawbe Aski?

You know, me and my co-worker, we were just talking about it last week. We saw NAN give this youth council one hundred thousand for their youth activities or whatever, and I was like, why don't we have anything like that. Then I looked in here and it says that our provincial organization is the Union of Ontario Indians. And I was, wow, if we're part of a union, how come we're part of their youth council. We don't know anything about their youth and what goes on with them. We were just talking about that and I guess we're not part of the Nishnawbe Aski. We're not even, from what I've heard, not part of Treaty #9 or any treaty. I don't know. We were just going to look into that last week. We were going to ask questions to find more information about the Union of Ontario Indians because it says we're not part of NAN.

Did you ever attend any chiefs' meetings or anything?

No.

I hear people saying that the youth of today are going to be our future leaders. What's your perspective on that?

That's right. We're gonna be the leaders and we need guidance from our elders, especially our chiefs. We need education. We need balance spiritually, mentally, physically, and emotionally. We just need to establish a foundation for our community to give the youth the opportunity to learn more about spirituality and stuff.

Do you think the chief and council should take the youth with them or the elders with them to a meeting?

I think we should have at least one elder representative and one youth representative, so they could bring back what they've learned to their, you know, fellow youth and elders. They should hold meetings, that's what I think. They don't have to bring a big busload of youth, just that one youth who has a strong voice or opinion. [Then] she or he can bring back what they've learned at the chiefs' meetings to their community.

Is there anything you would like to add there?

I just want to say that I'm proud of where I come from. I'm proud of who I am.

Do you encourage young people to continue with their education?

Yes, because it's very important if you want to work at what you like doing and what you have a passion for. If you want to have that kind of job, you have to go school for it. You just can't sit back and take what's given to you, like, a cheap job, you know, and settle for that. You don't have to settle for second best. Just go and get your education, go to school for what you like doing, and do what you have to do. Do what you like doing best.



Long Lake #58 General Store

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The purpose of the book is to highlight the past and present life experiences of elders and youth in the southern Matawa communities: Aroland, Constance Lake, Ginoogaming, Hornepayne, and Long Lake #58. In addition, this book identifies the aspirations of these communities and reserves as described by the participants.

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