

MAAMIKWENDAN GATHERING

Remembering Residential Schools and
Cemeteries as Indigenous Sites of Conscience

October 16 | 1–9 PM

October 17 | 9 AM–4 PM

Arrowhead Conference and Gaming Centre,
5008 Crescent Road W, Portage la Prairie, MB





**To the Attendees of the Maamiikwendan Gathering—
Remembering Residential Schools & Cemeteries as
Indigenous Sites of Conscience Conference**

Mino giizhigad - It's a Good Day:

As chairperson and on behalf of the Board of Directors of the National Indigenous Residential School Museum, it is my pleasure to welcome you all to our community of Long Plain First Nation, Treaty One Territory.

We are honored to host the Maamiikwendan Gathering—Remembering Residential Schools & Cemeteries as Indigenous Sites of Conscience.

While you are here, we hope you enjoy your visit to our community. My best wishes for an enjoyable and successful conference.

Chief Dennis Meeches
Chairperson



Welcome to the Maamiikwendan Gathering.

Thank you for joining us for the first of what will hopefully be many gatherings to recognize the vital initiatives that communities are leading in commemorating and memorializing Residential School sites and cemeteries. I am pleased we can help open the dialogue in advancing this important work.

The conversations we will have are informed by multiple Calls to Action—specifically Calls to Action 72-79. These Calls to Action reflect the many voices of Survivors that spoke to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Central in these Calls is the need to remember, honour and commemorate all the children that never returned home from the schools.

The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR) is honoured to share and discuss the important work that will further realize these Calls to Action.

We are thankful for all of our partners, speakers and delegates that have made this conversation possible. Together we will ensure that Canada never forgets and the action continues.

Sincerely,

Ry Moran
Director of the NCTR

Bozhoo, Tanisi, Tawnshi, Hello, Bonjour,

The National Trust for Canada is honoured to be an organizing partner in this historic gathering of Indigenous Survivors and representatives from more than two dozen Indigenous Residential School and cemetery sites from every corner of Canada. This is an important opportunity for representatives from the communities to explore the future of these sites of conscience, which speak of tragedy and trauma, and also have the power to speak to all Canadians and inspire change.

It is especially meaningful for the National Trust that Maamiikwendan is being held at Long Plain First Nation, the site of the Portage la Prairie Residential School (now the Rufus Prince Building). In 2007, Chief Dennis Meeches journeyed from Long Plain to the National Trust conference in Edmonton to tell us about his community's work to create the National Indigenous Residential School Museum of Canada—many years before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission brought the dark legacy of Residential Schools to the attention of all Canadians.

Founded in 1973, the National Trust for Canada is a national membership-based charity that works to save and renew Canada's heritage places and landscapes. We adopted the Truth and Reconciliation principles in 2016, but we have so much to learn. Over and over, we have been humbled by the generosity of Indigenous Peoples who generously share their stories, expertise and traditional wisdom with us, and who welcome our conferences and delegates to their traditional territory each year.

At Maamiikwendan we'll be listening with our ears and our hearts. It is our hope that throughout this gathering, as we learn about places of great meaning and memory, we will advance a few steps together along the path to Reconciliation.



Natalie Bull
Executive Director



Michael Seaman
Chair, National Trust

AGENDA

Day 1 – Wednesday, October 16, 2019

10 AM Roundtable Discussions with Residential School Delegates

12 PM Lunch

Official Gathering Begins for All Delegates

1 PM Opening Prayer & Song – Elder Ernie Daniels
Territory Welcome – Chief Dennis Meeches
Overview of Long Plain History and Community Highlights.

1:30 PM Spotlight: National Indigenous Residential School Museum of Canada – History, Vision, Challenges, Best Practices, What is Working and Next Steps.
Speaker: Lorraine Daniels

2 PM Update on Calls to Action 72-79
Speakers: Parks Canada and Ry Moran

3 PM Nutrition Break & Networking

3:30 PM Ceremony: Remembering the Children Who Never Returned Home from Portage La Prairie Residential School

4:30 PM Feast

Day 2 – Thursday, October 17, 2019

- 8:30 AM** Rise and Shine with Bighetty & Bighetty
- 8:45 AM** Indigenous Perspectives on Heritage Participation
Speakers: Melissa Bigmore, Dorene Bernard, Piita T. Irniq and Dr. Barney Williams
- 10 AM** Nutrition Break & Networking
- 10:30 AM** Opportunities Through Virtual Reality
Speakers: Dr. Peter Dawson, Vivian Ayoungman, Andrew Woolford and Ted Fontaine
- 11:45 AM** Métis Cultural Presentation
- 12 PM** Lunch
- 1 PM** Reclaiming Space: Spotlight on Indigenous-led use of Residential School Sites
Speakers: Roberta Hill, Dawn Hill and Dr. Sheri Chisan
- 2 PM** Honouring Community Researchers
- 2:30 PM** Nutrition Break & Networking
- 3 PM** Sanatoriums and the Link to Missing Children
Speakers: Dr. Erin Millions, Raymond Frogner and Jesse Boiteau
- 4 PM** Final Thoughts
- 4:30 PM** Closing Prayer and Adjourment



Dorene Bernard

Dorene Bernard, Kesatum tan teli L’nuwey, Kiwnik Clan, Sipekne’katik, Mi’kmaki, is a traditional Mi’kmaq woman, of the Sipekne’katik Band, residing in Indian Brook, N.S. She is the mother of 4 children and grandmother of 9 beautiful grandchildren. She is a Survivor of the Shubenacadie Indian Residential School, the 3rd generation to attend within her family.

Dorene earned a BSW Degree at Dalhousie University in 1991, and her MSW in Aboriginal Field of Study at Sir Wilfrid Laurier University in 2013. She eventually worked with Shubenacadie Indian Residential School Survivors in the Lnu’wey Healing program, within Mi’kmaq communities in the Atlantic Region. In 2013/14, she coordinated the IRS Legacy Project at Mi’kmawey Debert Cultural Centre, working with Survivors and families in the Atlantic region to document the history of the IRS Legacy and Survivors’ profiles for the archives, which she continues to do. Recently, Dorene was the project facilitator for the IRS Commemoration Project.



Melissa Bigmore, Communications Coordinator, Tseshaht First Nation

Melissa Bigmore has been in her position with the Tseshaht First Nation just over a year and has quickly integrated into the community. She came to the Nation with a background in Marketing and Business Development. Melissa was born and raised in Port Alberni and is married with two teenage daughters. Growing up in Port Alberni has allowed Melissa the opportunity to serve her community in many ways. Melissa has brought her passion for helping others to the Tseshaht First Nation and most recently was the staff lead on the Nation’s event, Reclaiming Lost Souls of the Alberni Indian Residential School Healing Event, held at the end of September 2019. Melissa believes that healing begins at home and encourages anyone to share in truth telling. “It becomes a ripple effect, starting with one truth, people gain confidence in their own truth telling and it carries forward to begin the healing for not only themselves but anyone who hears it”.



Bighetty & Bighetty Puppet Show

Four brothers—and their Cree-speaking puppets—show the silly, joyful side of Indigenous life. It started with short skits to entertain friends and family. Before long, the Bighetty brothers had gone viral, with tens of thousands of video views on social media and requests to perform for communities across Western Canada. The Bighetty brothers were born with the gift of humour and created characters based on what they saw around them in their own community. With the puppets speaking Cree, they found a fun way to engage children in learning the language.



Jesse Boiteau – NCTR Senior Archivist

Jesse Boiteau is the Senior Archivist and member of the Métis Nation. He completed his Masters in Archival Studies at the U of M, focusing on the intersections between Western archival theory and practice, and Indigenous notions of archives and memory to shed light on how the NCTR can accommodate and blend multiple viewpoints in its processes. Jesse works within a close archives team to process the records collected by the TRC, make new collections available online, and respond to access requests from Residential School Survivors. He is also continually researching ways to leverage new technologies to honour the experiences and truths of Survivors through innovative and participatory archival practices.



Dr. Sherri Chisan

Sherri Chisan, nehiyaw iskwew onicikiskwapiwinihk ohci, is serving as President at University nuhelot'jne thaiyots'j nistameyimâkanak Blue Quills (UnBQ). She also currently holds the role of Director of Research and is lead faculty in the Doctoral Program. She joined UnBQ in 1998 to coordinate the development and delivery of the Leadership & Management Program, and then the Indigenous Artists Program and Doctoral Program. Sherri has a particular interest in Indigenous Research, and her commitment to Indigenous Knowledge and ceremony informs her work. In 2011, Sherri received a Doctoral Degree in iyiniw pimâtisiwin kiskeyihtamowin at UnBQ. She has an MA in Educational Leadership from San Diego State U, and BMgmt from U of Lethbridge.



Cynthia Dick, Chief Councillor, Tseshaht First Nation

Cynthia Dick is a proud member of Tseshaht First Nation and elected councillor for her tribe. In 2016, she was appointed by council to sit as the Nation's Chief Councillor, making her the youngest and first female Chief Councillor Tseshaht has ever elected. In addition to representing her Nation as a co-chair of the Reconciliation Committee in Port Alberni, BC, she was appointed to the Board of Directors for the Port Alberni Port Authority and sits as a Director for the Port Alberni Bread of Life. Cynthia grew up in the Tseshaht Community and is the mother of a young daughter, Arianna. She says her daughter is her motivation to make the world a better place. She completed her Bachelor of Arts from Vancouver Island University, majoring in Sociology and minoring in Psychology. She then became passionate about creating social change for the betterment of communities and all people and living things.



Theodore Fontaine

Theodore Fontaine is a member and former chief of the Sagkeeng Ojibway First Nation in Manitoba. He attended the Fort Alexander and Assiniboia Indian Residential Schools from 1948 to 1960. Theodore graduated in Civil Engineering from the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology in 1973 and went on to work extensively in the corporate, government and First Nations sectors, including eleven years with the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs as Executive Director. Theodore is a regular speaker and media commentator on Indian Residential Schools and has presented Canadian national bestseller *Broken Circle: The Dark Legacy of Indian Residential Schools, A Memoir*. Theodore welcomes new Canadians and families at Canadian Citizenship ceremonies and has shared his Residential School experiences at events at the Canadian Museum of Human Rights and at The United States Memorial Holocaust Museum. He continues to break new ground by supporting Residential School Survivors and by seeking Reconciliation directly with those who were perpetrators of his abuse.



Raymond Frogner – NCTR Director of Archives

Raymond Frogner is the Head of Archives. Born in Port Alberni, British Columbia Raymond received his Master of Arts degree in Labour History from the University of Victoria and a Master of Archival Studies degree from University of British Columbia. His graduate work focused on archives and Indigenous identity. He continues to research and publish on archival issues with a focus on Indigenous Societies, identity and memory. Raymond joined NCTR in 2016 as the Head of Archives. Raymond is responsible to respectfully honour, safeguard, and when appropriate make available the records acquired by the TRC and additional records of enduring value for Indigenous peoples.

Roberta J. Hill

Roberta J. Hill is a Mohawk from Six Nations of the Grand River Territory and attended the Mohawk Institute Indian Residential School from 1957-1961. Pursuing the truth about the Indian Residential School era has been her focus over the past 10 years. Listening to the voices of other Survivors inspired her and a group of Survivors to dedicate time and energy to a lasting memorial - the Mohawk Village Memorial Park project. The Mohawk Village Memorial Park, is a not for profit charitable organization with a mission/mandate to build a memorial park on the grounds of the former Mohawk Institute Indian Residential School to honour the children of the Residential School era. Since 2011, Roberta has been the Chairperson for the Mohawk Village Memorial Park. It is about making positive change moving forward but not forgetting the past.



Dawn Hill

Dawn Hill is a former Residential School student of the Mohawk Institute Indian Residential School in Brantford, Ontario from 1957 – 1961. She became an elementary school teacher and taught for 28 years. Currently, she is the Secretary/Treasurer of the Mohawk Village Memorial Park, a not-for-profit, charity organization. The Park will be dedicated to the memory of all the children who attended the Mohawk Institute Indian Residential School in Brantford.



Piita T. Irniq

Piita T. Irniq, is an Inuit Cultural Teacher and Consultant. Mr. Irniq served two terms in the Territorial Council of the N.W.T. representing the Keewatin Region Riding (1975-89) where he held portfolios of Social Development, Economic Development and Tourism, and Natural and Cultural Affairs, and the riding of Aivilik (1987-91). Mr Irniq has worked for the Public Service of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut in various capacities. He became Deputy Minister of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth in the new government of Nunavut in 1998 with a mandate of guardianship of traditional Inuit culture and language. In April 2000 he was appointed the Commissioner of Nunavut and served a five-year term. He presently sits on the Museum of History's Aboriginal Advisory Committee.



Dr. Erin Millions

Dr. Erin Millions is a Postdoctoral Fellow in the Department of History at the University of Winnipeg. Dr. Millions' current research assesses the administration of death and burial of Indigenous child tuberculosis patients at two Manitoba tuberculosis hospitals in the mid-twentieth century. This work is in response to community requests for assistance locating the burial sites of missing Indigenous patients. Dr. Millions is also the Project Leader of the Manitoba Indigenous Tuberculosis Photo Project (social: @TBPhotoProject). The MITPP shares previously-unseen historical photos of Manitoba Indigenous tuberculosis patients and staff with Survivors, families, and communities through social media and community workshops.



Ry Moran, Director of the NCTR

As the first Director of the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR), it is Ry Moran's job to guide the development, growth and reach of the NCTR. Ry came to the centre directly from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) where he served as the Director of Statement Gathering and the National Research Centre. On the TRC's behalf, he facilitated the gathering of nearly 7,000 video/audio-recorded statements of former Residential School Students and others affected by the Residential School system. He was also responsible for gathering the documentary history of the Residential School system from more than 20 government departments and nearly 100 church archives – millions of records in all. Ry's professional skills have earned him many awards, including a Governor General's Meritorious Service Cross and a National Aboriginal Role Model Award. Prior to the TRC, Ry was active in many areas including indigenous language preservation and the arts. Ry is a proud member of the Red River Metis.



Dr. Barney Williams

Barney Williams is Nuu-chah-nulth and a member of the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations in Meares Island, B.C. He is an Elder and Residential School Survivor, a social worker and clinical counsellor, and an elected councillor of the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation. From 2008 to 2015, he served on the All Parties Committee for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada and as an Elder Advisor provided cultural and spiritual advice to the Commissioners. He has also served as an Elder adviser for the B.C. Assembly of First Nations, Parks Canada, Assembly of First Nations National Elders Council, Tso-tum-le-lum Society Treatment Centre and the Intertribal Health Authority. Currently he is working as an elder at Vancouver Island University and affiliated with UBC and University of Victoria in an advisory capacity. In November 2017, he received an Honorary Doctorate in Laws from the University of Victoria for his lifelong work in the helping field.

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We have a National Residential School Crisis
Line for Survivors and those who need it.

Call toll-free & in confidence **1 866 925 4419**.

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