

Tobique First Nation, NB January 2015

Wulustuk Times

Wulustuk - Indigenous name for St. John River

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THIS IS OUR LIFE.... WE LIVED THIS WAY

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Wulustuk Times:

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

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THIS IS OUR LIFE.... WE LIVED THIS WAY

Our people are now known as Maliseet but prior to white contact we always knew ourselves as Wulustukyieg or People of the Wulustuk River.

Prior to the white European invasion in 1604 our people had lived in our homeland, Oskigineewekog for some 15000 + years at least, according to our white oppressors thinking.

Our ancestors say that we were planted here within our homeland by Great Creator.

The natural boundaries of our homeland are as follows: North - Wulustuk River. South - Canibas River (aka Kennebec). East - Suubag (aka Atlantic Ocean). West - Gaabag (aka St. Lawrence River).

The spiritual center of our homeland is Mt. Katahdun with the heart center being the length of the Wulustuk River valley.

We had four primary communities situated at different locations along the Wulustuk River. They were Wiquody (aka St. John), Nerepis, Ekpahak (aka Silverwood), and Medoktek (aka Meductic).

We had spiritual understandings or agreements which were preserved on wampum belts for those natural boundaries that explained the separation between the homeland of the Wulustukyieg and the Micmac as well as with the Abenaki and the Mohawk. All were sealed with the smoking of the sacred pipe.

As an oral people our given word was from the heart and sacred. The sacred pipe was given to us by Great Creator as was the wampum belt and thus they were considered to be enough to hold all parties to an agreement. This way of reaching agreements has been the way of our people for thousands and thousands of generations and has served us very well in that time.

But all of this changed with the arrival of the white European invaders and their written treaties.

For thousands of generations we knew all of our traditional teachings, sacred ceremonies, customs, values, beliefs and world view and these were passed on to each generation orally from the heart. And since everything was received through the heart and passed on from the heart this means that it is from Great Creator.

One of the very first agreements/treaties that our people had with the white invaders was with Sam Champlain.

In 1604 Champlain met with Chief Bessabey and Chief Cabahis and he told them that "he desired to preserve their friendship and to inhabit their homeland". It sounded good to our people and since there was so much land and since they were a caring and sharing people we agreed to this oral treaty, smoked the peace pipe on it and had a great feast of celebration.

Between 1617 and 1619 the white European terrorists, with extreme malice and forethought, gave our people small pox infested blankets along with other infested items and managed to produce a huge pandemic which succeeded in wiping out 95% of our people. As a result of this European terrorist made pandemic the Wawenoch people were completely wiped out. Also the Maliseet, the Penobscot, the Pemaquid, the Piqwachet, the Abenaki, the Canabis, the Androscoggin, along with other peoples were all reduced to near-extinction levels.

With such a huge loss of Indian lives (genocide) the Mawooshen Confederacy disintegrated. The Mawooshen Confederacy was the predecessor to our Wabanaki Confederacy.

I have included the preceding so as to give context to the huge losses suffered by our ancestors in their effort to hold on to our beloved homeland and our way of life. And to be able to continue our way of life and continue the process of preserving and passing on to succeeding generations that which had been in existence for thousands and thousands of generations.

We also wished to show the devastating and long-term implications of this European terrorists genocidal pandemic on the continuing relationship between Indians and the European terrorists.

In addition to unleashing their genocidal pandemic those European terrorists also destroyed all of our societal institutions ie. Religious, government, health, economy, etc. in a very calculated and deliberate manner.

Today these European terrorists in their "white is right" and "might is right" arrogant racist audacity demand that our people show proof of evidence that we were indeed here first, living within our homeland for those many thousands of generations prior to the arrival of those European terrorists. And that we must prove our case to their satisfaction within their corrupt system of justice.

In playing the European terrorists game of justice we offer the following proof of our people having lived within our homeland since time immemorial - and whites can check this out.

Our people had names and stories for every body of water within our homeland beginning with the ocean which we called Suu-Bagg. We had our own names for the following rivers:

Chemquassabamticoak, Etchemin - now St. Francis, Allagash, Lake Temescounta, Madoueska, Aroostook, Toubic, Muniac, Monquart, Sictahaak - now Shiktehawk, Becaquimec, Meduxakik, Medoctec, Mactaquac, Pokiok, Skoodawabakooksis, Nacawick, Keswick, Nasswaak - now Nashwaak, Wolomocto - now Oromocto, Washodemoak, Kennebecasio, Nerepis, Shoqamoc and Jemseg.

Medoctec is the place our people always knew as Mehtawtik which means the end of carry and was also the end of the Maliseet Trail.

The Maliseet Trail has been dated to some 10000 + years and the same for our burial site located at Ekpahak in what is now known as Silverwood, N.B.

We referred to our homeland as Oskigineewekog and we had names for every lake, river, stream, creek, cove, island, mountain, hill and valley.

Never having the concept of written treaties we had no word for a written treaty or agreement. So our ancestors cobbled together the following Maliseet word: ""LAKUTUWAKONOL"" which loosely translates to ""stepping stones"". Meaning stepping stones toward an actual agreement, but by whites it was misinterpreted as ""treaty"".

For our people what occurred in the time gone by is etched within our hearts as the ""past"". And the past is what is real and true. While for whites the time gone by is history, and history is merely what someone recorded. And what is known as ""history"" can actually be a total fabrication. I believe it was Hitler who said that ""history"" is written by the victors.

These are the words of a child of genocide and a victim of white capitalism.

All My Relations, --Dan Ennis

THE WHIPPORWILL OR 'WIP-HOL-OUS', IN MALISEET DIALECT

Pat Paul, elder, TFN. NB

Whither the Whipporwill, which has somehow gone, moved, relocated, ceased, or moved on to other, newer locations, -this may be a mystery that may never be revealed to us. But in fact, the sweet melodies of the whipporwill will never leave me and I can still clearly hear and recall the melodic sounds and chants as if they were still coming to us nightly, even to this day.

I'm sure many seniors like myself must clearly remember hearing the sweet sounds of the Whipporwill or 'Whip-hol-ous' as we call them in the Maliseet dialect. These chanters sang their melodic tunes nightly back in the 1940's and 50's along the two rivers, Wulustuk and the Tobique that flow along the Tobique First Nation in New Brunswick, Canada..

Since that time however those fine, sweet and sentimental nocturnal sounds have disappeared completely, as if the spirits of the day went with them to their final destinations when entering their eternal resting places. Or may these fine nocturnal chanters have just moved physically on to other newer locations beyond that are unknown to us, to serenade the newer and younger generations of the day? That sequence, we probably will never know definitely, as well.

The nightly timing of the chants were very regular. They were heard mostly on finer nights from around 10 pm in the evening until about 3 am the next morning, when the first light of day broke up the darkness of night.

As we used to listen to the sweet sounds we always wondered what these nocturnal creatures looked like whether they were of the bird species, or bee-like, or maybe tiny animals or whatever. We have never definitely found out until just lately, via our computers.

But today with the use of zippy electronic technology around us, a person can quickly look up these creatures on Google and see them as tiny little birds that used to sing on a bush or tree branch along the shores of the two rivers mentioned above, at least during my younger days.

If, by the way, the Whipporwill can be heard anywhere in the NA continent, or anywhere else, I certainly would enjoy hearing peoples' thoughts, notes, opinions and observations of them if they were willing to share their knowledge with me through an email address given as follows,

A contact like this would really boost my will and confidence on the survival of the mighty Whipporwill if anyone were to exchange personal and recent knowledge about them.

I'm also sure that many other elderly persons would be very excited to know that the mighty Whipporwill is still with us today in flesh and blood. That would be great news and comforting information to print someday in one of our future issues.

Thank you kindly, - pjp, elder, TFN. NB. Canada

TREATY TIME

A light snow was falling ushered in by strong winds. We enjoyed sitting near the warm stove, the mid day meal was finished and we were settling back for more conversation. Pipes were lighted. I watched the snow surge this way and that reminding me of water racing over rapids. The conversation turned to canoe travel, sometimes covering several hundred miles. There was always a destination in mind. It could be north across the St. Lawrence River where some knew excellent trapping areas; it could be south to a pleasant ocean island set in the midst of a menagerie of fine eating. Young men learned the canoe routes used traditionally by their families. The French calls to war called for many fighters. Sometimes more than a hundred canoes filled with warriors were sent to battle. Maliseet soldiers joined their neighboring tribesmen including some from Maine, all led by their priests, fought at Lake George, NY, Lake Champlain, Montreal, Quebec City as examples. They learned much about the surrounding country around their beloved Wulustuk.

A treaty was signed after each war concluding with annual gift giving to the tribes who helped win the battles. Families canoed to the points where the gifts were given. Usually they went to Montreal. Peter Paul, then began a story his grand mother had told him about a treacherous half-breed Indian Agent.

In the early days of British rule we had to go to Montreal twice a year to receive our treaty presents. It was the custom for twelve or more canoes to paddle together on such trips. They were considered festive trip as many friends would be seen a long the way who the paddlers had not seen for a long time. Other tribes would also be visiting Montreal for their gifts at the same time. It was a grand social activity with dances every night and plenty of food for all.

On one such trip of twelve canoes to Montreal, only one canoe returned! The Indians camped in the woods outside of Montreal. The Indians had received their gifts. Everyone was feeling happy. The half-breed Indian Agent had given the visitors extra liquor. All but one young wife were drinking and soon in a deep sleep. The young girl was restless and did not feel safe in a strange place with all her people incapacitated in a drunken stupor. She dragged her husband further into the forest away from the others, hiding him in the bushes. She feigned sleep, although she was wide awake. Suddenly she heard many horses and from her hiding place saw many soldiers coming. She quickly covered her husband with more brush and quietly slipped into the cover of the dark woods. The soldiers clubbed all the sleeping drunken Indians killing all of them. The young girl and her husband were the only ones who escaped.

The young woman woke her husband and showed him what the soldiers had done. The young couple decided that they should immediately return to their people. They had not gone far when they met another party coming for their treaty gifts and told them what happened. They, too, decided to return to their homes and tell what had happened. The people in the main villages listened with awe to the young people's story. It was decided that a large party of warriors go to

Montreal. All those who could agreed to join those going to Montreal. There was an impressive number of canoes on this trip.

When they arrived at Montreal, they made a very large camp. A large group of men went to the meeting place asking for the Indian Agent. They were told that he was out riding. So they asked where he was riding. The reply was a finger pointing out there in the forest. They returned to their camp.

All the men joined going into the woods after the half-breed Indian Agent. Half of the men hid on one side of the road and half hid on the other side. Soon they heard horses coming. Presently the Indian Agent and two soldiers were surrounded by Indians who halted them. The soldiers were disarmed and made to watch, while others grabbed the Agent, tore off his coat and shirt. They skinned his chest. A large pole was cut. It was pointed at both ends. The agent's body was salted and set on one end of the pole. Then the pole was hoisted upright and set in the ground. The soldiers were told that the body should be left for the crows to eat. If anyone touched it, they would receive the same treatment. The body was left there. This was the way a half-breed traitor was treated.

Nicholas Smith

MANITOBA CHIEF SAYS FIRE INSPECTIONS WOULD CONDEMN RESERVE HOMES

THE CANADIAN PRESS

WINNIPEG — The chief of a northern Manitoba reserve where a baby died in a house fire says his band can't afford to have its homes inspected for hazards.

Chief David McDougall of St. Theresa Point First Nation told an inquest into the girl's death that most of the reserve's homes would be condemned if they were inspected.

He says many homes still rely on wood stoves and others aren't built to handle electrical heaters.

McDougall says the reserve doesn't have the money to upgrade houses, so many people are afraid to have them inspected.

The inquest is examining a fire in St. Theresa Point in January 2011 that killed two-month-old Errabella Harper.

It's also investigating a second fire about two months later in God's Lake Narrows that killed Demus James and his two grandchildren.

CREE YOUTH WALK 850 KM TO PROTEST AGAINST URANIUM MINING IN QUEBEC

Uranium exploration near Mistissini could cause 'irreparable' harm to the watershed, say Cree youth

CBC News

About 20 young Cree people have walked nearly 850 kilometres to Montreal's South Shore from their village in northern Quebec, protesting against uranium exploration in the province.

The youth left Mistissini, Que., northeast of Chibougamau in the James Bay region three weeks ago. On the way, they stopped in Quebec City to share their message.

They arrived in Longueuil, just across the bridge from Montreal, Saturday.

Their final destination is downtown Montreal, where they will deliver that message to the province's environmental protection agency, known as the BAPE, when it holds the last of a series of public hearings on uranium exploration tomorrow.

The Cree young people have endured frigid temperatures and wintry conditions, walking an average of a marathon a day.

"We've lost a couple of toenails on this journey," said Joshua Iserhoff, chair of the Cree Nation Youth Council.

But according to Iserhoff, it's been worth it.

He said uranium exploration near his community could cause irreparable damage to the watershed.

"If we were to contaminate one of the largest freshwater lakes in Quebec, that would be one of the most devastating things we could ever allow to happen," said Iserhoff. Uranium extraction has been on the table in Mistissini since 2006.

A Boucherville-based company, Strateco Resources, has invested \$120 million into developing a uranium mine in Mistissini in the last ten years.

In 2013, the then-Parti Québécois government banned uranium exploration and mining in Quebec, putting the project on hold.

Last week, Strateco Resources filed a \$190 million lawsuit against the province, asking for compensation for the investments made before the province blocked it last year.

DEANS DEN: New Year's Eve

New Year's Eve

And the year gone past

It came - and it went

So quiet - so fast,

Sometimes it was smooth

Sometimes it was rough

Parts of it pleasant

Parts of it tough,

New Year's Eve

I pause - in context

Contemplate on next year

And wonder ... what's next!

D.C. Butterfield

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Happy New Year

To all of my friends

I want to make it quite clear

I wish you all of the best

And - a Happy New Year,
Every minute, every hour
Every week, and each day
May life smile upon you
And may things go your way,
Sidereal or Platonic
Bissextile (meaning 'leap')
May your luck be abundant
And your hills never steep,
Academic or fiscal
May each season succeed
In meeting each measure
Of each want and each need,
May heartache nor sorrow
Never cause you to fret
And with pleasure and pleasance
May your 'resolutions' be met,
Again - to my friends
And to those they hold dear
I wish you the best
Of ... *a Happy New Year!*

D.C. Butterfield