

Spirit of the Island: Manitoulin's People
Stories of Indigenous-Settler Historical Dynamics

*Ezhi-minidoowang Minis: Minidoo-wining Bemaadizijig Wiin E-zhi-kendaang
gaa-zhiwebizid nji Anishinaabewid-Gaa-bi-daa jig gaa-bi-zhi-gigdoowaad*

Gathering Two: 'A Survivor's Story'



by Dr. Rhonda L. Paulsen

with Anishinaabemowin Translators Elder Shirley I. Williams-Pheasant and Isadore Toulouse



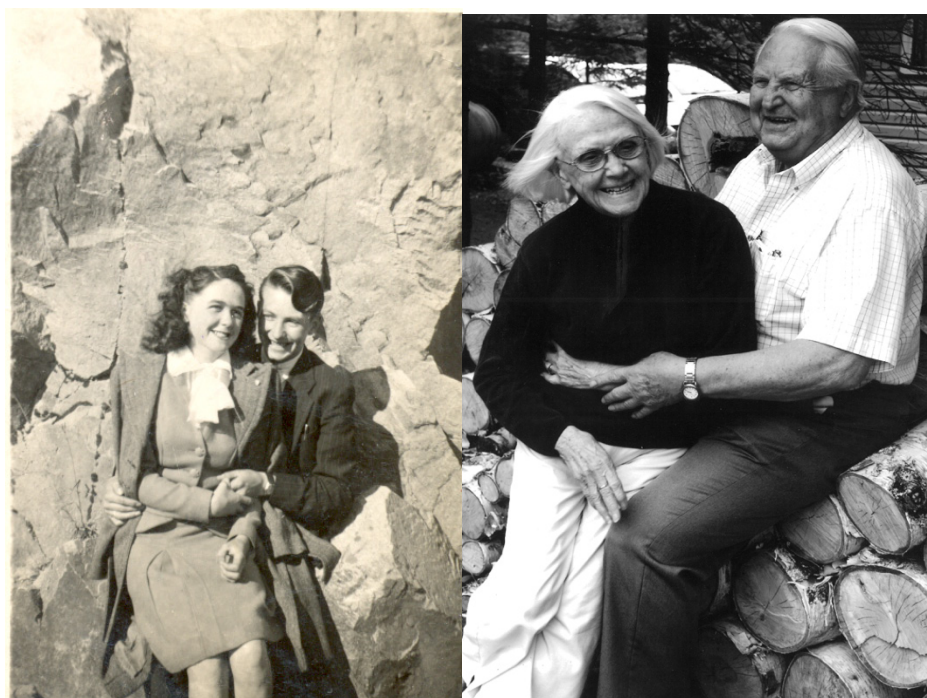
*Lovingly dedicated to my mom and dad,
Ronald Oscar and Elizabeth Patricia Paulsen*



*Ezhi-zaagigwaa ndoo-minaajaak Ngashi miiniwaa noos,
Ronald Oscar miiniwaa Elizabeth Patricia Paulsen*



*Affectueusement dédié à ma mère et à mon père,
Ronald Oscar et Elizabeth Patricia Paulsen*



1947 - Terrace, British Columbia 2010 - Manitoulin Island, Ontario

To honour the life of my most amazing dad, 1930-2014
and in loving memory of my dear son Joey, 1982.



*Wii-mnaadendamong noos-ba bemaadiziwinim gaa-moonji gchi-twaawid, 1930-2014
miiniwaa wii-menjimenmog ngwisen-ba gaa-zhi-gchi-twaawendamog Joey-ba, 1982.*



*Pour rendre hommage à la vie de mon père, un être exceptionnel, 1930-2014
et à la mémoire de mon cher fils Joey, 1982.*



First Nations, Metis, and Inuit pedagogy aim to create a safe and respectful learning environment for all students and teachers alike. Due to the nature of the material shared in this book, you may encounter information and perspectives that are new and that challenge views of community, society, spirituality, history, and contemporary situations.

This may create a sense of confusion, discomfort, or pain. As you proceed through reading our stories and the supportive data, we encourage you to contact the teacher, counsellor, or First Nations, Metis, Inuit representative at your school or district school board.

Please do not think you need to cope with reactions on your own.





GATHERING TWO

'A Survivor's Story' – 'Gaa-bi-zhi-zhaabiwiid dbaajimowinim'

Elder Shirley I. Williams-Pheasant with Dr. Rhonda L. Paulsen

This personal story is based on an interview published in the final report of
the Aboriginal Healing Foundation, 2006

Shirley I. Williams-Pheasant is an Odawa woman from the Wikwemikong Unceded Indian Reserve, Manitoulin Island, Ontario. She attended St. Joseph's Residential School for girls in Spanish, Ontario from 1949 to 1956. Shirley's parents remarkably negotiated a three-year postponement of her enrollment in residential school which resulted in her remaining at home until she was ten years old. During those early years Shirley received instruction in the Odawa and Ojibwe culture and language from her family, as well as instruction in the Catholic catechism. When she left by bus for St. Joseph's Residential School her father counselled her: "Do not forget your language. Do not forget who you are. No matter what they do to you in there, be strong. Learn about the Indian Act and come back and teach us about it."



The Residential School Experience

Shirley describes her introduction to St. Joseph's Residential School: "As we got near the school the bus stopped and the gates opened. I remember feeling kind of sick when the gates closed behind us. It was as if my heart shut down. I never knew why I became so unhappy."

Shirley does not dwell on the pain, loneliness, and punishments the girls endured at the school; she talks with humour about the small acts of resistance in which she and friends engaged. For example, despite the prohibition against using Indigenous languages at the school, Shirley practiced talking to herself in her own language while in bed at night, her head covered with a sheet. She imagined that she was back home at the kitchen table speaking Odawa with her parents. At the same time, she also dreamed of joining the ranks of high school graduates, a possibility with the instruction at St. Joseph's. But that was not to be.

When Shirley turned sixteen, through personal sacrifice her mother sent a store bought dress to celebrate her coming of age. The nuns saw the dress as an attempt to make Shirley "look like a whore" because the dress had an open front that showed some of her neck. When Shirley defended her mother, she was slapped and strapped by the nuns. Then she was made to stand facing one of the four 'punishment posts' in the middle of the building for three days with only bread and water for food. She and the other girls were forbidden to speak to each other during this time. At the break for Christmas that year Shirley sought her parents' permission to leave school and go to work, a possibility because of her age in relation to the residential school policies.



Identity

Elder Williams-Pheasant speaks of her identity confusion during the time she was trying to merge into mainstream society after having spent years in the residential school system. She tried to cover her brown skin with makeup. She had no sense that she had a right to her own opinion and recalls responding almost ‘zombie like’, without question, to directions that others gave her.

Shirley’s journey continued. She worked as a laundry and scrub woman in a hospital as her first job, was married then dissolved the bad marriage, and took night school and upgrading courses to attain high school equivalency. In 1979, at the age of forty, she undertook the challenge of attending Trent University to finish what she had promised her father and herself when she departed for St. Joseph’s Residential School years before. Her residential school experience caused her to take a long, often painful, detour from her early goals. She credits her survival as an Odawa woman to the grounding of language and culture that she received within her family and to the healing power of learning.

When Shirley graduated from Trent University with a Bachelor of Arts degree, majoring in Native Studies, everything seemed to point her in the direction of teaching. With the support of her B.A. Shirley began teaching life skills and transition courses that prepare Indigenous people for work or further education. Later, Shirley also earned a Diploma in Language Teaching and a Master’s degree in Environmental Sciences.

In 1986, she followed in the footsteps of one of her mentors, Fred Wheatley, and obtained a position in the Native Studies Department at Trent University teaching Ojibwe language, which is closely related to Odawa. She brings Ojibwe to the schools through books and compact discs she has produced for language instruction. One focus in her Ojibwe language courses is bringing

the language into the modern context of hockey, which creates much interest and fun for the students.

Elder Williams-Pheasant is a role model to many Indigenous and non-Indigenous students who pass through her classes. Shirley relates that: “Teaching helped me to heal myself because as I was teaching I grew. In the language, there are a lot of healing words. Last year I did a workshop on healing words.”



Reconciliation

Elder Shirley I. Williams-Pheasant, as well as other survivors, have reclaimed wellness for themselves. There are many still on healing journeys who are heavily burdened with the legacy of the residential school system. The Aboriginal Healing Foundation was established to support their healing journeys, as summarized by Elder Williams-Pheasant:

I have followed the political events of the Indian Residential School legacy since Jane Stewart, [then] Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs, offered a Statement of Reconciliation on January 7, 1998; and when [former] Prime Minister Stephen Harper followed with an apology in the House of Commons on June 11, 2008. But this is not reconciliation.

The government and churches took the responsibility of somebody else’s children to educate them for the purpose of assimilation, telling them “you are just Indians.” Attending the residential school made me understand what “killing the Indian within the child” means.

I made sure I witnessed those “apologies” for the future children, my family, and my nieces and nephews, so this will never happen again. I want to stand as a witness to the history I have lived and to how the schools and nuns treated us to try to assimilate us.

The Aboriginal Healing Foundation closed as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) formed and travelled across Canada to hear survivors' stories through personal interviews. Shirley explains that: "One of the reasons this was done is that people in the general population and in government roles do not believe just one story of a residential school survivor. But if there are a lot of testimonies given with similar and consistent experiences, then the stories are heard as being truthful and are recorded."



Recommendations

Elder Shirley I. Williams-Pheasant attended TRC interview sessions in Winnipeg, Calgary, Toronto, and the closing conference held in Ottawa, during which the final report was released. There were ninety-four recommendations in the report, which concluded that:

- there was a violation of Indigenous peoples' human rights, and
- the Indian Residential School system was an attempt at cultural genocide by the government and the church.

Shirley recalls that when these findings were announced at the Ottawa conference, the survivors in attendance all jumped up to cheer that the truth was finally exposed in the Commission's report. She recalls that: "It was a powerful moment among survivors where we were acknowledged of the stories we told our parents, Indian Agents, and priests. They never believed us and told us that we were just lying, making stories up."



Healing

The effects of residential school experiences are still prevalent in many Indigenous communities today, with loss of culture, hunting and fishing treaty rights, economics and

housing, and of treaty promises for land. There remains trauma, addictions, and suicides in many communities. Shirley emphasizes:

- *We cannot just “heal and get over it”. It takes a long time to deal with these things and to put oneself in a place to be responsive to reconciliation.*
- *We need to help our people psychologically through mental health programs in our communities with our own people in these professions, because they will understand better.*
- *Survivors are working hard with those who held onto their language, to restore what was done to them in the past and maintain the legal right for Anishinaabemowin to be included in education.*

These are ways to restore what the Creator gave us.

*Reconciliation is to undo the damages inflicted against us
and restore pride in who we are,
especially in our language and culture.*

STUDENT CENTER – GATHERING TWO



photo by R. L. Paulsen

“Fallen leaves will always find their way back to their roots.”

author unknown

Learning Outcomes ~ upon completion of this gathering, the student will be able to...

1. Appreciate the importance of cultural representation both in the curriculum and in the school environment.
2. Evaluate the implications of the domination of oppressed peoples.
3. Demonstrate an openness to, and an acceptance of responsibility for, change and innovation.

Progressive Contact and Colonization

The ideology of a right to conquer and dominate was ingrained in the worldview of the early colonists who, immediately *upon arrival to* (not 'upon discovery of') the North American continent, established a dominant and paternalistic relationship with Indigenous people.

Justification for this dynamic was principally based on the doctrine of Terra Nullius, which in turn created a platform for concepts later articulated in the Manifest Destiny.

Terra Nullius means the land belongs to no one, or, land that is not owned is free to be owned. The time of progressive contact refers to the 17th through 19th centuries when Euro-Western colonists came to the continent en masse and formostly oppressed and subjugated Indigenous societies. The colonists did not recognize the territories established since time immemorial by the hundreds of different Indigenous nations throughout North America, and also perceived Indigenous people as one group, which erases distinct identity. As the map below clearly indicates (Trent University Archives, Peterborough, ON), the land on which we live today, Turtle Island, was not belonging 'to no one'.

Erasing distinct identity of a person or nation for Indigenous people is the same as claiming that all Europeans are one group - French and Italian, German and Hungarian – all are the same historically, linguistically, and culturally because of their proximity to each other geographically, some even sharing boundaries. Then to go even further, to perceive that because French or German nations (for example only) have different political structures and social orders than 'me', then such will not be recognized. Thus, the doctrine of Terra Nullius was used to justify and support colonization and totalization (i.e. the absorption of a culture in its entirety).

The colonists' beliefs remained entrenched, which surfaced most blatantly in the Manifest Destiny published in Harper's Magazine, 1885, an excerpt from which states:

It is enough to point to the general conclusion that the work which the English race began when it colonized North America is destined to go on until every land on the earth's surface that is not already the seat of an old civilization shall become English in its language, in its religion, in its political habits and traditions, and to a predominant extent in the blood of its people (Pratt 1959: 4-5).

During the time of progressive contact in what is now Canada, Prime Minister Sir John A. Macdonald addressed the House of Commons in 1883 with the directive: "When the school is on the reserve the child lives with its parents, who are savages; he is surrounded by savages. Indian children should be withdrawn as much as possible from the parental influence." (McIntyre Media 2015). Duncan Campbell Scott (Department of Indian Affairs) echoed the same ideology, believing that all "students should be made conscious of the country's roots; they should understand how all its life flowed either from the old world or New England" (Titley 1995: 25). This statement reflects a denial of the contributions, if not the very existence, of Indigenous populations. One Elder remembers:

We lost our culture when people first started coming over, when they migrated to the island here in the 17th and 18th century. I remember one tradition, the naming ceremony they had. That's the last I recall.

Another Elder shares:

Whatever I've lost, the smudging and the cleansing and the drum, those things, those were suppressed in the 1800's because they didn't want to hear the drumming. But there was one old man that still used to do it and it was beautiful. He'd drum just to reminisce with older people. It really lifts my spirit when I hear it.

The colonist's self-appointed superiority and ethnocentric ideology continued and built momentum during this period in history. The implementation of the residential school system clearly demonstrates that the colonists of this era had targeted the education system as the primary means by which they would try and remove indigeneity from Indigenous people, or as Elder Williams-Pheasant learned through her residential school experience, the church and government together were "killing the Indian within the child."



Personal Inquiry

1. Contact between societies has been happening with the human population since time immemorial. When contact is made, if one society is oppressive and dominant towards the other it usually constitutes war. Do you think that there could have been opportunity for a different 'history' if Euro-Western explorers had not come to North America with the belief of being the 'dominant race'?
2. Are there evidences of the philosophy of Terra Nullius in modern day societies? If so, identify examples and explain how this philosophy is evident.
3. Write what you think you would serve as 'reconciliation' with those who authorized forcibly removing you from your home, community, language, traditions, and culture.



Residential School System and Indian Agents

Between 1828 (beginning with the Mush Hole Indian Residential School) and 1850, day schools and boarding schools were being built on reserves, but soon after, during the 1860's and 1870's, momentum was gaining to move the schools away from the children's communities. Creating great distances between the children and their communities made it impossible for

family members to get to the schools or for the children to get home, particularly evident when the children were removed from fly-in/out communities. This strategy ensured that any influence from the child's culture and language would be denied, thus pushing forward the 1830 Policy of Assimilation.

By 1885 it became compulsory for Indigenous children to attend residential schools and it became entrenched in law that if the children were not surrendered to the Indian Agent their parents could be sent to jail. The role of the non-Indigenous Indian Agent in this context was to act on behalf of the government, remove children from their communities, and take them to the residential schools. Some families were split, meaning that one or more of the children were taken while one or more remained at home. In this situation, these parents would hesitate to protest the Indian Agent because if they were sent to jail, no one would be there to care for their children remaining at home. One Elder recounts:

There was a lot of different schools, there was a school where the church was, just for the neighbourhood. But most of us came from the country, people were walking in about five or six miles on a bush road in the winter. So, to prevent your child from that, and to make sure they had three squares a day, the residential school was an alternative. But some children were taken by an Indian Agent.

Another Elder explains the social situation at residential schools:

There's a lot of people from different communities who went to the residential school. Just because everyone is there and away from home doesn't mean you band together. There are Mohawks and Iroquois, the different groups would hang around together. People call you names and you call them names. You learn fast as you get older, you learn to fend for yourself – defend your own territory, your own rights.

Acknowledging distinct nations in relation to residential schools, Georges Erasmus, President of the Aboriginal Healing Foundation in 2010, explains:

Although the Inuit are in many details unique, the commonness of their experiences with other Aboriginal peoples who endured the Indian Residential School System should be acknowledged also. Like their First Nations and Metis counter-parts, Inuit students were removed from their communities, cultures, families, and territories to be re-engineered into the likeness of a presumed superior race (2010: 9).

Evidence of presumptions of a superior race and ethnocentric ideologies lie in the early journals of Reverend Thompson Ferrier of the Methodist Church, who in 1906 stipulated:

i) “As fast as *our* Indian is capable of taking care of himself, it is our duty to set him on his feet and sever forever the ties that bind him to his tribe” (italics added); ii) “The preparation of Indian youth for the duties, privileges and responsibilities of citizenship is the purpose of the Government plan for education”; and, iii) “The [educational] foundation must be the development of character – learning is a secondary consideration” (1906: 1-15).

One Elder describes their related experience:

Certain students were given days to work in different areas, like Monday one was in the barn, Tuesday one was in the field. The school work wasn't important, it was more religious instruction and training that they thought would make us responsible.

Another Elder recalls:

We weren't doing the same thing every year. I worked in the chicken coop, in a shoemaker shop, and the horse stable. I liked working in the dairy.

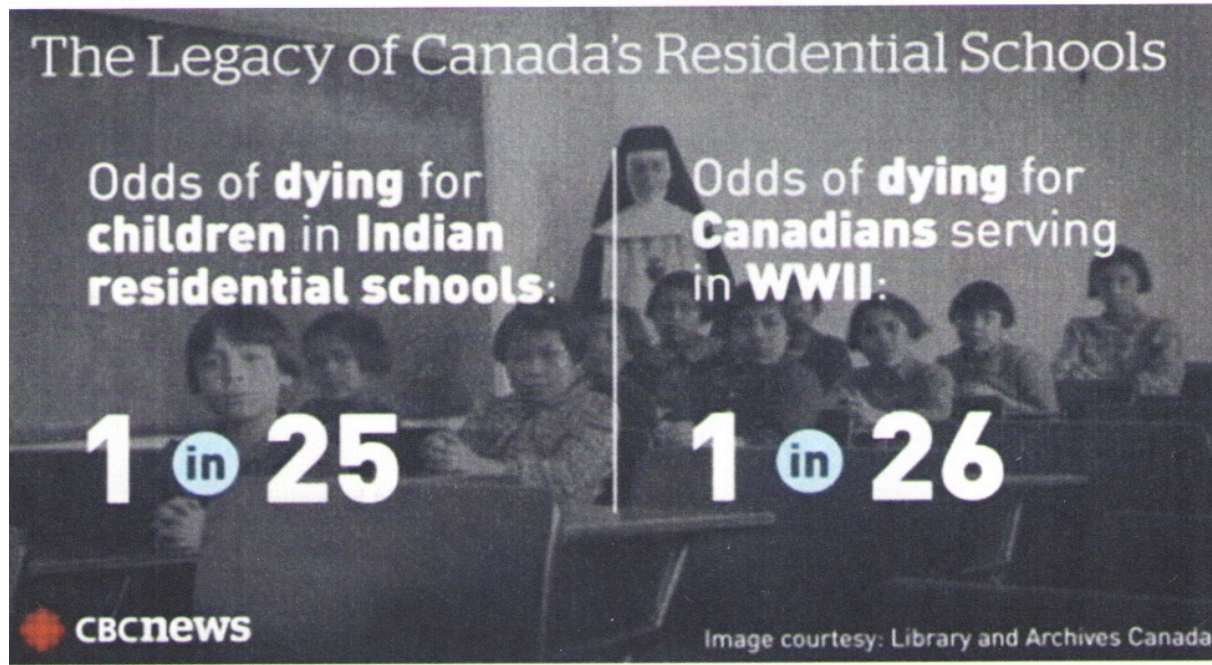
In keeping with these mandates, residential school teachers did not need to be qualified, the names of the children were either changed or replaced with a number, and no Indigenous languages or beliefs were allowed. An Elder shares:

*In the schools, there was no regard for our own traditions.
Absolutely none. When you talk about tradition, they didn't
have any concern about the culture, they just drove you one way,
their way. But we had our way of life – close to Mother Earth.*

We are reminded of Duncan Campbell Scott's role with the Department of Indian Affairs (DIA). In 1909 Scott took the appointment of Superintendent of Education, his objectives reflecting the government goals for assimilation that were the same as those held by the church, related by Ferrier above. Scott stated that: "Our objective is to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada who has not been absorbed into the body politic, and there is no Indian question" (Smith 1993: 38). He targeted the education system for this goal: "The happiest future for the Indian race is absorption into the general population, and this is the object policy of our government. The great forces of intermarriage and education will finally overcome the lingering traces of native custom and tradition" (Titley 1995: 34). Tragically, the forces of disease, starvation, and neglect had already almost "finally overcome the lingering traces" of Indigenous children: over 50% of children who went into the residential schools never came out, and many bodies have never been found or identified.

In 1904 Dr. Peter Bryce was appointed as Medical Inspector for residential schools by the Departments of the Interior and Indian Affairs. By 1907 Dr. Bryce had visited thirty-five schools and reported on formidable conditions such as sanitary concerns and tuberculosis, documenting that: "The appalling number of deaths among the younger children brings the Department within unpleasant nearness to the charge of manslaughter" (Advisory Board on Indian Education, 1907). As Scott later responded: "I can safely say that barely half of the children in our Indian schools survive to take advantage of the education we are offering them" (1910 to Indian Affairs Agent General in B.C.). The image below, *The Legacy of Canada's Residential Schools* (Library and

Archives Canada), draws a comparison between the odds of dying for children in residential schools with soldiers who served in World War II.



Personal Inquiry

1. What question(s) would you ask the Canadian government about the decisions to continue the residential school system while knowing of the health concerns?
2. What is the difference between how the memories of survivors of the residential school system and war veterans are viewed (e.g. 'Lest we forget', moments of silence, etc.)?
This question is not meant to infer a competition with, or a minimization of, war veterans, but is meant to highlight the atrocities of 'letting' children die in Canadian schools.
3. a) How did these people die?
b) What was the reason for being at the location of their death?



The assimilation and character preparation processes outlined in Ferrier's religious precepts and Scott's political agenda are notable in the photographs taken during this time, recording 'Three Little Indians' before and after the residential school experience. The caption for the first photograph of these children is: 'Three Little Indians, Wild and Untaught'; the latter photograph of the same three children is titled: 'Three Little Indians, Institute Pupils.'

Residential School Students - 1906



THREE LITTLE INDIANS—WILD AND UNTAUGHT.



THREE LITTLE INDIANS—INSTITUTE PUPILS.

(Ferrier 1906: 4-5)

Scott's work was commended by the government, evident in that he was promoted to Deputy Superintendent General in 1913 and held this position until 1932 (Titley 1995: 24). During his tenure with the DIA Scott made consequential decisions regarding Indigenous education to support his objectives for assimilation through the "great forces of education", particularly in relation to the residential school system.



Agency of Assimilation

The school as an institution, when established in a hierarchical order, becomes an agency of assimilation. Students are assimilated into the knowledge, traditions, and expectations of the dominant order as determined by the dominant order. The ramifications of this system in residential schools, such as extremes of familial and community separation, include cultural displacement and identity confusion, which are still being felt today. One Elder recalls:

You're away from home, there's no one there you know. The family was taken away from you. You're at the residential system for ten months out of the year, so you miss a lot. And being told not to live by your own traditions – that's really hurtful.

Learning to cope with familial separation and antagonism amongst peers was just part of the horror; the cloak of racism and oppression under which the children were subjugated by the administrators of these schools is beyond comprehension.

There are gruesome accounts of physical, emotional, and sexual abuses that took place in the residential schools. Just one example is the electric chair that was used in Fort Albany First Nation of Ontario. This is discussed not as sensationalizing, and indeed is horrifying to face, but the example emphasizes what Elder Williams-Pheasant maintains when she expresses that "we

cannot just heal and get over it.” Published in Toronto’s *Globe and Mail*, October 21, 1996, the report recounts one Anishinaabe student’s experience:

The homemade electric chair that was used for years to punish aboriginal children at St. Anne’s Residential School has disappeared, but its memory endures... [One former student] remembers he and his class being forced to take turns sitting in the chair and receiving painful jolts of electricity to entertain visiting dignitaries... ‘I was six years old, we were told by the brother to do it and there was never any question of not doing it. Once the thing was cranked up, I could feel the current going through me, mainly through my arms. Your legs are jumping up and everyone was laughing’.

St. Anne’s Residential School operated from 1936 to 1964.

Healing takes time, sometimes a life time. An Elder reflects:

I call what they did in the residential schools brainwashing: being removed from your own people and turned against each other. It didn’t just happen because of the religious denominations, it happened because of the government. It almost worked, but the people were strong. And we’re still strong.



Canada’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission

Truth and Reconciliation Commissions (TRC) are task-forces established in countries in which a specific group or groups of people face inhumane and oppressive treatment and circumstances. Usually such countries have had periods of civil war or dictatorships. As a result of the residential school system, Canada was tasked with resolving past conflicts with Indigenous nations through the development of the TRC.

Prior to Canada’s TRC, the Aboriginal Healing Foundation (AHF) was created on

March 30, 1998, through which sustainable projects were formed to support the impact of the residential school system era, such as Healing Circles as part of community projects. Also during this time, psychologists coined the term ‘Residential School Syndrome’ for commonalities of behaviour and symptoms presented by residential school survivors. Some behaviours consistent among many survivors include: nightmares, anxiety, depression, thoughts of or attempts at suicide, anger, substance abuse, and insomnia. Before effective treatment can take place, the cause needs to be identified. A benefit that can come from research and analysis resulting in the designation of a ‘syndrome’ is that treatment can be more specific and support(s) can be established.

By 2004 AHF had 1,248 healing projects underway. In 2010 the funding for AHF was cut by the conservative government under then Prime Minister Stephen Harper, which resulted in the foundation closing in 2014. The closure of the foundation also resulted in the closure of most community healing projects, and healing initiatives across Canada were also discontinued.

In May, 2006 the Canadian government announced the approval of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement out of which formed the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC), launched on June 2, 2008. The mandate of TRC was to inform all Canadians, through public education and awareness, about what happened in residential schools, which spanned five generations of Indigenous students. Through a nation-wide research project that interviewed over 6,000 Indigenous residential school survivors, the truth of the individuals, families, and communities affected by the residential school experience was documented. The final report of TRC was released in Ottawa between May 31 and June 3, 2015, referenced by Elder Shirley I. Williams-Pheasant in *A Survivor’s Story* above.



Calls to Action #62 and #63

The final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada includes a section of recommendations on ‘Education for Reconciliation’, which the Ministry of Education of Ontario has responded to Calls to Action #62 and #63.

Call to Action #62

We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments, in consultation and collaboration with Survivors, Aboriginal peoples, and educators, to:

- i. Make age appropriate curriculum on residential schools, Treaties, and Aboriginal peoples’ historical and contemporary contributions to Canada a mandatory education requirement for Kindergarten to Grade Twelve students.
- ii. Provide the necessary funding to post-secondary institutions to educate teachers on how to integrate Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods into classrooms.
- iii. Provide the necessary funding to Aboriginal schools to utilize Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods in classrooms.
- iv. Establish senior level positions in government at the assistant deputy minister level or higher dedicated to Aboriginal content in education.

Call to Action #63

We call upon the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada to maintain an annual commitment to Aboriginal education issues including:

- i. Developing and implementing Kindergarten to Grade Twelve curriculum and learning resources on Aboriginal peoples in Canadian history, and the history and legacy of residential schools.
- ii. Sharing information and best practices on teaching curriculum related to residential schools and Aboriginal history.
- iii. Building student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect.
- iv. Identifying teacher training needs relating to the above.

The Ministry of Education of Ontario has responded to these two Calls to Action by moving forward with the development and implementation of a comprehensive educational plan with First Nations, Metis, and Inuit partners. A Steering Committee of Indigenous educators,

administrators, and organizations oversee this project and in January 2017 the Joint Implementation Working Group was established, of which this author is a member.



Student Voices: Truth and Reconciliation

The following definitions of Truth and Reconciliation are written by Indigenous students who voluntarily provided their perspectives.

- *“Reconciliation is two or more parties making amends for the wrong doings and injustice of at least one party in the past.”*
- *“Recognizing the past; moving forward.”*
- *“Acknowledging past mistakes, apologizing, and doing whatever possible to make things right/make amends.”*
- *“The general public needs to be made aware of everything that has happened to us. It starts with the youth. Intergenerational trauma and blood memory are real things, and we, as Indigenous people, are in a constant healing journey. Healing ourselves and having an awareness of our responsibilities as Indigenous people and being able to reconcile with ourselves is integral.”*
- *“Trying to make a truce between two parties that have wronged.”*
- *“Recognizing that there were horrible assimilation policies put in place by the Canadian government.”*
- *“For me, a big part of reconciliation involves all people recognizing the wrong doings in the past as well as honouring those who suffered through it. The next part is for non-Indigenous people to respect Indigenous people when they memorialize and remember their ancestors in any way they need to.”*



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Gathering Two

'A Survivor's Story' ~ 'Gaa-bi-zhi-zhaabiwiid dbaajimowinim'

Video Credits

Personal story: Elder Shirley I. Williams-Pheasant and Dr. Rhonda L. Paulsen

Anishinaabemowin Translators:

Elder Shirley I. Williams-Pheasant and Isadore Toulouse

Oil on canvas 'Walking in Birches' banner: Laura L. Thippahwong

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Videographer: Evan Brockest

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