

WABUN

Special Cultural Issue 2018

Sun



Beaverhouse FN Celebrates Culture

Beaverhouse First Nation hosted a Cultural Family Gathering to bring together Elders to share their knowledge with community members and with the idea of reconnecting to Native ancestral traditions and culture. The gathering was held in Temagami at the Temagami Shores Inn & Resort from March 12 to 16 and in Kirkland Lake from March 19 to 23. The event was coordinated by Nancy Wabi, Executive Director, Beaverhouse FN.

"This has been a beneficial gathering for our members. It brought together our youth, especially the very young, their parents, our community members and our Elders. This gathering allows our people to build stronger

bonds with one another and provides a stronger support network for our young people," said Wabi.

Funding for this event was provided by the Nishnawbe-Aski Nation (NAN) through the Choose Life Program, a joint initiative working with the federal government to provide more culturally appropriate programming for youth in crisis, intervention / prevention and community wellness.

"The main purpose of this gathering was to bring together our community members in a positive and open environment. We especially wanted to connect with our Elders so that we could share their knowledge of our territory and our traditional lands. It is a real joy for me to see everyone here together. Many of them have not seen each other in years and a few members have not been together like this in decades," said Chief Marcia Brown Martel, Beaverhouse FN.

She was in attendance with some of her administration staff who took on the duty of speaking with Elders at the event to record and document their knowledge. Chief Brown Martel explained that their community wants to collect, preserve and document as

much knowledge about their lands as possible to identify traditional sites and show how their people historically used the land.

"It's important for our people, especially our youth to learn about heritage, not only as Indigenous people but specifically to learn about our Anishinabe way of life or as we call it, the Misamikowis way of life. In order to do this, we have to involve everyone of all ages and spend time with one another, so that we can build trusting, healthy relationships that will go towards building a stronger community," said Chief Brown Martel.

Adults, older youth and Elders took part in traditional teaching events led by traditional teachers Joseph Mathews and Elder Nisa Diamond. They led individual and group sessions in traditional ceremonies, hand drumming, teaching circles and presentations throughout the week. Both Mathews and Elder Diamond have ties to multiple First Nations in northeastern Ontario, the James Bay coast and families in Beaverhouse FN.

"Many of our people across our territory are losing or have lost their connection to their traditional culture,



FROM L-R: BEAVERHOUSE FN EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR NANCY WABIE, CHEYENNE PITREMONT (FRONT) AND CHASITY PITREMONT



FROM L-R: JIMI MAURER, BEAVERHOUSE FN; JOHN SHYMKO, TEMAGAMI FN; CHIEF RANDY BECKER, Teme-Augama Anishnabai AND SEATED IS CHIEF MARCIA BROWN MARTEL, BEAVERHOUSE FN

Front Cover

CLARA CANDASSIE, A FIRST NATION OJIBWAY MEMBER OF BRUNSWICK HOUSE FIRST NATION IS SEEN HERE ON HER HOMELAND WITH SOME OF THE MANY BIRCH BARK CRAFTWORKS SHE MADE.

HER WORK WOULD LATER BECOME RECOGNIZED AS HISTORIC CRAFTWORKS REPRESENTING HER OJIBWAY CULTURE.

courtesy of Susan Harvie and the Royal Ontario Museum



FROM L-R: BEAVERHOUSE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR NANCY WABIE, ELDER ABRAHAM THIVIERGE AND GABRIELLA CHIE CHIE



FROM L-R: CHEYENNE PITREMONT, CHASITY PITREMONT, CHRIS PITREMONT, STEPHANIE KING-MCLAREN AND MELISSA PARENT

their spirituality, their language and their ties to the land. This loss has occurred because our people were taught that it was not right to continue our traditions and that we should assimilate with modern society. We were taught that we were not worthy to be who we are and that contributed greatly to a feeling of loss and pain for our people,” said Mathews.

He explained that their role in gatherings such as this is to help First Nation people back on to a healthier path of self-confidence and pride in one’s heritage.

“Our work here is to try to bring that knowledge back so that our parents and adults can become stronger for their children and the youth can learn to take pride in their past. It makes it easier through gatherings such as this, which brings together Elders, youth and other family members. This is sometimes a difficult journey for all of us but it feels good to see everyone wanting to become whole again” said Mathews.

The gathering held daily events to bring different groups of people in to activities and teaching events to learn about traditional pursuits, spirituality and customs. Activities included snowshoeing, ice fishing, craft making and the preparation of traditional foods. Young people were involved in fun events including face painting, children art painting and toy making.

On the last day of events in Tem-

agami, community members were invited to watch a musical performance at the Temagami Theatre hosted by members of Temagami First Nation. The event was led by John Shymko, Economic Development Officer, Temagami FN, who also performed some of his original music. Opening greetings were provided by Temagami FN Chief Arnold Paul and performances by Teme-Augama Anishnabai Chief Randy Becker and Jimi Maurer Lands and Resources Coordinator, Beaverhouse FN. Chief Marcia Brown Martel and Beaverhouse FN youth Gabriella ChieChie were also invited to perform a hand drum song to start the event.

“I give my thanks to all the organizers and participants that made this Cultural Family Gathering a success. We are so fortunate that we have a lot of our Elders and traditional people still around us and eager to share their knowledge with our First Nation communities,” said Jean Lemieux, Wabun Health Director.



AT THE FISH HUT ARE L-R: JIMI MAURER, MITCH GABRIEL AND GABRIELLA CHIE CHIE



**BACK L-R: CHIEF MARCIA BROWN-MARTEL AND GABRIELLA CHIE CHIE
FRONT L-R: CALEB McMARTIN AND JAYDA MOORE**



TRADITIONAL TEACHERS ARE L-R: NISA DIAMOND AND JOSEPH MATHEWS.



YOUTH ARE FROM L-R: JAYDA MOORE, CAPRI McMARTIN, HAVEN McMARTIN. IN FRONT IS LENNOX McMARTIN.



BEAVERHOUSE FN MEMBERS CAME TOGETHER AT THE CULTURAL FAMILY GATHERING IN TEMAGAMI, ONTARIO.

Cultural Teachings In Matachewan FN

Matachewan First Nation held two days of Cultural Teachings as part of its annual week of March Break events. The First Nation regularly holds fun events for community members during the March holidays and this year organizers expanded activities to include a cultural component. Two days of traditional teachings were held on the weekend of March 17 and 18, 2018. The teachings were led by Traditional Helpers Nora and Rodney Abitong of Sagamok Anishnawbek First Nation.



ELDERS AIME AND MARIE BOUCHER



**YOUTH AT THE CULTURAL EVENT WERE L-R:
ALEX KMET, ISABELLE GILBERT AND
DANIELLE KMET**



MATACHEWAN FN MEMBERS AND PARTICIPANTS AT THE CULTURAL TEACHING DAYS.

"Our role here is to teach other First Nation people about our traditional past, our spiritual beliefs and our cultural practices. Our people's connection to their past has either been weakened or lost and that has made it difficult for many individuals to find a healthy path in their lives. We are born Anishinabe people and it is our role as Traditional Helpers to assist others to understand who they are so that they can lead healthier lives for themselves and their family," said Nora Abitong.

She explained that over many decades, First Nation culture has been eroded or lost through the residential school process, the sixties scoop, assimilation to modern society and government programs meant to disrupt or extinguish cultural identity. This has created generations of individuals living with trauma and inter-generational trauma that have lost their connection to their traditional past and spiritual practices.

"We learned the teachings of our people from our parents and grandparents from the time we were young. Through the many years we have helped so many people, we've learned that one of the greatest ways to help those who live with historic trauma is to allow them to talk and for us to listen," said Rodney Abitong.

During their two days at the community, they held a series of presentations and teaching events. They also

spent time meeting with people and speaking to individuals in groups and on a one on one basis. To engage participants, they worked with community members through a series of creative workshops where they showed participants how to make traditional shakers, rattles and dream catchers.

Nora and her husband Rodney have been well known as Traditional Helpers who have been passing on their knowledge for the past 25 years. They have travelled extensively to Indigenous communities in the northern United States, western Canada and throughout Ontario. Originally from Sagamok Anishnawbek FN between Sudbury and Sault Ste Marie, Ontario, they both grew up in families that held strong connections to traditional knowledge, medicines and spirituality. Nora comes from a family background with knowledge of traditional medicines and Rodney learned much about his people's spiritual beliefs from his grandparents. In addition to their upbringing, they have worked with traditional people to learn about teachings and cultural practices from the Ojibway and Cree in the far north and James Bay coast in Ontario; the Mohawk, Algonquin and Huron people in southern Ontario and the Lakota and Sioux nations in the United States. Over the past two decades they have been to many communities in Ontario to provide healing strategies for residential school survivors and their families.



**EVENT ORGANIZER ELAINE DALEY,
MATACHEWAN FN AND TRADITIONAL HELPER
RODNEY ABITONG.**

The organization of the Cultural Week for Matachewan FN this year was led by Elaine Daley, National Native Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention (NNADAP) Worker; Sue Alton, Community Health Representative (CHR) and Tara Grenier, Family Well-Being Program Worker.

“It is special to bring our people together in gatherings such as this where we can all learn about our heritage. It is also important for us to stay connected to our members, especially to our youth and to remind them that they are important and that we all care about their health and well being,” said Daley.

Matachewan FN Elder Jeannette Gilbert was happy to take part in the activities and to see her family and friends at this gathering.

“We need to remind our young people about who they are and where they come from and not to forget about their heritage and especially their language. It’s important for us to meet like this because it helps us stay

together and build a strong community,” said Elder Gilbert.

Matachewan FN organized the event with funding support through Nishnawbe-Aski Nation (NAN) from the Choose Life Program.

The week’s events began on Wednesday March 14 when the community hosted a fishing derby with prize awards for top anglers. First place Pike Angler went to Cody Schram and second place Pike Angler went to Jared Daley. First place Pickerel Angler went to Bertha Cormier and a prize went to the first person to weight in their fish, to Adrian Boucher. A community bingo event with plenty of prize awards for participants was also held later in the evening. On Thursday March 15, Matachewan FN members were invited to join members of Mattagami FN in Timmins who were hosting a tube sliding event at the Kamiskotia ski resort. On Friday March 16, a series of fun games for all ages were held including racing games for children and fun competi-

tions for youth and adults.

“I am very happy with the cultural events having taken place and I want to give my thanks to all the organizers for the events in Matachewan First Nation. These cultural events are important for our people and we will continue to support this type of programming as much as possible,” said Jean Lemieux, Wabun Health Director.



TRADITIONAL HELPER NORA ABITONG AND MATACHEWAN FN YOUTH ISABELLE GILBERT



FROM L-R: COMMUNITY MEMBERS SANDRA ROY SMITH, AMANDA JULIEN AND CYNTHIA HENDRIX AT THE CULTURAL TEACHING EVENT.



CRAFT MAKING AS A FAMILY ARE FROM L-R: ADAM GILBERT, ELDER JEANNETTE GILBERT AND JULIE LETOURNEAU.



FAMILY AND FRIENDS AT THE CULTURAL TEACHING EVENT ARE FROM L-R: SKY LYNN BATISSE, ELAINE DALEY, ROBYN NAHWEGEZHIC AND RACHEL FLOOD.



TWINS DANIELLE AND ALEX KMET (IN MIDDLE) HAD FUN AT THE CULTURAL TEACHING EVENT WITH THEIR AUNT KAYTLYN JULIEN (LEFT) AND GRANDMOTHER AMANDA JULIEN (RIGHT).

Brunswick House FN Historical Items At ROM



FROM L-R: NAOMI RECOLLET, INTERN, ROM; ALEXIS REDDREAST (FRONT), JONATHON TANGIE; MONA REDDREAST AND SYLVIE REDDREAST



FROM L-R: BAND MANAGER LORRAINE TANGIE; COUNCILLOR ANGELA SAUNDERS, SUE HARVIE, COLLECTION DONOR; COUNCILLOR CHERYL ST. DENIS AND MARGARET QUAKEGESIC.



FROM L-R: TRUDY NICKS, CURATOR EMERITUS, ROM; DARREN TANGIE; ANGELA SAUNDERS AND SUE HARVIE, COLLECTION DONOR.

Brunswick House First Nation celebrated the inclusion of a collection of birch bark containers and model canoes at the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) in Toronto on March 13, 2018. The 16 birch bark containers and two model canoes were hand made in the 1940s and 1950s by Joseph and Clara Candassie, who were original First Nation Ojibway members of Brunswick House First Nation.

The birch bark items designated as 'outstanding significance and of national importance' by the government of Canada were donated to the museum by Susan Harvie, of Ravenna, Ontario. She had acquired the collection from the estate of her mother Madeleine Boucher Harvie, a cousin Elizabeth Austin and a friend Helen Campbell. Through her long time association with Brunswick House FN, Susan Harvie worked with Lorraine Tangie, Band Manager and Christine Venedam, community member and past Chief of Brunswick House FN to preserve and protect these historical items.

"I am so happy and excited that myself and more than a hundred

people from our First Nation are here today to honour the memory of our ancestors and their way of life. It is very satisfying to see the Candassie family craft work become part of a collection here at the Royal Ontario Museum," said Chief Lisa Vanbuskirk, Brunswick House FN.

Susan Harvie explained that the idea behind providing ROM with the Candassie collection had to do with the necessity of finding an environment that was ideal to preserve and protect the artifacts.

"These pieces represent part of the history of Brunswick House First Nation. Most important is that Brunswick House stays part of the story. If these items just went from my mother to me and to the ROM, then they would be just baskets, however with the stories of Brunswick House they become very special," explained Susan Harvie.

J'net Ayayqwayaksheelth, Indigenous Outreach and Learning Coordinator, ROM was on hand to show the Candassie collection and lead a tour of the First People's Gallery

"This all started when Susan ap-



FIRST NATION HISTORY WAS CELEBRATED AT THE ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM (ROM) IN TORONTO ON MARCH 13. FROM L-R: CHIEF LISA VANBUSKIRK, BRUNSWICK HOUSE FN; TRUDY NICKS, CURATOR EMERITUS, DEPARTMENT OF WORLD CULTURES, ROM; SUSAN HARVIE, COLLECTION DONOR; BRUNSWICK HOUSE FN COUNCILLOR CHARMINE SAUNDERS, BRUNSWICK HOUSE FN COUNCILLOR ROBERT REDDREAST AND NAOMI RECOLLET, REBANKS TECHNICIAN INTERN ANTHROPOLOGY DEPARTMENT, ROM

proached the community a couple of years ago and thanks to the work of so many of our leadership, Elders and community members we are here today with our children and grandchildren to see these historic artifacts at the Royal Ontario Museum. I almost cried this morning as I was filled with so much emotion and happiness to see our people honoured,” said Band Manager Tangie.

First Nation Councillors in attendance at the museum were Jennifer Wesley, Charmaine Saunders, Robert Redbreast, Angela Saunders and Cheryl St Denis.

“This is awesome, to be able to see our ancestral community members honoured by having their work become part of the Royal Ontario Museum. It is great to see all of our children today being able to witness this celebration of the history of our community. For many of them it is

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BRUNSWICK HOUSE FIRST NATION MEMBERS ATTENDED THE ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM TO CELEBRATE THE INCLUSION OF ANCESTRAL ARTIFACTS AS PART OF THE CANDASSIE BIRCH BARK COLLECTION ON MARCH 13.



J'NET AYAYQWAYAKSHEELTH, INDIGENOUS OUTREACH AND LEARNING COORDINATOR, ROM (RIGHT) LED BRUNSWICK HOUSE FN MEMBERS ON A TOUR THROUGH THE MUSEUM'S FIRST PEOPLES GALLERY.



FROM L-R: NAOMI RECOLLET, INTERN, ROM; TRACEY FORSTER, TECHNICIAN, ROM; J'NET AYAYQWAYAKSHEELTH, ROM; DR. MARK D. ENGSTROM, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, ROM; TRUDY NICKS, CURATOR EMERITUS, ROM; CHIEF LISA VANBUSKIRK AND HER DAUGHTER SANTANA AND SUSAN HARVIE, COLLECTION DONOR.



BRUNSWICK HOUSE FN YOUTH XAVIER MILLEN AND KIRA MILLEN.



BRUNSWICK HOUSE FN LEADERSHIP WAS IN ATTENDANCE AT THE ROM. FROM L-R: COUNCILLORS ROBERT REDBREAST, CHARMAINE SAUNDERS, ANGELA SAUNDERS, CHERYL ST. DENIS AND JENNIFER WESLEY AND BAND MANAGER LORRAINE TANGIE AND SUE HARVIE, COLLECTION DONOR.

Birchbark Crafts Housed At ROM

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their first visit to Toronto and to the museum and they will remember this for the rest of their lives,” said Venedam.

The event was organized by Brunswick House FN and supported by Wabun Health, Wabun Tribal Council.

“This was an important milestone in the history of Brunswick House First Nation in a wonderful cooperative effort to preserve some of the early crafts of the community. I give thanks to all the organizers from the community, the donor Susan Harvie and the Royal Ontario Museum for giving these precious Native crafts a protective environment that will guarantee the First Nation’s access to their historical and traditional crafts,” commented Jean Lean Lemieux, Wabun Health Director.

Naomi Recollet, of Wikimikong First Nation, who is also the Rebanks Technician Intern Anthropology Department, ROM and Tracey Forster,

Technician, Anthropology Department, ROM assisted Trudy Nicks, Curator Emeritus, Department of World Cultures, ROM in presenting the Candassie collection.

“Susan Harvie brought the collection to us with the support of the First Nation. All of the pieces had to go through a lengthy process and it emerged that they were of historic significance to northern Ontario and Brunswick House First Nation. The long term goal of acquiring this collection is to show these items and tell the stories associated with them,” commented Nicks.

Dozens of Brunswick House FN children donned gloves to handle the birch bark artifacts which originated from their community.

“It’s great to be here today because this is special for our community. I am here with everyone to see what our ancestors did a long time ago and also to enjoy the city of Toronto and have some fun,” said 15 year old Jacy Jolivet of Brunswick House FN.



MONA REDBREAST, BRUNSWICK HOUSE FN, EXAMINES A BIRCH BARK CANOE THAT IS PART OF THE CANDASSIE COLLECTION.



Courtesy of Susan Harvie and the Royal Ontario Museum

JOSEPH AND CLARA CANDASSIE, FIRST NATION OJIBWAY MEMBERS OF BRUNSWICK HOUSE FN WHO CRAFTED BIRCH BARK ITEMS THAT HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED AS BEING OF ‘OUTSTANDING SIGNIFICANCE AND OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE’ BY THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA.



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