

IPPERWASH PUBLIC INQUIRY

INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE FORUM

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Draft Version Only

Held at:

Forest, Ontario

\*\*\*\*\*

October 13th, 2004

Day 1 of 2

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--- Upon commencing at 9:30 a.m.

MR. WALLY MCKAY: I want to welcome each one of you to this historic gathering. Historic in many ways, because this is the first time a Commission has taken the time in -- in the country that we know of, to take two (2) days to be able to concern itself in the heart of the people.

In the papers that you have there, it tell a little story about my friend Richard Twiss who works internationally with a number of people and it says about the rising of the sun in the east and setting -- and the setting of it in the west.

While one people are brushing their teeth to get their day starting, the other peoples brushing their teeth to end their -- end today.

It says, is it a different event? No, it's the same event, the same sun. It's a matter of the angle.

In the next two (2) days we're going to be looking at the angle. By sitting together and looking at the angle, we hope to have a better understanding, a better vision of what we are doing in this territory.

With that, I want to welcome each one of you. I want to ask all the people to come in, sit with us in this circle and be part of this event. It's only through how much you want to put into it that you'll get out of it.

With that, I'll call upon the Stoney Point singers for the opening. Thank you.

(CEREMONIAL SINGERS PERFORM)

ELDER THOMAS WHITE: My name is -- my name is Tommy White, I come from a community called Whitefish Bay. I like to apologise to my elders, seeing me standing in front of the drums speaking to you as to open the meeting. And I hope they forgive me for they know so much more than I do. They know how to speak more than I do. But I hope they bear with me and I apologise to the elders.

And I also apologise to the spirits for seeing me standing in front of the drum here to open this meeting, this gathering. But it's also a pleasure for me

to see the circle of life that we're standing here, sitting around here as Anishinaabek people.

Myself, I do this every day. I pray every day. I'm fifty-seven (57) years young. I got seventeen (17) grandchildren, and two (2) great-grandchildren. So give me a round of applause. I'm just kidding.

(APPLAUSE)

My elders back home have always told me not to get over serious when we open meetings like these.

When I hear people laugh, people get together, it is a very good sign it's going to be a good day.

As you know, I decided not to take my feather yet. And when I open I won't to be needing this out there in the back. I'll be talking in my language and as I speak in my language I want you in your own way, pray with me, say it in your own heart why we are gathered here.

I do not know anything. I am nervous, but I see friendly faces. I recognise a lot of faces and I will try and do my best to open this meeting so we can have a better understanding after the two (2) days we are gathered here.

So with that, I like to apologise to whoever is controlling this, but I won't be needing it while I open with my -- with my prayer. So help me.

(PRAYER BY ELDER THOMAS WHITE)

ELDER THOMAS WHITE: I'd like to just say what I said to you just during my **ten (10), fifteen (15)** minute speech, all I said was, thank you.

During my **ten (10)** minute speech -- during my **ten (10)** minute speech all I said was, thank you, ladies and gentlemen.

(BRIEF PAUSE)

MR. WALLY MCKAY: **At this time, I'd like to ask the Stoney Point Singers to sing again.**

**(CEREMONIAL SINGERS PERFORM)**

MR. WALLY MCKAY: Thank you very much.  
At this time I would like to ask Emery Shawanoo to say  
the opening prayer. Emery...?

(OPENING PRAYER BY ELDER EMERY  
SHAWANOO)

MR. WALLY MCKAY: Thank you very much,  
Emery, for that prayer.

At this time, I'd like to ask Chief Tom  
Bressette for the welcoming.

CHIEF TOM BRESSETTE: Thank you, Wally.  
I really appreciate Wally coming down and helping us out  
like this and I want to acknowledge all the visitors that  
we have with us.

But, first of all, to acknowledge our  
sacred items that we have before us. I know many people  
have lost a lot of understanding of our own culture. Our  
people are impacted very, very negatively by the  
governments of Canada throughout the history that we've  
shared together.

And I believe when we first welcomed  
visitors in this area it was a welcome to share in -- in  
the land and somehow we got left out of the sharing.

And I guess we have to acknowledge that,  
because that's our history on this land and hopefully  
we're going to spend these next couple of days trying to  
understand our own perceptions of what our culture, our  
history and our feelings are on this land that we all  
agreed to share.

And it's quite an honour to be able to  
host this -- this assembly here in this area and  
hopefully everyone will feel free to speak their mind and  
-- and sort of people know our perception that the world  
is not the same as it is with the rest of the people in  
Canada.

I know the people in Canada think, you  
know, that they own this land. They think that this is  
their own country but the reality is, it's a country that  
our people first lived in and we agreed to share and

that's something, I think, that our perceptions have crossed path as we've moved along.

And it certainly is impacted very negatively, not in our community, but many communities across the land.

I think the -- the Commission is making a -- a very positive step in acknowledging that we do have a different view of the world as First Nations people and the people have come to call this place home they call their selves Canadians but they trace their roots to other nations in this world and that's something, I think, when we trace our footsteps, our footsteps stay where we are.

And I think that's the thing that we have to come to terms with when we deal with the many land claims that exist across this country.

Because our people -- you know, our -- are struggling to come to terms with where do we go? What's our future in this country?

Because it was supposed to be a future that we shared evenly and that we respected each other and I hope that -- that is certainly how we come to -- to move forward.

With that, I'd like to thank all the visitors, the guests. I'd like to thank the elders most of all for coming the distance they have to come and share with the great knowledge they have because they have a lot more knowledge than I do.

I hope to learn things, because I don't believe there is a day goes by that we don't learn something new. And that's our responsibility to learn something and to pass that on to our future generations and hopefully we'll build a better life and we'll move on forward together. Miijwetch.

MR. WALLY MCKAY: Thank you very much.

In the handout, you'll have guidelines that we have drafted up for the next couple of days, and I just want to briefly go over those guidelines.

First of all, all participants are requested to be respectful of each other, extend respect to traditional elders, their age and ceremony and instruments.

The drums will be only handled by the keepers and drummers. It is appropriate to offer tobacco to the drum.

Number 3, presenters and speakers will not comment on the subject matter of the Ipperwash Inquiry. I have met with most of the presenters to explain that you're not to make comments on the matters of the Inquiry.

Participants are requested not to comment or ask questions pertaining to the subject matters of the Inquiry and I want to further explain that. We're not here for people to say -- to ask Commissioner Linden to say, well, what you going to do about this particular matter that's been put to you? This is not the forum for it.

I would like to ask the lawyers to also not to make comments on the Inquiry either directly questioning other lawyers on it.

So I'd like to -- and also for our people when you're asking questions or comments to please refrain from discussing the subject matter of the Inquiry.

If I should hear someone leading in that direction I'll kindly ask you to -- not to deal with that matter, as it is not a matter for this forum.

Participants -- each presenter will be given ample time to make a presentation without interruption and I just want to -- I'll introduce to you our presenters -- to you after I've gone through these.

We want to give the presenters ample time to be able to present what's on their heart to -- to be able to put on the table here for participants to look at and -- and present it in such a way that will create an understanding.

So we're going to do the presentation without interruptions. There will be time for questions and answers after each presentation.

Participants will be given an opportunity to ask questions specifically on the presentation's subject matters. Please ask questions, we will provide any answers. The -- after each presentation it will be open for people to ask questions on the presentation that

is given.

So that when you're asking a question, sometimes it happens that you will provide an answer that you want a person to answer it in such a way. What we're asking is that please try to be concise in your answer so that ample time is given so that the question is answered.

The -- along the way the -- I'll just look at the number 8, presenters will provide initial answer to questions on their presentations. Elders and other First Nation participants may provide supporting explanations.

When you ask a question to a presenter, he or she will provide the answer. Now, what will happen is that an elder will indicate that he or she may want to add something to that explanation and it is open, in such a way, and if the First Nations people wish to add something to that presentation to the answer, just indicate by raising your hand, okay?

Number 7, participants are requested to notify the facilitator by showing of hand if he or she would like to ask or comment on presentations. The facilitator will recognize each person in order. As I see the hands go up, that's the order that you will be asking questions or making comments.

And I say it here, don't give reason for the facilitator to bring out his talking stick. We don't want that to happen at this particular time. I have been informed that the Commissioner was given a talking stick and I will ask him if we -- if it gets to that point, we'll use his talking stick.

Supplementary questions will be allowed from the initial questioner. Unruly and interruptive participants will be asked to leave the Forum. This Forum is about learning and understanding. This Forum is not about arguing.

And I want to thank the two (2) drums for being with us here. And it is in this light that we start off this particular two (2) days of Forum. And that to ask each one (1) of you to show respect to these **two (2)** drums that have come to be with us today.

In the -- I just, before going on, I'd

like to introduce some of the guests we're going to have today. We're -- we're fortunate and very happy to have Elder Merle Assance-Beedie with us. Merle, stand up there. This is Merle Assance-Beedie. She's with us here today.

And we have another elder, Bruce Elijah. Bruce, he was here. Where is he? Oh, there is Bruce Elijah over there. Bruce is here with us also.

And we have Susan Hill. Susan Hill is here with us. Susan. And we have Leroy Little Bear with us today. Leroy, comes from -- all the way from Alberta.

And then, of course, we have the Elder Thomas White here with us. You've already met Thomas White.

Unfortunately, we had another elder who would have joined us, his name is Fred Plane (phonetic).

Unfortunately, he got hurt. He fell in his apartment and he's not able to be with us. So our prayers go with him and his family at this time.

We're going to take a short break. And after a short break for people that want to have a smoke or coffee, it's there. After that, we're going to listen to the elders make presentations to the Forum.

With that, we'll be reconvening in about **ten (10)** minutes.

--- Upon recessing at 10:05 a.m.

--- Upon resuming at 10:20 a.m.

MR. WALLY MCKAY: Hello, can I ask participants please to take their places. We're going to commence our presentations very shortly. If I can have the participants take their place, we're going to start shortly. If you still have your cup just take it with you and enjoy it as you listen to the presentations this morning.

This morning we're going to have the local elders make presentations to you and they will touch on the very -- the very -- their very heart and who they are, where they came from, where they're going and those things.

First of all, the -- we have two (2) mikes and whoever is going to be addressing the delegation has

to use one (10 of the mikes. If you talk, they won't be able to pick you up.

This is being recorded and it's going to be put on the website. So if the -- if any of the elders wish that there is certain things that they don't want recorded, just let me know and we'll accommodate you.

My name is Wally McKay. I'm from Satchigo (phonetic) Lake First Nation and I want to thank the Commission and the people for asking me to be part of your life in the next **two (2)** days.

And I have been involved in the -- extensively with the First Nations' movement for the -- for over **thirty (30)** years now. It's hard to comprehend that I've spent so much time doing that.

I come from a little community called Satchigo Lake and the only way you can get into that community is if you fly in by a plane. There is no roads in it. When I was **six (6)** years old, I was taken away from my parents to go and attend a residential school and I was taken away for **ten (10)** months out of the year. And I would see my parents **two (2)** -- **two (2)** months of the year.

The -- the -- what happened to me at the residential school shaped my life of what I was going to be in many ways and what I wanted to see happen.

I -- my first day at the residential school was a harrowing experience. It's not like, you know, boy, I can't wait to get to school again. It's nothing like that. And I was glad to survive the first day.

You know, I often think back and even now I can think back and clearly remember as a little boy on a trap line, you know, setting up my snares and excitedly running home with my rabbits to my parents.

And they would compliment me and they would teach me how to skin the rabbit and clean it up. If I kill it I had to clean it up. All those things are so distinctly clear to me.

In residential school, it's one (1) big blur. Things I don't remember. Things I don't want to remember. But, you know, I just want to share something with you this morning before we ask the elders as they're

getting ready.

Share a little story with you. There's one (1) thing I will never -- I don't forget. I have not forgotten about being a little Indian boy in a residential school and that is being taught a poem.

A poem that's etched in my mind that I -- that I could never forget. And the poem goes:

"Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall. Humpty Dumpty had a great fall. And all the King's men and all the King's horses couldn't put Humpty Dumpty back together again."

Never forget that. What it meant that day, I don't know. What it means today, I don't know. It's something that stays in the back of my head. I could never figure out what the meaning is. I could not relate to it. But I had to learn it.

Now, I just want to read you something that makes a little bit more sense to me. And it deals with what we're doing this morning. A friend of mine and I sat down and we figured a story that we should tell in these circles.

And the story is called "The Snail and the Rabbit". One (1) lazy warm summer evening a snail happily set out to visit his neighbour across the road. Distracted by the sights and smells of the languid evening and the beautiful -- beauty of the sunset shining through the trees above, the snail failed to notice a turtle speeding along the well travelled path. Before he realized what had happened, a terrific collision occurred.

Later that evening in the emergency room a police officer interviewed the snail for the accident report. When asked to give an account of the accident the snail replied "I don't remember a thing. It all happened so fast". Now, a rabbit had been watching this same incident from a little hill near the path.

Even as the snail set out from his home the rabbit immediately assessed the situation in his rabbit-like manner. After **fifteen (15)** minutes of seeing everything come together, the rabbit left -- left to go to take a bit to eat and then come back with his folding lawn chair to watch the final outcome.

How the turtle and snail could actually let that happen to themselves was beyond the rabbit's ability to comprehend. In the mind of the rabbit, this was easily the most avoidable collision in the whole history of the animal kingdom.

He could not fathom how two (2) animals could allow such a stupid incident to occur. After all, if they were like him, they would quickly would have zigged and zagged, easily avoiding the whole thing.

His only conclusion was, something is terribly wrong with them. They are not of normal creatures.

This story illustrates how differing perspectives affect our views of life and our perceptions of reality.

To the snail the turtle was a blazing rocket. While to the rabbit the turtle's forward progress was very perceptible. But whose definition of speed was correct? This, in the next few days, we're going to be looking at different angles of how we look at things.

We're going to be sharing with you our world views and how we look at things and what things are so important. I could never understand Humpty Dumpty. I know about the snail and the rabbit. I understand it.

To you, you might not understand. You might understand very well what Humpty Dumpty is. To this story, a little bit far-fetched, you know. But, you know, that's what we're going to do today and we ask you for your respect. We ask you for your understanding as we move forward.

Yesterday we had a meeting with the elders. We were supposed to have a short meeting but it ended up to be a very long meeting and -- and it was a very good discussion.

At this particular time, we're going to ask a number of elders to make their presentations to this Forum and at this time it is my pleasure to ask Elder Cliff George to make a presentation. We've -- we've sat down with the elders and expressed to them that they're not to talk about what happened at that particular incident or what this -- what the Inquiry is doing and the Commission.

So, with that, I'd like to ask Clifford George to make his presentation. Clifford...?

ELDER CLIFFORD GEORGE: Thank you very much. Have I got it on? Is that okay? Can you hear me now? Okay.

I usually have to stand when I'm talking because I talk so long. If I talk too long tell me to sit down and I'll understand. My Friend Peter over there will likely tell me anyway.

My name is Clifford George. I was born in Stoney Point, 11th of March, 1920 and I went to school there and it was just -- happened to be in the wrong time of the year because that was the big depression time that I -- that I grew up on and it was -- it was rough living for us. I had straight hand-to-mouth existence that -- that we lived but we did manage to go to school on the reservation.

We -- we had a school there. We also had a church and that's Stoney Point Reserve I'm talking about and originally it was Aux Sable Nation and -- of Ojibwe. My -- my grandfather Johnson became the -- the Government made -- made us all to change into -- into -- into understandable names.

So instead of Wabagans (phonetic), my grandfather became Johnson, except that today, like -- he is -- he is my grandfather who lived on Stoney Point Reserve and he was a very, very, very good farmer so that's -- that's -- that's enough for that. You know, that's my background. My -- my mother -- my mother was a -- was a -- was a Johnson and my father was a -- was a George. He come from -- from Tommy -- Tommy George -- Potawatomi people.

So, other than that, I went to school -- I went to school there. I finished my grade -- grade 8, which all we were allowed at that time because they -- they -- they kind of thought that we -- we weren't capable of absorbing anymore than grade 8 at that time so that was the way. Because if we went further in our education at that time, we had to enfranchise ourselves so -- so that we -- we became white people if we wanted to go farther in our education. So that was -- that was some of the plights that we had to -- we had to go through, but speaking further of that, I -- we're all

good workers -- hard workers.

We lived off the land completely because we were told in early -- in my early days that we are the keepers of the land. That is why we -- we respect the land that we live on. It was given to us completely and there's a little story about that later on. So that -- that -- that's how we were taught by our the elders, our parents and -- and even next door neighbours taught us how to -- what to do if we were -- if we weren't doing right and that was acceptable -- completely.

So, we -- we managed to do our own -- our own thing, our young people. We played a lot of ball with the -- with the surrounding area farmers and stuff like that, you know, and other than that, that's about all we had to -- to enjoy ourselves and then, of course, we had the big lake close to use. We'd gone fishing and we'd gone hunting and -- same -- same as the rest of the nations, you know.

But apparently, as -- as I understand it, Stoney Point was a much larger -- larger piece of land than we have today and -- because when -- when -- when the Government gave us Stoney Point and -- and made us put fences up and all that goes with the -- with the takeover, we were -- we were -- the Stoney Point we have today was placed on a much larger Stoney Point, the Osauble Nation.

So there's a lot of stories about that. We've heard a lot of -- a lot of it in -- in the -- in the opening remarks. It was some of these knowledgeable First Nation people that spoke to us already, so that was part of that, but mostly what I want to talk about is the now.

I spent a long time in the army. I was overseas -- France, Belgium and then I was -- I was called back to England and then I was -- I was sent to Italy, I was taken prisoner of war in Italy and I remember walking two hundred and fifty miles (250) miles barefooted because I lost my shoes in the mud as soon as I -- as soon as I got there. When you got smitzers (phonetic) in your back, you don't look around and ask them, Hey, can I stop and put my shoes on? And they wouldn't understand anyway. They had -- the only thing they had is to -- that was pull that trigger. So -- so I

wasn't about to do that. But we managed.

There was three (3) of us in the same position. We was everything we could grab a hold of for that big march two hundred and fifty (250) mile, about twenty (20), twenty-five (25) miles a day.

We used paper, anything, newspaper and bags and rags and everything like that to cover our feet.

But, we managed. And eventually I got a -- I got a size fourteen (14) shoes given to me. That's what I clumped around in until I got back to England.

But, I thought that's enough of that, you know, because the war was tough, it was rough there was an awful lot of us that were there. I come back without a scratch, you know, I was good at dodging bullets and still am today too.

So coming back I always tell my people, my friends there, coming back was a disaster for us. While I was overseas 1942, my father kept writing to me and then they forwarded to us, as you all know that that's when they took over our reservation for an army camp.

And he kept saying, never mind son your land will be here when the war is over with. Here it is sixty (60) some odd years afterwards, we're still looking for it. So that's some of the things we come home to. Another thing happened, I got married in England. My wife come to Forest, a little town that's down here and my aunt lived here and then that's where she come from.

So she got here before I did on account of the situation that was, that -- there was a lot of married people over there and I know it will be -- it will be hard to apply for a trip here. So I told her to apply early and she did and she come home here quite awhile before I got out of prison.

But, the thing is, I'm trying to tell you is -- is finally after a year or so, 1946 as a matter of fact, we decided to have family and I went to the -- I went to Kettle Point and asked -- asked for some land because we had -- we had at least rehab money coming to us.

And that's another story again there. We -- we got -- we got given two thousand two hundred dollars (\$2,200) a piece. All white people that was in the army got five thousand five hundred (5,500). So you

can start seeing discrepancies that people done to us at that time.

And then I went to -- I went to ask for land to build on to start building on. And the Indian Agent slammed the door -- or slammed the table he was sitting on, he says to me, this is the direct words he used, you are not bringing that white woman to this godforsaken reserve, which will never see hydro, never see water -- she's used to that, no sir, you're not going to live here.

So I got kicked out of my own reserve. I got kicked out of my own reserve, once was at Ottawa and this was in Kettle Point. So that's why I say I found my enemy when I got home here.

So that's enough of the back story about me, so far anyway. So in 1993, some of the people from the reserve start coming to -- I was living in Sarnia at the time and they said, let's take over our reserve back again because nobody is doing nothing about it.

So we started making plans about the way we went in. No guns, no animosity, no nothing, we'll just walk in and take it. And we did that. There was no weapons, no animosity, no nothing, we worked out a deal and took over.

So -- so there was just a few of us, maybe about twenty-five (25), thirty (30) of us that started. We ripped a fence down to get in there and then we started with our pup tents and everything. And then we ran into no trouble at all, so we started bringing our trailers.

And we gradually grew to possibly about a hundred (100), we made our own -- we elected a chief, councillors and everything like that. I happened to be one (1) of the councillors for awhile, but, we decided we'd change every once in awhile so -- so that's what we done. We -- we exchanged, you know -- but we always had chief and councillors there for a while.

And then rumours started going around. One (1) -- one (1) gang decided that they could do better by their own so that's -- that's how we started separating, but today -- today, right now, is the -- is the only people that -- that stuck there and they know that I am still -- I'm still one (1) of them. I am a

Stoney Pointer completely.

But that -- that's how -- that's how the trouble started -- rumours. Our own rumours from different places, different families. So that's how -- that's how it happened and -- and our -- our Chief's been talking about it quite a bit, our -- the one we elected, Carl George.

Well, he lives in -- in Kettle Point, so -- so he was trouble at home so he decided he had to abandon the -- the Chiefmanship and -- and go back home and that's how he -- that's how he decided to go back home. There was no trouble there, just that he -- he decided that he was needed at home more than there, because he had a nice home in Kettle Point.

So other than that, we -- we managed to get -- we managed to get by together, a few of us. Gradually, as you all know, we -- we finally took over the -- the camp itself.

But we had a good relationship with the people that were there, the Army. I spoke with them all time. Never had no problem with them except -- except that a -- a lot of people were -- were against us. I remember one (1) Sunday morning -- nice bright Sunday morning -- we started hearing noise at the east end -- the east end of the reserve. A carload of young people and there was one (1) guy in the front seat mooning us all the way -- all the way across, yelling and -- and -- saying bad names about us.

So -- so that -- that was what we had to put up with, but we put up with it, you know, nothing we could do about it. They -- they were just -- just young people that weren't satisfied with the way things were going.

So we had lots of that as -- as some of these people here that -- that spoke already and can attest to that, so it -- it wasn't the easiest thing to do. I -- I -- I had a -- I bought a trailer and I made additions to it and the CAW come and give us a hand.

There was a lot people come down there to help us, a lot of people from -- from different organizations come down to help us but CAW come down and give us stuff to build our -- our little houses on and -- and that's -- that's how that happened and so -- so we --

we gradually -- we gradually adapted a -- you know, quite a nice little community again.

And then -- then eventually -- eventually, we -- we finally told the Army that -- that this was the last year for -- for the cadets, that we were taking over completely and they did. They complied. We didn't have no problems with them. They put up a -- they put up a gate and -- and we -- we -- we all were not to go into the camp at all and -- and hinder anybody. We -- we had our own openings along the highway. So that worked out good.

Until we -- until finally everybody left but about three (3) soldiers and they used to drive around daily just to check the -- the whole perimeter of -- of Camp Ipperwash. And we eventually talked to them and -- and they -- but again, some of our people got using the finger at them and stuff like that, driving by, just -- just to bug them, but -- but there was never no -- no problems and so, there's -- there's lots of other stories.

I think you all heard -- heard about all the different things that happened, about the helicopters, you know, bugging the heck out of us and scaring our children. Our dogs went screaming into the bushes and stuff like that, which -- and -- and they started to bug us more and more all the time with their helicopters and as we know today -- anyway, that -- that was the start -- start of our -- of our deal there. And then -- and then we finally went into the -- into the Park.

But what I want to talk about is -- is a lot of you people do not know the significance of -- of what happened to our Park many years ago. We -- we're owed the biggest flint bed that there is on Stoney Point. There's a big sign that they made somewhere, it must be in London they took it with them, when we told them that we're taking over the Park.

It's written there, this was a manufacturing place of all the tools that the whole Nations needed. So they're allowed to come into our reservation yearly and -- what happened was, when they moved for the summer down to our reserve, they brought whole families with them.

So, what happened if some of the elders got sick or some of the young people got sick and died, they were buried right there. That is why I can say that all across that -- the south end of the park is all many different burial places for single families.

So I know everybody was looking for a regular burial place, there's no such a thing, never was. All the old people told us all that. The ones -- the ones that was unearthed was when they started making the roads.

But, all through -- all through -- all along that creek there, I don't know what it looked like then, but, now there are burial places there, single -- burial places all over the place and we don't know how many. But, we have people, elders that are very spiritual they know where these people are buried.

So, that's some of the things that we have to -- why we protect the lands there, we want these people to lie in peace, as they should have. So I'm asking please, don't go around digging to try to find these because we have never done it, and we don't want to do it, we want to leave them in peace as we always do.

Of all our elders that pass away or all our people that pass away, so that's a story of our -- of our life there. We existed, we got along, we didn't have no weapons, I've been accused of having a lot of weapons there and there never was such a thing.

I kept telling that, right to this day, we never had weapons there. So that's the story of Stoney Point. It was a real --

MR. WALLY MCKAY: Cliff, maybe you can touch on the part where you told us about the land where people came from all over the place, you know, when you -- how the people used the land in this whole area? If you can touch that part, I'd really appreciate it.

ELDER CLIFFORD GEORGE: Yes, sir, I sure will, because that is why Stoney Point is so spiritual. We are the first reservation that invited other reservations to come and use our flint. Because -- and make their -- their -- I was going to say weapons, their knives, their stuff that they need in their daily work.

And that's what they might waited yearly to come and do this work there. And they were allowed,

they was to bring us their presents and stuff like that.

So that is how Stoney Point become very, very prominent in this whole district.

As a matter of fact, I can tell you a story about how Stoney Point became Turtle Island. There's a big story about that. Most of you people that regard Turtle Island as all of North America.

But, the real Turtle Island is in Stoney Point. And we have proof of that. We were put here -- we were put here to look after these lands and we had everything to work with in that Stoney Point and Kettle Point.

Now, as I know it Kettle Point is ahead, Stoney Point -- Stoney Point and Sarnia there's -- there is a what do you call it -- deep holes five (5) of them, as a matter of fact, in this district. One (1) in Sarnia, one (1) in Stoney Point, a bottomless lake we call it and then here in Kettle Point is the head.

And Walpole Island there's another deep hole that nobody ever find the bottom of it. And same thing on Thames River between Muncey and Oneida. So that designates the four (4) feet of the turtle and the tail is, I always call it, Buck Town, Moravian Town. So that is -- that is why. We -- we classify Stoney/Kettle Point, Turtle Island and there's a long story about that -- that probably -- probably somebody else can tell you more about it.

I -- I know the story, but there's how it happened and -- and why and there was always -- there was always lots of rumours going around we were told never to talk about and we still don't. So there's lots of things happened at that time.

So that's mostly what I want to tell you about, that -- that please regard our burial places, because we like to keep them -- keep it holy and -- and keep it for -- for the people that's buried there.

Keep them in peace, because -- because we, the Natives, find that if a body is disrupted, they -- they roam and -- and that's what they call -- that's what you people call a -- a ghost, I guess, but these are people that's not settled in where they're supposed to be, but we -- we have special people that can -- that can go -- go to that grave and -- and -- and designate them

to the right place.

So there's many things like that -- spiritual things like that -- that -- that we of the -- the Natives know and recognize. I could tell you a lot more but you'd probably throw me in the -- throw me in the nuthouse at the things -- some of the things that we -- that we really believe in.

Little people and stuff like that and they are true, they're alive, we see them and -- and a lot of people talk to them, so things like that, you know, that -- that is why we, as Stoney Point people, regard us -- regard ourselves as being in our own home, our own lands, and I want to tell you one (1) more thing.

When we moved in there, that -- that land was absolutely dormant. No grass, no nothing was growing. I took my -- I put my trailer and -- and my mother had five (5) acres of open land there and -- and it come to me here just about a week ago, that land come alive again since we moved in there.

There's growth in there, little trees as high as the ceiling here, now, and yet they stayed dormant all the sixty (60) years that we were away. Test me if you like, but that's -- that's what happened. It's the truth because we are -- we are the people of the earth and that -- that'll be all I can tell you. Thank you.

MR. WALLY MACKAY: Thank you.

The next presenter is going to be Bonnie Bressette. Bonnie Bressette is going to present certain things on relations, how important it is to have relations today, in the present and also in the past.

I'd just like to remind the elders again that we're not to talk about the actual incidents of what happened at -- at Kettle and Stoney Points, so if you could just respect that when you're making your presentations. Bonnie, remember on the -- we have two (2) others after you. I think there's two (2) others, you know, before lunch time. Bonnie...?

ELDER BONNIE BRESSETTE: You don't have to worry about me, Wally, mine is short.

Well, you kind of -- I want to first of all acknowledge the drum and our people who brought the songs to us, acknowledge the fact that our visitors came

to support us in this two (2) days of sharing and I will say what we are allowed to share because it's to give you an understanding of the commitment that we are taught at a young age that we have a responsibility and mine -- I kind of want to speak about my dad.

He -- he came from Stoney Point, there was me and two (2) sisters and we left there and our house that we moved from Stoney Point still is at Kettle Point and my dad built around it, so we still have that. Everybody knows that our house is still there, but I want to kind of give an understanding of why I have such a long time commitment to what was my dad's commitment.

And my dad's commitment was the land. Why do we feel that way towards the land? Why do -- why do the Anishnaabe people across this country feel that way towards the land? Because as a walking human being alive in this world as it is today, we have a responsibility for our land for the future generations.

Not for me and not for any of us today because we're all enjoying what we have. But we have a responsibility to the future generations. People that are not born yet.

So in the years of -- I look back and because my mom went to residential school and I was lucky my dad did not go to residential school but if people realize, our ways was, kind of, I guess, a thing that was said in the residential schools and it was shown through the Indian Agent and everybody else that was around the First Nations that our ways were wrong.

So our small community of Kettle Point, and I know the community of Stoney Point, we're all learning. We're all learning but we can look back where our parents subtly taught us our responsibility.

And when we think of when I was growing up and anyone that's Anishnaabe here, we know the importance of protecting and honouring and respecting our burial grounds because the spirit of our people whose body is in that ground, the spirit of my relations is what gets me by today.

This morning before I left, I asked, not my husband, not my kids, I asked my mom and dad, my relations, that's how important that is to us. I asked them to be with me today.

It -- it's an understanding that most people when a person -- they think when a person is buried, they're buried and they're gone. With Anishnaabe people, the spirit of my relations walks with me all the time. And I get guidance from my mom. And I call on my dad all the time.

They're not here in body, but they are here in spirit. So that is why it is so important for us to protect what they enjoyed, they passed and protected it and passed it on to me as a person here today.

I have that same responsibility. What people don't understand and it always bothers me, is our lack of feeling and commitment and responsibility to the earth. And that is what my dad taught me at an early age.

I -- you can't -- you know, I had to be -- assume my responsibilities. I wished I'd have been born a boy early. Mostly everybody else is lucky they got an older brother. Well, I didn't have an older brother so I had to do what older brother's have to do and that's listen to what dad had taught me.

And our spirits in the past, the spirits of my relations are so important that sometimes, and it don't have to be, to me, at a feast, it don't have to be at a feast that we're having, it can be just all of a sudden I think, I've got to let my mom and dad know that I remember, and all my relations and I will say to one (1) of my kids, can you fix a plate?

And they will. I'll say to the rest of them, no, no, you can't eat until we fix a plate. And we'll fix a plate and we set that plate out. And that plate sits on the table. And I'll tell you one, kind of silly, because this is all a learning process. I'm not an elder. I don't consider myself an elder. I'm a learner.

I have a responsibility to learn all I can. The elders have taught me that we don't put anything into a tape recorder. We don't put anything into a computer. The Creator, God, gave us a brain.

He gave us a heart. And when we -- when we talk and when we're teaching somebody what we were taught, it's in our brain and we don't change a word of it, because in our heart, we're the only ones that knows

it was wrong. So that way we are taught very young, the importance of truth, honesty, respect.

And I'll tell you about, in my learning process mom -- my mom, even though she went to residential schools she carried on little traditions that I didn't -- I knew enough not to ask questions I just -- I was one (1) that I learn and I'm quite sure the Anishnaabe people and people learn by observing.

And my mom used to pick up this plate and she'd go around the table, we never said nothing, and we'd see her stop and -- oh, she's praying. And then the plate would sit there and we'd never ask where it went. So, my mom carried those traditions on and it was her way of teaching us.

But, I'll tell you one (1) thing about my sister. Because we weren't fully knowledgeable about how strong the spirits are of our ancestors that's gone on and how the strength that they can pass onto us and help us.

My mother wanted a feast because she said, my dad who passed in '68 and my one (1) sister who had never had that opportunity because she don't live on the reserve, she didn't really attend with our feasts.

But, this time she did because my mother asked her to come. My mother had a very little house. And we had our feast and we done it, we have a certain way we have a feast, women have -- who prepare the feast, have responsibility, there's certain things we do and certain things we don't do.

But, we had gotten our feast ready and it was all the stuff my dad always liked. And we had the gentleman come in and he done our ceremony for us and my sister, she's just looking around the room there watching everybody and we're all sitting there.

And because my mom's house is so small, we're all crowded in there. So I thought, well I'm just going to sit at the -- at the table, where they -- we'd done the plate. Of course, I had the responsibility -- Bonnie will you do the plate? So I got the plate and done it.

And it's sitting at the table there. And my sister she still looking around, really watching and we later on explained all this to her, but, because we're

all in a learning process because of the life we lived, the residential schools, the downgrading of our ways, our language, our culture, our history, everything was wrong and we're all re-learning it because I have that responsibility because I'm -- my kids and all the ones that we can sit and talk with, they're going to learn it.

But, anyway back to my sister, she's really watching. And the rest of us had all sat in on mom's feasts before. And my one (1) sister had said, where are you going to sit Bonnie? I said, I'm going to sit over here with dad. You know, the plate was for my dad.

And of course my sister looks up and she's looking over there and I was sitting there and dad's plate was sitting there, there was a plate for my dad and all our relations.

And I got talking away and she's really looking, the rest of them knew I'm always doing something crazy and I said, dad you ought to really see the family now, I says, I hope you can see it because I know you can see us, but, you can't answer to me, but, I got to fill you in.

My one (1) sister's gained weight so much -- and I'm talking away to him and I said, you ought to see the other one (1), she's got red hair dye, you know, I said -- and I'm talking away and my sister's totally wondering what's going on.

So after awhile I had to tell her, you know, what -- that I was just joking with her, but, I know my dad, he was hearing us, he knows I'm always pulling jokes like that. But, that's what our life is. Our life is very humorous. We can find humour in anything we're doing.

But, also we have our serious side that's a heavy responsibility. And the heavy responsibility is ensuring that we done what my relations done in the past. They kept whatever they had, so that I'm able to enjoy it.

And then I'll -- I have that responsibility and my kids are going to have that responsibility, all the young people sitting in here are going to have that responsibility to ensure the next seven (7) generations is able to enjoy what we have.

The fact that our relations in the past and our -- as with us today, and the children unborn, we have that responsibility, and it's -- it -- it makes it really hard when people don't understand our commitment to the land.

Other people, the land means money, you buy land and it means money, it's an investment, you're able to make something on it. But with us, our land and I'm -- in listening to the elders, I can tell you, but I won't say it, our land stretches far beyond what our First Nation is.

But my -- our commitment to land is not money. It's life. It is life for the next seven (7) generations. Those people that follow me, they'll be responsible for the next seven (7) generations, and through that we have to get our strength and to get knowledge, we still depend on our people in the spirit world, and will always -- that will always be our way.

Just a couple weeks ago, first part of October, I had the opportunity to go to our burial site, like our burial sites are sacred ground. Even at Kettle Point, we don't very seldom ever see -- we're taught young, that is sacred ground, that's where our people's bodies are placed.

So, keep our kids -- maybe you'd cut through the graveyard up there, some people call it a cemetery, but it is our sacred ground where our people are -- are placed.

I had the opportunity a couple weeks ago, for people from another First Nation to come down, who in their vision, they'd never been to Kettle Point, but they were sent to Kettle Point, and they were told they would be helped when they got down there, and the ceremony was to be on our sacred ground in our burial ground.

And that ceremony was so beautiful, it's like the birds were actually singing along with the drum when the ladies were singing the song.

So, what I've tried to do is give you an understanding of a commitment you may not be aware of, and it's our understanding and responsibility and commitment towards our land, because we have -- not looking at it as a dollar, we're looking at it's life for the next seven (7) generations.

And when we place our plates out, we're thinking the spirits from the past, have given us the knowledge and the wisdom and the strength and the help that we need to carry on what we have to do today, so that we can address the future generation's needs too.

And with that, that's about all I can say, we all said we would kind of stick to a subject, but that was mine and my -- that's my strong commitment and I'm waiting for my kids or some other -- some of our women in our communities, to step forward.

And we all have responsibilities as Anishnaabe people, if our life wasn't changed with residential school, we'd have been born into a clan, we'd have known from the day we were born, what our responsibilities are. And that's what's missing in our lives.

And it's -- finally we're able to bring these back, and teachers like Merle, and we have teachers like Cliff, Tommy, the different people. Those are the ones that I depend on to teach me, and maybe some day I might be a teaching elder too. With that, miijvetch.

MR. WALLY MACKAY: Thank you. Thank you very much, Bonnie.

The next presenter is going to be Carol Pelletier, and she's going to be talking some of the things about medicines.

So, well, Carol.

ELDER CAROL PELLETIER: Boozhoo, my name is Carol, and I think I was probably the last person, almost the last person to be born in Stoney Point in 1942. And I find that wonderful, I like it. I live on Kettle Point but I was very -- I don't know if you would say fortunate or what, but I was born into a family of medicine gatherers.

And I knew when I was **six (6)** years old that that's what I wanted to do. I went with my Uncle Bill Henry, most -- some of you might know him. But he was a medicine person and his father and his father's mother. So my great-great-grandmother would have been a medicine gatherer as well.

And I went on this medicine walk with my Uncle and I can remember it all. I was talking to Bonnie about it this morning. I -- I just -- I -- it was just

unreal. I just couldn't believe there was such beauty and such feeling in the bush; that's where we gathered our medicine.

So this one (1) day we went into the bush and he -- he was watching me. I knew he was but I looked up and it was about this time of the year. I looked up and the trees were -- it was just like a canopy, an umbrella and the trees were just beautiful, golden colour and I can't explain how I felt about that. It was just -- it was warm. There was no wind there. The sun just lit up those trees. It was beautiful.

And another thing I remember was when he started digging for the medicines he told me, well, this is, you know, what we're digging for. I forget what that was now but we dug it up and the smell of the earth was a fragrant -- just a fragrant smell that only a person that loves to dig medicine and looks for medicine, gathers medicine, would know that feeling.

So he -- he told me, he says, well, we'll only look for **two (2)** or **three (3)** things today. So we did that and I'll tell you by the time we got home and cleaned our medicine and he said, now this is what you do. This is the way you dry it. So he showed me all of that and, you know, all this time, all these years, I -- it was like I never stopped gathering medicine.

He'd always come and look for me and when I got -- when I got married, when I was a teenager, we did the same thing. We looked maybe in different places. We have our own medicine ground and these places are sacred to us too.

Like, everyone has their own gathering space and nobody else goes into that ground. They stay away from that because they know that it's your ground and you gather your medicine there.

And another thing he did, he said, when he -- when you -- before you go in to look for your medicine, he said, we'll -- we'll put some tobacco down here wherever he thought was a good place, on a stump or wherever.

And he said, that's for -- that's partly for the spirit and partly for the good Anishnaabe because they like to smoke. And they have a hard time getting it these days.

So, what they do is -- what we do is we put a little bit of tobacco down and -- and they'll -- it'll be gone when we come back. And I always checked and it always was.

And he said, you know, sometimes, he said, the Goodchanishnaabe, they're little people -- little Indian people, he said, sometime when you're -- when you're gathering medicine, he said, you'll notice something duck behind a tree real quick.

And he said, that's what they are. He said, that's what that is. And he had -- and he -- he showed me, he said, look at this. There was a tree that had -- a little dip in it like that. A dish and there was water in there.

He said, that's where they drink. He said, they come here, that's where they drink. And I always remembered those things. So, you know, as I got older I learned more and I liked it more.

And different times of the year we'd go, like, in the early spring we'd -- we would not gather the medicine, he said. This is when all the strength goes up to the root, up to the leaves and it makes the flowers. And he said, a little later we'll gather those flowers.

So when it was time, we'd go and we'd gather the -- gather the flowers -- hawthorn berries we'd always get and -- and flowers. We used that for certain things and than at another time of the year we'd -- we would gather bark -- excuse me, I need a drink.

So, the bark we'd gather at another time of the year and then this time of the year was the really good gathering time because everything was -- everything was ready. All the roots were ready, so we'd go into the bush and we'd gather everything and he said, Now this -- this time of the year, he says, All the strength goes back to the roots and he said, That's what makes good medicine and that medicine, we will clean it and we will store it away and we'll use it for all -- the winter time.

So, we did -- we did all of that and in the meantime, I had -- my grandmother would take me in the bush -- that was my uncle's sister -- and I had several sisters -- three (3) of them.

Some of you might know Rachel Shawkence,

she was my aunt and just a wealth of information, too, and I learned very much from her and my other aunt, Mary Beeswax, from Muncey, I learned a lot from her and my grandmother, Bessie.

So, all of this time we just keep on learning more about the -- the medicine and -- and it is so good for our people, and you know, there's a lot of laughs and Wally was talking about it yesterday and I would say that laughter is the best medicine.

It goes along with your medicine, it really does, and when you laugh, your eyes sparkle and when your eyes sparkle that means you're really happy, so you know, we have to -- we have to remember that. And when you make medicine for people, it's a good thing to keep them happy. They -- they must learn to be happy.

So, I'm -- I'm really thankful and I - I count it a real honour and a privilege to carry on the traditional medicine of my family and I have relatives here. I'm -- Tom is my -- the Chief -- he's my cousin. His mom and my mom were sisters, so we -- we can all share in this, but I know one (1) thing.

I -- I knew -- I knew that when I was six (6) years old there was something inside me. It was innate in me to be a medicine gatherer and I -- I love it. I enjoy it, I love it, I do it today. I wrote a little book called "Roots, Berries and Bark," by Canada's first healers and I just have a very basic -- basic medicines that we would use every day, but that's -- I love it and it's just a part of me and I -- I would like just to let the people know here that don't, maybe understand, our ways that medicine grows in certain places.

Stoney Point is the best gathering ground for medicine. Everything is there -- everything. And I just -- I would -- I would try and let you know how -- how important it is for us to be in our own -- our own surrounding and our own -- our own gathering grounds. It just means so much and with that note, I thank you all for your time.

MR. WALLY MACKAY: Thank you very much, Carol. I enjoyed listening to you yesterday and here again.

The next presenter is going to be Emery

Shawanoo and he's going to be presenting some of the -- the ancestors and the relationship in this area. Emery...?

ELDER EMERY SHAWANOO: Ahow Jownew (phonetic) means south in our native LANGUAGE. I -- I feel it's rude to be back against people, so I'm not an elder, I'm young, got a couple of grey hairs, but my grandmother was the one who installed -- just like Bonnie, when I was asked last -- yesterday after school to be a part of this gathering and I want to acknowledge today for you inviting me here, the Commissioner at this -- at this gathering.

And like Bonnie said, I -- I said I'm going to come. I'm going to come here, B'jahmampei (phonetic) I'm going to come here with my grandmother, Okimous (phonetic), Mishomis (phonetic) my grandfather. They're the ones that have taught what I've come to know today.

When I was young my grandmother told us a story of our people, of Tecumseh. And I had a book and she says put that book down. When I was young, as a young girl, my dad came out with a little box and in that box contained the war medals, the Wampum, the -- the things that was given to Oshawnoo in the 1812 war.

You kids put it in your heart. And this is what I will say today to you that as I briefly touch on this. You may not know it, but, it is our community -- what makes our community.

When you study Forest, Ontario you see the first pioneers that put foot -- that put soil on this ground are first people.

This guy here, maybe if I can ask this guy here to hold it here, this guy right here is Tecumseh's nephew, O'Jaunoo Oshipinankwat (phonetic), Coming of First Cloud. And the guy here you see is Clifford George's ancestor, Wabigans (phonetic) the Chief of Angonom (phonetic).

And -- and this nephew along with this other nephew, Shugawnobik (phonetic) as oral history has it, and there's one (1) other person from Moravian Town, when Tecumseh fell, which he knew he was going to fall in this battle, he told his nephews, when you see me fall, you take my body and you hide it.

There was a reason why they had to do it.

The history has it, that Tecumseh will rise again to help his people. And I begin to think, in a sense, how can that be? How can he rise up from the grave to help us? The spirit, I believe, he's going to use those that are in authority to move them, to move their spirit to help the Anishnaabe, our people.

So, he's buried today in that location where the nephews laid him. I don't care if somebody claims they got him in Walpole or Moravian or London or anywhere's, my ancestors always maintained they kept that sacred, they would go and see that grave periodically and they will pass it down to another person.

And it was their job to keep that location. We speak here a little bit about burial. Oshawnoo when his time was coming to an end, when the Creator was going to take him, he walked around Kettle Point for a long time. And he said, my grandmother said, This is the spot where, Mabu (phonetic), you're -- my great-great grandfather is buried here.

This is sacred. And I thought, why is it big -- why is it so secret, it's not a secret everybody knows that cometary behind Basil's, back the dump, but, what she was referring to in our way of life, our burials are sacred.

So, this has the first -- the first burial of this community. Before Kettle Point was ever even established as a community, it was through the inter-marriage of Oshawnoo to this Wapagus' daughter.

And they had four (4) sons. And in different nations, the Potawatomis came, different ones come and this is how the community begin to develop, begin to grow. And when my grandmother told me a lot of these stories, after she passed away, she was born 1902, she passed away 1980, I went to a few other people to inquire about some of the stories that she has said. Some weren't knowledgeable to what she said.

I took it upon myself then, as years went on, to go to the archives in Ottawa. I went to the local libraries. Everything that my grandmother said is written down, the missionaries wrote it in their journals and the Indian agents wrote it through their reports, that we are proud, our community at Kettle Point, to know

that we are a direct descendant to a relative of Tecumseh of Cumseh (phonetic).

So, this is what I want to bring to your attention, we are a very proud nation and our land.

You know, my -- my grandmother said that these territories, they're very special. And I will have to say this now, not in a way of bragging or boasting, but we're Kwadow (phonetic) Kettle Point, Ojidinaw (phonetic) Stoney Point; they're very powerful territories.

This is why we want to guard our land, this is why my grandfather -- this is why your grandfather -- this is why Robert George and many others, fought hard to defend, to return back the land that was illegally taken away from us. So, with that, I hope in your heart you will understand as you're gathered here in these meetings, to see the importance of our connection to mother earth, our connection to the land.

And those lands that are being taken away in Stoney Point, they're burials like Cliff said, they're not just one (1) little location, and all one (1) location. But when someone back then thought it was their time to pass away, they chose a spot where they were going to be laid to rest, and there may be others covered by bush, so with that, Miijwetch.

MR. WALLY MACKAY: Thank you very much. That's the list of elders that -- that told us that they would like to present this morning. And thank goodness, we have lots of time. No Indian time this morning.

Just going at the presentations there, I'm just going to leave the floor open for comments or questions. If there's any questions people may have, we would -- you know, we'll do that.

But the presentations that you hear this morning, deals with the heart of the people in -- in this area. You heard about the relations that when people pass on, the relations don't stop there, it continues.

And I was very glad to hear some of the things here again, what they were saying yesterday, on these things.

Hyati (phonetic), the land of the people here. You heard about the people that live on the land, the important things of the people that went beyond the

land, and how did they look after themselves when they need something, taking it right from the land, to get their medicines. Talk about -- you heard about -- a little bit about the face (phonetic) that happened.

You heard about the people -- when people left the land to go to a foreign land to go and fight and come back to the land. You know, what I understood yesterday was that the significance and how important is that land to the First Nations, and you begin to hear these things and touch these things.

They talk about the medicines and all those things, the gatherers, that each group had a separate area that they went to gather. They had a respect for all those different sites.

And so, whatever it is that's being presented, it's connected into what we do this morning, and how we present. Look at the ancestors that's be -- I found that very interesting, what Emery presented to us, the ancestors from a long time ago, to where they came from, how they got here and where is the ancestors going to go, things like that.

So, I want to thank the elders this morning. Was -- was selected to show honour and respect to the elders from this area, to be able to present. This afternoon we're going to be listening to Thomas White. He'll be presenting a presentation to the people regarding the ceremonies and other things that he has in mind to share with you.

And then this afternoon we're going to have Susan Hill present to us this afternoon also.

Is there any questions or comments? Yes? You have to use this, okay.

MR. WILLIAM HORTON: I would just be interested to hear examples of some of the medicines that were found on the land and the significance of those, and how they were used in the community?

ELDER CAROL PELLETIER: Ginseng is one (1) of them. Ginseng is one (1) of them. Ginseng is one (1) of the medicines. It's -- it's used in tonics. It's used for a lot of things. I can't tell you how many things it's used for, but I often use it in tonics and there's things that you can't use it for as well.

So, you've got to be careful, you've got

to know what they're used for and how they're used. Spikenard is another one (1). That one (1), it's not sold in shops where you buy this, and it's -- it's a medicine that you use for a cleanse as well, and it's a stress reliever.

Golden Seal, that's a natural antibiotic, very expensive in your stores. We get it for nothing. I think it's about five hundred dollars (\$500) a pound, if you want to buy it in a -- like at the Water Bug, if you're from Sarnia, or wherever. And it's a very good antibiotic. There's another one (1), plantain, and I think you can find that one (1) in your backyard.

Oh, I -- I neglected to mention the fact that when you're gathering your medicines, you must be very careful where you gather them, because if you gather them in -- in a place where there's cars moving by, you can get all that pollution on it, and not good, plus they have all kind of sacred medicines that they use for ceremonies, and et cetera.

MR. WILLIAM HORTON: Can you give us some examples of those, the sacred medicines?

ELDER CAROL PELLETIER: Tobacco, and cedar. Cedar is used in many things as well, like for medicinal purpose as well as ceremonies and sassafras is another one (1). That's a good tonic, as well as used for ceremonial purposes.

MR. WALLY MCKAY: Yeah, thank you very much, Carol. I don't want you to let us know everything, you know --

ELDER CAROL PELLETIER: I can't tell you everything.

MR. WALLY MCKAY: -- I'll lose half of them and they'll go and dig it up.

ELDER CAROL PELLETIER: That's right.

MR. WALLY MCKAY: Any other comments or questions, just raise your hand if you wish to.

(BRIEF PAUSE)

MR. WALLY MCKAY: Yes?

(BRIEF PAUSE)

MS. PATTY SHAWANOO: Boozhoo. (SPOKEN IN NATIVE LANGUAGE). Sammy Gwetch (phonetic) for the representation of our -- of our communities that been introduced to the Commissioner.

And I just want to say with part of that last presentation done -- done by Emery, that it was -- he delivered that very well. But in order for us as Anishnaabe people to move ahead in this healing process, is that we've got to come and sit in a unified manner, just as we are doing now, to represent the Anishnaabe people.

And a part of that is being and opening our minds and our hearts to those ancestors, that we don't only go back to the electoral process, that we acknowledge those ones that even become before that, because those -- that's our grass roots.

Tecumseh, we say Tecumseh, it was Tekoomsa (phonetic) and he was a (SPOKEN IN NATIVE LANGUAGE). That's who he was. He was also -- stood up for the Three Fires Confederacy, which -- which brings us all pretty much underneath that.

So, when we sit here and we come together and we talk in this way with -- with these ones, and all of us at one (1) point had come to begin our healing when -- when say with when we were re-learning ten (10) years ago.

And all of us went to look for those teachers. And those teachers were in our family, the Hooshano (phonetic) family. And they were strong, they were strong teachers. But, there wasn't too many places that we visited, different lodges, different circles of people that talked about these great leaders that carried that medicine.

So, as we went searching for that, in our ways, at that time we found the medicine in those people, those ones, those elders, we found that they knew that there was things that we didn't know. And they come to our aid in different -- in different ways, not only for the traditional people, but, for the Christian people, as well.

And now we sit in this room. We sit in this room to present the Anishnaabe people. And with what Emery shared, he's very knowledgeable, he's one (1)

of very few that carry that flu -- that influential language that keeps us connected as a Anishnaabe people.

But, when we sit here and we talk and share and we comes to terms that -- that we want to show representation of Anishnaabe, then we have to speak the truth. That's where we got to begin.

So, when we go back and -- and we want this to go in a moving way, we have to think -- we have to put our hearts and our spirits back before that war. Who were our teachers? Who were the ones that defended so that we could sit in this room today?

So, that I really feel that we have to remember that as we go through these forums, as we go through talking about the Anishnaabe people, that it was more than just a history, it was more than just the oral history, it was the connection to spirit, what makes us a Anishnaabe -- our Anishnaabe, our language, the sacred connections to our homelands. Miijwetch.

MR. WALLY MCKAY: Any other comments or questions before we break for lunch?

Just -- if you can just state your name, you know, for the recording, who you are, we appreciate that very much.

MS. DONNA MCGEE: Okay. Donna McGee, The retired instructional leader for Native Studies, Native Languages for the Toronto District School Board and a Board Member of Native Child and Family Services Toronto.

It was briefly mentioned, the Aboriginal belief in the seventh generation stewardship. And I think I would like to hear it expanded a little more. I think it is central to understanding why it is so important, the actions that we do today and the fight for the land and each and every thing that we take on, that belief in how it will impact on seven generations.

So, if one (1) of the elders might say a few more words about that?

MR. WALLY MCKAY: Yeah. Thank you very much. And I will ask Bonnie to respond.

ELDER BONNIE BRESSETTE: I can only respond -- like I said, I'm not a teacher, I'm a learner, but I learned at a very young age of my responsibilities towards my grandparents, my aunts and uncles, people who were here before I was.

And I -- my children, I've taught them their responsibilities when it comes time for me and their aunts and their uncles and their grandmas and grandpas. They have a responsibility.

But, when you look at -- when I look at the responsibility my dad and his brothers and sisters carried on and my mom and their families, it was what was taught to them.

Whatever they are enjoying, must be here for the next generations and to fully explain about seven (7) generations is not something that could even be taking place in one (1) or two (2) days; it's something you learn. And the care and -- it was like when I was growing up, I didn't just have a mom and a dad, I had three (3) sets of moms and dads. That's how our life is.

I could go to my aunt and uncle -- any one (1) of my aunts and uncles, but in particular, Uncle Bayish (phonetic) and Aunt Maude. They're no longer with us, but they were like parents to me. My Aunt Gus (phonetic) and Uncle Bill -- they were like parents. That's what our life is, is -- we're -- we're a community.

It's not as if just Mom and Dad looked after us. That's a shared responsibility in the community and that's the way that I was taught and I have that same responsibility that they had of helping me then, when I was young and needed help.

I have that responsibility now with my -- my nieces and nephews and it don't necessarily mean that. It could be Christmas time at home. I've got children coming to my house, they're no relative of mine, but I'm still Grandma and Grandpa to them. They call Fred Poppa, they call me Nannie and that -- that's a hard thing for people to understand.

And when you work with Children's Services, you'll realize that through the present day system, that is one (1) of the things that has caused a lot of hardship for our children that have had to go into that system because there really isn't that help from -- it could be Auntie and Uncle, it could even be the neighbours -- that's not there and it's really missing in their lives.

So, in the end I know, probably in the

next few years, they're going to realize the importance of us assuming and taking on those responsibilities for all our children that's not there. They're out some place where we don't know, but in the end, a lot of them find their way home.

And those -- those -- that care and that feeling for the generations that's here today and for the generation that's just growing up and for the generations yet to come, is so very strong about -- among us Anishnaabe people.

For -- the teachings on -- I have no teachings on the seven (7) -- responsibility for the seven (7) generations, only what my parents have taught me and that's where the responsibility is. Not only to the children, but it's to the children and the land so that when they grow up, they're going to have a place. They're not going to be wandering around and wondering where they're going to get a house or get -- have a -- even a place to put their feet on.

So, that's my responsibility and I take it real serious about ensuring that what land was here when my mom and dad and my grandpa and grandma and them. I know the parameters are not what they were supposed to be, but -- and as long as I'm here I will continue to try in a way that we get back what is rightfully ours. But there was one (1) thing I want to express is my pride in our ancestors that's gone on.

You look at Kettle Point, you look at -- some think of Stoney Point as Aazhoodena -- those lands, nobody gave them to us. That's the way my dad taught me.

Nobody gave me those -- nobody gave us that land. We were the first people on this land.

When the newcomers came, we shared the land with them. And I look at Kettle Point along the beautiful lake there -- I look at Aazhoodena along the beautiful lake and I just am so thankful that my ancestors picked such a beautiful place for us to live and to grow up in and live our life there.

And this is what a lot of our young people that for one (1) reason or another get caught up in the system that -- especially with Children's Services, they miss out on that feeling that we have for the land.

But when they come home, they learn how

important it is, just by being in the community, to protect that land for the future generations.

So, I -- I can never expect -- express my pride and my feelings, I can't express it enough for the people that choose. And when they signed the 1827 Treaty and kept this land at Kettle Point for us and the land at Aazhoodena, the head land at Walpole and Sarnia, all through but our perimeters are not the same, but I look at that land and think they were very smart people.

They thought -- thought about everything we needed in -- in our areas. We have the -- the plants, the water, everything that gives us life is there.

But for the -- that's my limited understanding of the -- keeping what we have today for the next seven (7) generations is because it's been done for me. I had that responsibility.

So, when I'm no longer here, the young people will pick it up, and they will do it for the next seven (7) generations, that's how we've survived all this time, with all the hardship, all the -- taken away from our communities, our children. My mom talked to me about what it was like in residential school. And I can't ever imagine take -- somebody coming in, taking my kids or my grandchildren away from me, but that did happen.

And it's like there's a whole gap in there, where our culture, our history, our language, our heritage and everything was wrong.

And it's just like today we're continually grasping for whatever we can learn, because it's our responsibility so that our children are able to have those same teachings that we had.

And my knowledge of the language is limited, because in my -- like I said, looking after the next generation, I had to look after my grandpa, worst darn job I ever had in my life, because he was pretty hard.

But I am so thankful today, because that's where I got my language, see he passed it on to me. So, and I was telling them yesterday at the meeting, for the longest time I thought I had an Indian name you know, but I really didn't know what it -- I knew what it meant, but my grandpa used to always tell me, Cookonma (phonetic). So, I thought that for the longest time that was my name,

until I found out it meant, "get out of here".

But that's -- he didn't like me keeping an eye on him all the time. But that's my limited knowledge of -- I have a responsibility today. My kids will carry it on and the kids after that, for the next generation, to enjoy what I enjoy today. Miijwetch.

MR. WALLY MCKAY: Thank you. As a -- as a visitor, I begin to meet a lot of different people, and you begin to see the makeup of the community. One (1) of the things is that I met Lorraine, also from -- as a Band administrator here, is also learning these ways of the old people, and I've asked her to comment on the seven generations also.

ELDER LORRAINE GEORGE: (SPOKEN IN NATIVE LANGUAGE) Is this on? Can everybody hear me? (SPOKEN IN NATIVE LANGUAGE).

I'm very honoured to be asked to -- to share what little -- what little I can share in -- with my father's permission, because I -- I take my teachings and my responsibilities very seriously, and -- and it's my understanding that I am to pick up whatever -- whatever teachings, whatever understanding I can, and it's my responsibility to -- to carry that, and -- and to pass that on after our family elders have -- have all passed on into that spirit world.

So, with my father's permission, I will share a little bit of understanding I -- I have today, a little bit that I -- that I feel comfortable with sharing on -- on my responsibilities of -- of carrying those teachings and -- and that family -- that family history, that family understanding, and the responsibilities that -- that go with that to -- to pass that on to -- to my children, to my grandchildren, to my great-grandchildren and -- and so on.

I -- I have been -- I have been told many times, first of all -- I must share it, because it -- it's very important to me. I was born in 1949 and I was born on the land you now know today as -- as Stoney Point or Camp Ipperwash and anyone in here that has those -- those life teachings will understand what that means to me to -- to be born on that land.

That much I will share on that. With that comes the responsibility of -- of knowing what it is that

I'm to know. And my father has told me many times, he -- he's complained, too, that -- that I was a -- a very thirsty child, thirsty for knowledge. I wanted to know.

I -- I needed to know.

But he also told me things that didn't seem that important as I was growing up. But as I -- as I -- as I understand today, they -- they were of -- of -- very significant.

One is the -- the hereditary chief line of Wapagas and -- and the story and history that -- that goes with that. And that is the -- the hereditary chieftainship of -- of -- of the land we know today as -- as -- as Stoney Point.

But it was also some of the memories of my -- my grandfather -- my grandfather William George, who lived at that time in my great-grandfather's little -- little home in -- at Kettle Point which was where -- where Tommy George lived and that begin to give me the understanding of -- of how we were connected as -- as people.

But my memories of not only the wood burning but also my memories of the -- of the medicines that were hanging and drying that were never talked about -- that the ways that we took of ourselves as -- as -- as native people.

So, a lot of those teachings, a lot of that knowledge, a lot of that understanding I believe today comes through just living, not necessarily always sitting down and hearing a story but just living, and understanding what that means to that person.

My grandfather, like so many others, he didn't talk about it, but he carried that knowledge of the -- of the -- of the medicines that would help him and it certainly helped him because he was ninety-six (96) years old and in very good health up until that time.

Walked every day. He was ninety-six (96) years old when he passed on into that spirit world and, as so many have shared today, it is my belief and I understand and I feel that connection, that he is still there for me today.

But what he also showed me, and it was in later years and I didn't understand then, and my -- my father and I would go and visit my grandfather as he was

getting elderly and as he was preparing himself to pass on, and he would sit there and he would look out -- he would look out the window and he would point and he would point to a light out there that he saw.

And he would -- he would try to impress upon me, Do you see that? Do you see that out there? And I would look and I couldn't see this light. But I picked up on the importance of understanding what was out there.

And I believe today that's how my grandfather gave me the teachings that my grandmother would -- my grandmothers would have given me, had any of them lived. My grandmothers were passed on before I was born but my grandfather knew that I -- that I needed to make that connection and that's where that connection came from.

So, it's my responsibility to carry that on and to pass that on to, as I say, to my children, to my grandchildren and I have great-grandchildren today and -- and that's my responsibility.

The biggest responsibility as I understand it, my father told me for many years, as far back as I can remember, and still tells me today, my grandfather was not an educated man.

But, my grandfather was called upon by the band to maintain the books, as my dad would put it, to keep the record, to -- and you'll often see his name today as the -- as the minute taker, as the recorder, as the secretary.

And my dad would also tell me many times they would say they didn't need him anymore and then paperwork would get all messed up and they'd call him back and he would walk from Stoney Point to Kettle Point and keep the books. To me that is a clan teaching, to me that is a family responsibility.

And I was talking to someone a couple of weeks ago and tried to impress upon them my understanding of, yes, I believe in education today, yes, I believe we need to be educated to -- to survive and to understand and to grow in the system that we're forced to live in today.

But, we need to look at our responsibilities, we understand our responsibilities from

our ancestors, those -- those family skills, those natural skills, those natural teachings, those natural learnings that tell us who we are today.

And again, that's -- I try to instill in my children, it's not necessarily what you learn in the system that's important, you need that to survive today, but, look at who you are. And the only way we know who we are, is to look at our ancestors and teach your children that.

And that's all I will share today. And again I thank you Wally for asking me to -- to pass that -- that on. It's knowledge that is within me that will be my responsibility to talk more about some day, but, that's my understanding of not only the seven generations teachings, but also the importance of looking back to go forward. Miijwetch.

MR. WALLY MCKAY: Miijwetch, Lorraine.

Emery to add some comments. Emery is going to be our last speaker for this morning and we'll change the order of the forum shortly.

Emery...?

ELDER EMERY SHAWANOO: (NATIVE LANGUAGE SPOKEN).

MR. WALLY MCKAY: We're going to -- before we break for lunch, it's the practice and the custom of the people that when they share something that is very close to them that we acknowledge them.

And we're very pleased and honoured to have these elders come out from the community and share their heart with us. As I listen to Lorraine speak, you know -- and there are others in the community that are learning the ways and the traditions. So, when one (1) of them is called home to go to the next place, there's people that move forward to take the place.

And that has been the practice and the tradition and the existence of our people, throughout ages and it continues today.

And I just want to thank the elders, you know, for the time that they have spent with us this morning and for sharing what's in their hearts with us.

At this time I'd like to present this little gift to Clifford George. Thank you for being with

us, Clifford.

(GIFT PRESENTATION TO ELDERS)

MR. WALLY MCKAY: To Bonnie Bressette.  
Thank you very much, Bonnie.

And Carol Pelletier. Thank you very much.  
And to Emery Shawanoo, for being with us  
this morning, helping us out. Thank you very much.

The food is going to be brought in. We'd  
like to have everybody share the food with us this  
afternoon. And we're just waiting for the food to come  
in. Lorraine you've been asked to set the food -- set  
the plate aside once it comes in, and we can't touch  
anything until that has been done.

So, with that, you know, we will -- we  
will be breaking for lunch. And then we will start at  
one o'clock again, right on time, and we'll move right  
along.

So, if in the meantime, you can stretch --  
you can stretch a bit until the food comes in and then  
we'll call it to order. Thank you.

--- Upon recessing at 12:00 p.m.

--- Upon resuming at 1:00 p.m.

(CEREMONIAL SINGERS PERFORM)

MR. WALLY MCKAY: Thank you very much.  
If we can have the delegates take their places, we're  
going to continue with the presentations for today.

This afternoon we're privileged to have a  
guest with us from northwestern Ontario. Thomas White is  
from the Whitefish First Nation near Kenora, Ontario. He  
is a member of the Lynx Clan.

Thomas is well known and a respected  
elder. He is a cultural and spiritual teacher, advisor  
and is a member of the Midewiwin Society. Thomas is a  
cultural worker with Child and Family Services in Kenora.

Please make welcome Thomas White as he makes a  
presentation to you today. Thomas...?

ELDER THOMAS WHITE: Thank you.  
That's the first time I met Wally, he knows a lot about

my history. I hope he never met -- meets his wife or he'll be telling her everything.

Good afternoon, Ladies and Gentlemen, my Indian name is Monato G'easic (phonetic); Thomas White is my English name. I'm from the Lynx Clan, and it's nice to see everybody here. I'd like to acknowledge the drums that we have here, the pipes, the eagle staff, the feathers, the singers and I'd also like to acknowledge the elders that are here, the ones that made the presentations and the ones that are here with us.

And I'd also like to acknowledge the youth, the young people that are here and also the ladies that are here and all the men that are here. I raise my hand with respect and I hope -- I'm a person that doesn't know anything. I get my teachings from the spirits, from the elders, from these gentlemen. They give me strength.

Let me tell you a little bit of how I was born. It's a short, short little story. My mom was huge when I was -- when she was pregnant and all my aunts said that I was going to be a twin. I was born in a log cabin at that time and they had a drum in that house and my uncle, they had an old clock at that time, the time I came out, they always said it was 4:32 in the morning.

So they laid down a -- a blanket when my mom started to have me. So all my aunts were there and then, of course, I came out and they were expecting twins. One (1) of my aunts took me and shoved me aside and they kept looking, waiting for the other one.

Of course nobody came but myself. The elder at that time who was sitting on a drum started laughing in a good way. He said, He's not a twin, but we are going to wait for the sun to come up.

I guess in a way to them I was a special child. When the sun came up they gave me my Indian name. They also gave me my song. And these guys know that song already and I happen to have my brother here who has the same Indian name that I have, spirit name.

I always feel proud of that -- that young man. I don't know his English name. All I know him is by his spirit name. That's the way that I was brought up throughout these years.

The visions, the dreams that I had while

growing up trying to be taught on how to help people and try and help people as much as I can. In my dreams I always ended with grandmother, grandfather, I do not know anything; that's how my dreams always ended up showing me whatever they were trying to tell me.

My dad and my cousin Alan White would -- what's your name again? Sam. They told me out of nowhere, When are you going to start doing what they want you to do?

My answer was, I don't know anything. I'm afraid for you my cousin said. They might come and pinch you to wake -- to wake you up. When I was **forty-six (46)** years old I had a major heart attack and **two (2)** minor ones after that. During the time I stayed in the hospital sleeping or whatever, unconscious, whatever, they came and repeated those visions.

So I, at that time, I said I'll -- I'm going to do it but I have nothing. I checked myself out -- out of the hospital. I was pale like when a person that leaves this earth, that's what my face looked like.

And I went to the sweat lodge for healing. **Four (4)** nights -- **four (4)** nights and **four (4)** mornings I went to the sweat lodge. People told me, don't -- don't go in there or you're going to have your last breath in there.

It'll get too hot for you. You'll keel over. Don't go there. I said, I have faith. Well, you can go in but don't sing in there. Just sit down. Even the person that was running the sweat passed the drum and he passed it by me.

And I asked for that drum. I was pale white. By the time I came out of that -- the sweat lodge my -- my colour was back. And that's the healing part that I took and that's when I started doing what I'm doing now, trying to help people.

Doing the work that whoever knew a lot more than I do, I try to help people best way I know how.

Never to overdo things. It's the best way that I can help a person, this was what I was told.

After that, **two (2)** of my brothers came over to the house and I didn't -- and I didn't see them. They said, Where do you want the sweat lodge? I said

first, I got to get the logs to construct it. They said we got everything. We just want you to tell us where. And I said, Holy smokes, these guys know more than I do, what's going on here.

It's our way of helping, they said. Ever since then that is the reason why I'm standing here in front of you. Because sometimes these doctors tell us you do not have a chance. You will have another major heart attack, I'm scared for you.

These are what I heard from my doctors. When I went to the ceremony with the sweat lodge and all the ceremonies that people -- that we do back home, they always talk about life. Positive life. So that's what I listened to. My little grandson is three (3) years old. He's a very special little person to all of us because he was born premature.

He was only two and a half (2 1/2) pounds. My wife gave him a small feather to help him in the hospital in Winnipeg. All my nephews, my nieces, my aunts, my brothers and sisters on both my wife and my side, we were all there.

As soon as my little boy was handed that feather, one (1) of my daughters named him right there. Consequently, he received two (2) more names. And I'm happy and proud to say that one (1) of them has the same name, Doug, my brother Doug here.

My grandson has that same name. And they both have that same song. This was the healing part that we did in our traditional ways. In our ways back home. And I'm not saying to you people, do it that way. In your own way, I respect both ways, the healing part of it.

As a culture coordinator for the Aboriginal Child and Family Services, I -- I do a lot of work with the people, the families, the clients that we service back home. The mainstream way of trying to help people regarding Counselling, treatment centres. And in a cultural part of it too, I do a lot of that, for ceremonies. I've been through a lot of communities, where people have asked me to come and help them, I try and help them.

The south, in the Florida area, I've done

a lot of that. Travelled over there, they asked me to come down and help them. West, north, and east. But the one (1) thing my elders, my dad, especially my dad respect the ways of the people that you visit.

Never try and shove your beliefs to the people. Let them be free. The drum, the drum that you see here, it's not an object. It's a spirit. The sticks -- the legs that you see, the feathers, the ribbons, the connection to the Creator.

When we sing these songs, we sing for your people. We sing for ourselves, we sing for our relations. But we sing for the spirits who come and help us.

As we try and understand each others' beliefs, our ways, the heartbeat of our nation, the drum. I've seen a lot of people getting help from the drum and a lot of them are major sicknesses that we have.

A lot of people have gone to the drum, offered tobacco. Remember, when we do these things, the traditional way of life, tobacco is our connection to the creator, to the spirits.

And I believe the mainstream way, the mainstream is the bible. The way we think about them, basically the same.

We don't buy the sacred items that are given to us. They were meant to be. Sometimes we earn them. There's a lot of sacred in-depth traditional healing that we take, that we do. But they're so in-depth that I dare not to mention some of them here.

Sacred. But it all comes down to the same thing, healing. Understanding each other in a good way.

As you people walked in here in this morning, you probably noticed the sweet aroma of the smudge, the sweet grass, the smudge.

And I hope that most of you recognized it, because it cleanse our minds, our bodies, our souls. So we can understand and recognize each other in a good way.

A lot of our lands are very sacred, are powerful, such as what we were hearing this morning in the presentation by the elders.

When we cut down a tree or a small tree we put tobacco first before we take it down and we don't

take it down for just simply for cutting it down. We take the medicine, the healing, from that tree in order to help people.

We speak to that tree, because it's alive.

It's not just a tree, it's alive. We utilize it in so many ways. This eagle staff, for instance and the curve of that eagle staff. They put tobacco down before they cut it down and ask to help us, because it very significant of the medicine that we take from the mother earth.

Yet sometimes we abuse it. Without realizing that we abuse the spirits of the trees, the rocks, the rivers, the grass. We sometimes -- we make amends for that.

When a person hears a negative part about a healing part of it, when they -- these people hear the negative, like I heard from my doctor, telling me not to do these things because I might keel over. That was in my mind for a while until I went to these traditional ceremonies and here I am talking to you. I was having a hard time talking to you with this language. Maybe it would be a lot easier in my own language, I don't know.

And I just didn't start talking to you here. I smoked my pipe, I sang that song, the song with the words, "They are here, they are listening to us." Those were the words to that song. It's a healing song, letting people know that they are not alone.

Each and every one (1) of us here, each and every one (1) of you have your own spirits. In the language we call them Hatsocan (phonetic). In the English language, maybe it's the guardian angel, which we all know, also a spirit. So we are all gifted. So it depends on how we -- how we take our healing, our strength.

A lot of us get our strength from the drums. A lot of us get our strength from the sweat lodges. A lot of us get our strength from the shake tents (phonetic). A lot of us get our strength from the Midewiwin Society in which are totally in debt that I dare not to describe them to you.

And it's out of respect for these sacred healing ceremonies that we go -- that we do. When we

hear these guys singing and drums singing, the spirits come to them and help them sing. Accomplishment, I guess, knowing a song.

I was always told never keep a song to yourself. You want to do that, don't sing it. But what's the purpose of keeping it if it's going to help other people. Once you sing it to the public or to the general public, you're giving that song away to some people so they can start their healing journey or they can just feel good about listening to the song.

And I'm not sure if any one (1) of you has noticed, but during the heartbeat of the drum a lot of you were tapping your foot, singing with the heartbeat of the drum.

I could go on and on here in regards to how Anishnaabe utilizes the healing part of the traditional ways that we were given. These things here aren't just for show. They're here to help us understand each other.

Now, I've gone through a lot of personal - - personal setbacks myself. People call me Elvis -- I look like Elvis Presley and I pretended to be one (1), and I -- turned out I wasn't. I didn't even know what rock and roll was.

I was a native language teacher for fourteen (14) years. I taught the kids the language, teaching them the cultural parent, the Anishnaabe. A lot of them didn't have their healing names, their spirit names.

We just had a ceremony last Monday, no, forgive me, Sunday. And these are the beautiful words that I heard from my wife, I think she really woke me up when she started talking about a child, an Anishnaabe child.

As soon as a child has received an Indian name, a spirit name, they are looked after by the creator, connection there already. That is one (1) of the most powerful tools that we have for life she said. When an Indian child knows who her clan -- who her or his clan, that's one (1) of the most powerful gifts we have, connection to the creator.

These are her words that when a person

receives a feather, or whatever, a sacred item, that is part of life. Part of life, connection to the creator, to the spirits.

When I was called to come here and make a presentation, again I depended on my partner, my wife. I have known you for a long time, she said. Oh, we've been together I think thirty (30) -- thirty-eight (38) years, I'm not sure. Under the blanket for about eight (8) years anyways.

And she told me, I've always heard you talking to people using your heart. And if you feel it's the right thing to do, nobody can tell you that but yourself. That is why before I came here I did that ceremony back home, so I can be guided in a good way.

I first met my friends here, Sam, I think the first time I heard that ugly laugh was about what, eight (8) years ago? He's famous for that. But I considered him my brother. I consider them my brothers, they have taught me a lot.

When I do these ceremonies for people I don't do it by myself, I rely on the higher powers, I rely on these people, their spirits. It makes it easier to try and help people.

The culture component of our lives are very powerful, regards to giving us strength. You heard about the seven (7) generations, and the seven (7) teachings that are written, yet, back home where I come from, there's only one (1) word for those seven (7) teachings. (SPOKEN IN NATIVE LANGUAGE), which means the seven (7) teachings, covers every one (1) of the seven (7) teachings that are written.

So this is the life that I follow now, was given to me as a young boy, having these dreams these visions. And I did a lot of work for some elders before I could actually do the ceremonies myself.

But, the one (1) significant thing that I always denied the spirit, they came and pinched me for that simple reason. So I went through a healing journey to make myself strong. To give you this little message.

Why I am still standing in front of you people here.

One (1) of the little boys in Whitefish Bay where I come from, who I'm very fond of him, can pick

up a song when he hears it once. And he kind of reminded me of myself when I was that age.

My two (2) boys -- the two (2) younger ones when they quit dancing, I didn't force them to keep on dancing, it was their decision, now they're singers. And I know that in their later life they're going to go back to dancing without my forcing them.

I try very hard not to use, from what my dad -- my father told me, never say to another Indian person or tell another person, you must do that, you have to do that, you can't do that or you shouldn't do that. Always be positive. Come out from your heart and help people.

A lot of us are gifted in our own ways. The people that requested this forum are very gifted people for they want to hear, they want to learn about the Anishnaabe way of life, which is sometimes very unique.

Hard to explain. I don't practice my traditions, my values -- I don't practice them. I do them. Because if I practice them, I'm only practising them. There's a big difference there when a person is in it or practising it.

I used to be a hockey player. I used to play hockey. I used to practice a lot. I used to play left out. Bench warmer. So that's practising.

I've met so many good people here in Kettle Point, I've met so many good people, compassionate people.

I tend to look at them as brothers and sisters and I just met another young baby here, three (3) months old. Yet I barely recognized the mother. I haven't seen her for five (5) years. And I believe she's here someplace. And that felt good, meeting that young child.

I had a major -- major concussion. I was making a fool of myself, trying to be Santa Claus and I tripped on the ice and I had a major concussion and I -- some doctor's still phoning me every now and then.

You going to lose some of your memory. That was the scariest part when they told me that I was going to maybe lose some of my memory. What if I go to a

different house and start sleeping with a different woman every night?

That's -- that's the terror I had. Again, I went for the drum. The sweat lodge. As far as Sam is concerned, I'm still sane so I ...

I'm sorry I could not give you the in-depth part of the healing or descriptions of the healing ceremonies that we do.

One of the reasons why I can't, myself, personally is I do not want to degrade, I guess, this -- the sacred healing that we do back home where I come from and I know they do it in here also.

One (1) of the greatest gifts that was given to me was the singing. And I don't usually sing in a soft voice. I sing -- try and sing as loud as I can.

I work hard with my elders back home and they gave me the utmost honour back home. The elders gathering regarding our staff, a healing part for our staff so they can understand the ways of the Anishnaabe when they handed me the tobacco and told me -- and asked me to say the invocation to open the meetings that we had.

They had confidence in me to open, to speak on behalf of all the elders. So that was a very proud moment for me. Just a regular day, yet when they asked me to say these invocation, one (1) of the elders came up and said, we know -- we know that you needed a little bit of the healing, and we just wanted to lift you up, what they said.

At Aboriginal Child and Family Services we work in customary care, we are funded through the Ontario Government. But the main way that we work with our children is through customary care, with our relatives.

If a child is in need of safety, we place them with extended family, through customary care. We make sure that they do not lose their identity, we work with them to know who they are, where they belong. And this is what I do everyday when I'm at work.

Instead of placing them in the -- in just a home that -- that is available, they look for the extended family. And if we can't find anybody within the

extended family, we go through the clan system. And if we can't find anybody in the clan system, then we go to the other communities where our relatives are, clans are, believe me, we've always found a place for these children. Customary care, which again is part of healing that our young children go through.

We've had some people, a lot of our young people from the west, east, south that have returned to customary care. The ways of the Anishnaabe people to help each other in the healing part. See everything we do is healing.

I pray everyday, everyday, maybe four (4), five (5), six (6), seven (7) times, I don't know. I pray everyday. That is the way of the Anishnaabe. I prayed a lot before I came up here to talk to you people, hoping that the little message I'm giving you will help out a little bit, know Anishnaabe does, and go through a healing process.

When I had my heart attack -- before I had my heart attack, I was seeing a Counsellor at that time.

My wife and I were going through a lot of difficulties and every time I had this ache in my -- my chest, I thought it was heartbreak, because my wife was -- we were separated for a month.

I went and seen the Counsellor and he said it's because your wife -- you and your wife are separated, that's why you have that. I went and seen the doctor, and they put me on a stress test for my heart Friday, and that Saturday and he told me that same thing, heartache. That Sunday I fell, Monday I fell again.

When a woman gives birth to a child, they give a lot of pain in order for us to receive that sacred gift. That's the kind of pain I endured that time. The message to the young people and the young woman and the women that are here, they are more powerful than we are as men.

And I'm not talking about physically. I'm talking about spiritually. Every month they clean themselves and get rid of the old blood, comes in the new blood. It's a power, it's the power, that's how powerful they are.

Us men as boys when we're born, we carry

the same blood. Sometimes it gets weak. Sometimes it gets rich. But the little woman, they always clean themselves.

During the ceremonies that I do I always depend on these ladies to help us make us strong. I always depend on them.

This young woman and this two (2) young woman they were looking at the stars. The first one spoke as they were looking at the stars. I like to be with that star, that little spot that's twinkling. I like to be with that one.

The other one said, I like to be with that one where we can see it's huge, it's big. I like to be with that one. They came down as men. One (1) of them was young, the bright star. The other one was a dim star, an old man.

The young one was given energy. The older one -- the other lady was given by the old star the knowledge, the passing on of the woman teachings which I do not know it, of any, except for the ladies that are here.

And yet these stories -- these stories they all -- when they come out, they're part of healing. They're part of giving us strength.

Humpty dumpy who sat on a wall. You can never fix an egg. Scramble it, all right. Finish it. What does that mean? That's a very different philosophy from the mainstream to the Anishnaabe philosophy.

Things that cannot be fixed. It's the philosophy. Yet the old Anishnaabe philosophy, things that can be fixed, things that can be changed. And the most important part we can forgive because we are all human beings. We come from different nations, but we all the same. The same human being.

I used to be intimidated by the mainstream people when I was growing up. But I don't feel that way any more because I consider them -- I consider everybody a friend.

Just another human being who in their own way have their special gifts. Someone that can help us.

Or someone I can just talk to. When I make these presentations sometimes I always make a fool of myself to

make people laugh because that is one (1) of the most powerful tools.

And I look around and I got a joke that I do not dare to tell you in -- an eighty (80) year old man. And this is not out of disrespect for anything, for anybody.

But, they gave me two (2) hours to speak. Can you imagine two (2) hours? My wife wouldn't even give me one (1) minute to speak.

But, I told Wally that I was -- I wasn't going to overdo it. I thank you all. I hope my little message -- my little presentation hit you in a good way.

We can all understand each other, for I believe this is what this world needs, people to understand each other in a very good way.

And I'd like to apologize to Wally that I can't fill your two (2) hours. So with that ladies and gentlemen, forgive me if offended anybody, for those were not my intentions.

And (SPOKEN IN NATIVE LANGUAGE) Thank you.

MR. WALLY MACKAY: Thank you very much, Thomas. No, it's always a pleasure to be able to listen to these people that teach and have experience into areas that most of us only hear about them.

As I listened to Tommy and his presentation for people that don't understand the things that he is presenting, there's different planes, I guess that people have certain understandings of it. And when I listen to him speak about the seven (7) teachings, you know, (SPOKEN IN NATIVE LANGUAGE) you know, the name that he gives it, just to an ordinary person, you can literally translate that to a different meaning.

So that's why it is so important that what -- how we say things to each other and how we explain things to each other, we need to be able to take the time to think it through, what is it and how do they look at these things from?

So anyway, as I say, it's very interesting by the presentation, I relate to so many things that he's brought us this afternoon.

I just want to ask, anybody have comments or questions for Tom? Remember, the questions will be

directed to his presentation and feel free just to raise your hand we'll bring you a mic and you know, ask a question or make a comment?

(BRIEF PAUSE)

MR. WALLY MACKAY: No questions, no comments? Oh, thank you.

ELDER THOMAS WHITE: I am going to tell you, Sam's been -- ladies and gentlemen, again not to offend anybody, but, I'm going to close it up with this, okay?

You know, when we're -- when our birthday is, right? How old are you?

MR. PETER ROSENTHAL: I'm sixty-three (63).

ELDER THOMAS WHITE: And you are happy and proud to be sixty-three (63), right?

MR. PETER ROSENTHAL: No.

ELDER THOMAS WHITE: Why? Because the word Viagra didn't appeal to you yet?

MR. PETER ROSENTHAL: I would take twenty-three (23) for various reasons.

ELDER THOMAS WHITE: Oh, okay. Anyways, this hundred (100) year old man, hundred (100), imagine this man, hundred (100) years old, he celebrated -- he celebrated his birthday, and his own peers came over and congratulated him, congratulated this old man. How the elders went to his home and congratulated him, for being a hundred (100) years old.

So he's sitting there thinking, how can I make these people laugh? They travelled out -- some of them travelled a ways to be here. So, he was sitting, each and every one (1) of his visitors were sitting around, hundred (100) years old, and they wanted him to make a speech, so he started making a speech.

My hair, my -- my ears, my nose, my mouth, they all turned a hundred (100) years old today. My arms, my legs, they all turned a hundred (100) years old today.

He looked in the middle and said, see, you would have been a hundred (100) years old if you were

still alive.

(BRIEF PAUSE)

ELDER THOMAS WHITE: That's the humour of the Anishnaabe.

(BRIEF PAUSE)

MR. WALLY MCKAY: Thomas, on behalf of the community here, and we'd like to thank you for making the presentation, and sharing part of your life with us.

On behalf, we'd like to present this little gift for you.

(GIFT PRESENTATION TO ELDER THOMAS WHITE)

MR. WALLY MCKAY: Before we go for our break, are we on Indian time?

Now, whenever people talk about Indian time, it means that you're running late. You're starting late, never get there on time. That's what's implied.

But Indian time is not about being late, and I just want to share with you, because these are some of the things that's misunderstood in our culture, when we say Indian time.

And Ms. Riddup (phonetic) wrote something up, that if you people wanted you could make copies of it.

Time, quantitative, or qualitative. Each one (1) of you may have heard the expression, he is on Indian time. The expression may be used to indicate that he is late or has no sense of timing. To an Euro Canadian, time is quantitative. But to the First Nation, it is qualitative, as evidenced by the older Aboriginal man, who was living on a reserve, when asked if he had been -- if he had lived on the reserve all his life, he replied, no, not yet.

A friend of mine was talking to his Maori friend from New Zealand about the way and the manner the

indigenous people think about time. He relayed the following story of his visit among the Maori Tribe. He and his host were driving to a gathering, where he was asked to speak to a major gathering.

When he asked his host what time the gathering was scheduled to begin, he said in about half an hour. Then he asked his host, how far they were going -- were to the town from the gathering was to be held, his host said about an hour. When they arrived, more than an hour late, all the people were waiting as though nothing was wrong.

His host said to him, don't worry about it, the white man have the clocks and the watches, he says, but, our people have the time.

A word to describe one (1) of the major qualities of time among the First Nation circle, is appropriateness. An event begins when it is appropriate. Most aboriginal languages don't even have the words to designate time.

In western cultures, however time is regarded as a commodity. Canadians buy it, sell it, borrow it, waste it, kill it, make it up, take it and if they run afoul with the law do it.

As Canadians we are all obsessed with time. To the Aboriginal person his or her priority is a significant thing he or she is doing right now. According to the western world view, what I am doing right now, is subject to what I have to do in one (1) hour.

The present is subject to the future. In the Aboriginal world, what I need to do in one (1) hour is subject to what I am doing right now, the future is subject to the present.

Aboriginal people have a circular view of time, as opposed to the Western's linear one. To the Westerner, time is like a flat line. And runs and moves from one (1) end to the other. This linear view, separates time and life into three (3) categories, past, present and future.

To the Aboriginal world, however, everything is internally connected because time is a continuous unbroken circle. Aboriginal people's history

has a lot to say about the present and future because our identity is forever connected to our past.

So many of us are ruled by our daytimers, calendars, appointment books, if we start a meeting late, we start to get edgy, we start to perspire, complain and we start to get cold sweats.

Be careful it's not worth getting a heart attack over. We're not saying aboriginal time is better, only that it is equal in both value and importance and at times, worth considering as a option.

In the 19th century there were no wrist watches. White men carried pocket watches, some Plains Indians said white man carries his God in his pocket because he never did anything without consulting it.

I had a privilege of coordinating the first sacred assembly called by Elijah Harper, who was the MP then in the early 90's. The three (3) day gathering was packed with events in a very tight schedule. It had over three thousand (3000) participants. To organize it within three (3) months.

Each presenter was allotted specific time with restrictions and it became evident that the gathering would not result according to the schedule. We put the schedule away in one (1) of our meetings and took the matters into -- took the issue at hand, how are we going to pursue the presentations?

In one (1) of our organizational meetings, we decided that we would allow the people to make the presentations as they felt and move forward. In the end, the agenda was completed, the people had the time that they wanted to present.

In one (1) of the things I said to Elijah, Elijah it's the clock that gives the Indian time a bad name.

We will break for about fifteen (15), twenty (20) minutes.

--- Upon recessing at 2:10 p.m.

--- Upon resuming at 2:30 p.m.

(CEREMONIAL SINGERS PERFORM)

MR. WALLY MCKAY: Thank you very much for that song. We're going to call the meeting back to order and ask people to take their places. Appreciate that very much.

The next presenter is Susan Hill. Susan Hill is a member of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and resides at the -- at the Grand River Territory of the Six Nations.

She's a PhD candidate in Native Studies at Trent University. In July she began a position as assistant Professor of Indigenous Studies and Contemporary Studies at Wilfrid Laurier University, Brantford.

We're glad to have Susan here with us. I'd like to ask Susan to make her presentation. Susan...?

PROFESSOR SUSAN HILL: (SPOKEN IN NATIVE LANGUAGE). I send you greetings today and acknowledge and send greetings to everyone here and -- and to the rest of creation.

There has been a suggestion from some people in the audience that we all hear who everybody is. You all just get to hear who we are if we happen to get our hands on a mike.

And it might be nice, if there is time, to -- to just briefly say who you are and maybe what brings you here, if that's all right with Wally. Okay. I'll just pass the mike?

MR. WALLY MCKAY: Yeah.

PROFESSOR SUSAN HILL: Okay. Let's start with you.

MS. BONNIE BRESSETTE: Bonnie Bressette, Kettle and Stoney Point First Nation. Why am I here? I'm just plain nosy.

MS. CAROL PELLETIER: Carol Pelletier, Kettle and Stoney Point First Nations.

MS. MERLE ASSANCE-BEATTIE: Good afternoon, Merle Assance-Beedie and I'm here because Bonnie invited me.

COMMISSIONER SIDNEY LINDEN: I'm Judge Linden, I'm the Commissioner. I'm here to learn like everybody else. Thank you very much.

MS. LORRAINE GEORGE: Lorraine George. I'm the band administrator for the Chippewas of Kettle and Stoney Point First Nation and I'm here to learn as well and to -- to hear the presenters and to see the interaction of everybody. Miijwetch.

MR. CLIFFORD GEORGE: Hello. My name's Clifford George. I'm from Stoney Point and I'm here because my daughter made me come.

MR. EMERY SHAWANOO: Boozhoo. Emery Shawanoo, Kettle Point, and I'm here because I was invited to be here.

MR. RONALD SPIKE GEORGE: Ron Spike George, Kettle and Stoney Point First Nation.

MS. GWEN BONIFACE: Gwen Boniface, OPP.

MS. ANDREA TUCK-JACKSON: Andrea Tuck-Jackson, Counsel for OPP.

MR. BILL HORTON: Bill Horton, I'm Counsel to the Chiefs of Ontario and in some other places I have to explain that's not the Police Chiefs of Ontario but the First Nations organization.

MS. KATE HORTON: Hi, I'm Kate Horton and I'm just here to learn.

MS. SUSAN VELLA: My name's Susan Vella and I'm one (1) of the Commission Counsel for the Ipperwash Inquiry and it's such a privilege and honour to be here and to hear the wisdom of the elders, and the presenters today, and I thank you.

MR. PETER ROSENTHAL: My name is Peter Rosenthal. I'm Counsel to some of the people from Aazhoodena at the Inquiry and I'm very much interested in learning about First Nations' issues.

I'm starting very slowly. I'm a snail in -- accordingly to your story this morning, and not a rabbit, but I'm not going to run into a turtle, I don't think, and I'm going to learn instead from all of you people as I have from my clients. So, thanks very much.

MS. MELISSA PANJER: I'm Melissa Panjer, Counsel for Deb Hutton.

MR. LEROY LITTLE BEAR: Leroy Little Bear from Blackfoot Country in Southern Alberta. I came here to confuse you.

MS. JOANNE McCANN: I'm Joanne McCann

with Department of Indian Affairs. The First Nation invited us, so we're here -- I'm here to learn about your history -- Anishnaabe history and culture. And thanks for inviting us.

MS. LINDA RICHAL: Linda Richal (phonetic), Federal Department of Justice, I'm Counsel for Canada with respect to the Camp Ipperwash negotiations, and I'm here to learn, as I always am, for every meeting that we have together.

MR. BRAD MORRIS: My name is Brad Morris, I'm a professor of law at University of Ottawa, here at the invitation of the Chippewas and Kettle and Stoney Point First Nations. I'm the Chief Federal Negotiator on Camp Ipperwash, and with a thank you too for the invitation and with respect for both drums and the wisdom of the elders today to learn from them.

MR. MIKE SHERRY: Hello, my name is Mike Sherry (phonetic), I'm a Counsel with the Chiefs of Ontario, thank you.

MS. SARA NEUERT: Hi, I'm Sara Neuert, and I'm the Executive Director of Chiefs of Ontario.

MR. IAN ROLAND: Ian Roland, Counsel to the OPPA.

MR. IAN MCGILL: Ian McGill, Counsel to the OPPA.

MS. KAREN JONES: Karen Jones, Counsel to the OPPA.

MR. BRIAN ATKIN: Bet you all thought you had to have the name Ian to be with the OPPA. I'm Brian Atkin, and I'm President of the OPP Association.

MS. DONNA MCGEE: Donna McGee, retired from the Toronto District School Board.

MS. KIM TWOHIG: Kim Twohig, Counsel for the Province of Ontario.

MR. PETER DOWNARD: Peter Downard, Counsel for Mike Harris.

MS. SALLY MATSI: I'm just Sally Matsi (phonetic).

MR. RON HEWITT: Ron Hewitt, Court Service Officer. I enjoy being here. It is a learning experience and I'm enjoying the company.

MR. MARK FREDERICK: I'm Mark Frederick, I'm Counsel for Chris Hodgson, I'm also from a place

called Sioux Lookout, Ontario, and some of you will know where that is, and it's nice to be here and see the proud tradition of the Ojibwa people again, and in addition, to hear from our Native war veterans who were never properly acknowledged for all their role and sacrifice they made for our country.

MR. CRAIG MILLS: Craig Mills, Counsel for Chris Hodgson.

MS. CINDY HENRY: (SPOKEN IN NATIVE LANGUAGE). Kettle Point. English name, Cindy Henry. And I'm a Native Community Worker, and also a student at AEI, Anishnaabek Educational Institute, and I'm here instead of being in class, so don't tell them.

MS. CINDY MANSIA: (SPOKEN IN NATIVE LANGUAGE). My name's Cindy Mansia. I live in Kettle Point. I've come to learn and come to sing. Miijwetch

MS. JENNIFER MCALEER: Hi, I'm Jennifer McAleer. I'm one (1) of the Counsel for Mike Harris and I'm also here to learn.

MR. WALLY MCKAY: Wally McKay.

MR. DERRY MILLAR: Derry Millar, I'm Commission Counsel for the Commission, and as -- as others have said, I'm here to learn.

MR. DAN SMOKE: Hi, my name's Dan Smoke, Anananius (phonetic) Seneka (phonetic) Nation, Grand River Territory, same place as Susan. And I'm here to help out as well. Miijwetch.

MS. ANN CAMPBELL: Hi, my name's Ann Campbell, I'm from London. I always like to come here whenever I can to learn, and I've learned a lot from the few sessions I've been able to come to. So, thank you for having this opening today for us to learn some more.

MS. MARYLOU SMOKE: (SPOKEN IN NATIVE LANGUAGE). My First Nation's name is Shooting Star Woman. Other people know me around here as Marylou Smoke. I've been living in London with my husband Dan for twenty-seven (27) years, and we've been friends and supporters of the First Nations in this area, and we're here to help and to learn more about our traditions. Miijwetch.

MR. VILKO ZBOGAR: I'm Vilko Zbogor, I'm one (1) of the Counsel for the Estate and family of Dudley George.

MS. NOEL SPOTTON: Hi, my name's Noel Spotton (phonetic), I do policy work for the Inquiry, and thank you very much for this day. I'm learning a great deal.

MS. MICHELLE PONG: Hello, I'm Michelle Pong (phonetic). I'm one (1) of the Counsel for the Province of Ontario.

MS. LYNETTE DESOUSA: Hi, I'm Lynette DeSousa (phonetic). I'm also one (1) of the Counsel for the Province of Ontario.

MS. MAUREEN SMITH: Hi, I'm Maureen Smith. I'm also Counsel for the Province of Ontario.

MS. TINA GEORGE: I'm Tina George. My father was from Stoney Point and my mother was from Kettle Point so I'm a half of a stone and a half of a rock.

MR. EMERY SHAWANOO: My name is Norm Shawanoo, I'm one (1) of the elders from my community and I support the elders that spoke and I -- I strongly support the forum of what's going on because education has to come out and the truth has got to come out for First Nations. And that's -- I'll pass it on again.

MR. ALBERT GEORGE: Hello, Albert George. I'm here to learn, take up space. I'm from Stoney Point.

MR. RICK SHETEPETOOF: Hello, my name is Rick Shetepetoff (phonetic). I'm with National Defence and I've been invited by the Kettle and Stoney Point First Nation.

(BRIEF PAUSE)

MR. TERRY LAIRD: I'm Terry Laird (phonetic). I'm near Thetsburg (phonetic), my ancestry was raised abutting Stoney Point. I've always had a soft spot in my heart for the Indian pope and we truly am interested in all the Indian culture and your day to day happenings. I can't say much more at the moment. I won't. Thank you.

(BRIEF PAUSE)

MR. MAYNARD GEORGE: (SPOKEN IN NATIVE LANGUAGE). My name I guess, what everybody knows me by

is Maynard Sam George.

I'm here today to help share in this forum, also to come out and meet new people and also to have some laughs with everybody and I don't know where Tommy's gone, but, anyway I would just like to welcome everybody to our territory and I hope that everybody's learning here, while they're here.

And also don't be scared to ask questions.  
Miijwetch.

MR. DOUG GEORGE: (SPOKEN IN NATIVE LANGUAGE). My name is Doug George from Kettle Point, I'm here to support my brothers and sisters and have a good time and sing. Miijwetch.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (SPOKEN IN NATIVE LANGUAGE). I'm the project administrator for the investigation down at the camp -- the environmental investigation. And I'm also here to learn and to share what knowledge I have, if I have any at all. But, I'd just like to welcome all the elders here and say miijwetch to you for coming out and we appreciate your wisdom and your input. Miijwetch.

MR. JIM HENRY: Hello, my name is Jim Henry. I know Tommy's not in here right now. I'm the one (1) that he was calling his brother. I also go by Manitougijik (phonetic). I'm from Kettle Point. I'm really just hear to learn and sign. Thanks.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (SPOKEN IN NATIVE LANGUAGE). I'm here to learn a little bit and show my voice as well. But, I just say a big miijwetch to the Commissioner and the Inquiry staff. I'm really moved that they took the step to learn about what we have to say about ourselves. So, miijwetch.

(BRIEF PAUSE)

MS. JANET CLERMONT: My name is Janet Clermont and I'm one (1) of the Counsel for the Municipality of Lambton Shores.

MS. TARA POLLOTT: My name is Tara Pollott (phonetic). I'm an articling student. I'm here because Janet let me come.

MR. GEORGE MATHESON: My name is George Matheson (phonetic). I'm a reporter from the Sarnia

Observer. And I'm looking around here now and I think I'm the last member of the media still in attendance. And I think that I have more than enough for my -- my story today, but I'm here because I'm fascinated by the process, and I appreciate the opportunity to be here.

MS. DONNA SMITH: Good afternoon, everyone, my name is Donna Smith, and I'm here representing the Aboriginal People's Television Network.

(BRIEF PAUSE)

MR. ANTHONY ROSS: Good afternoon, my name is Anthony Ross, and first I would like to thank you for inviting me to your community. I am here on behalf of the residents of Aazhoodena, thank you.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: (SPOKEN IN NATIVE LANGUAGE). I'm a Native language teacher in the local high schools and I'm here as a supporter.

MS. JACKIE ESMONDE: Hello, my name is Jackie Esmonde, I'm here representing some of the residents of Aazhoodena.

MR. WAYNE GREER: My name is Wayne Greer, and I'm the negotiator on the Camp Ipperwash file, and I'm here to learn and observe.

MS. SHARON BRESSETTE: I'm Sharon Bressette from Kettle and Stoney Point, I'm the Secretary Clerk on the Camp Ipperwash Negotiations file.

MS. MARCIA SIMON: (SPOKEN IN NATIVE LANGUAGE) My name, if you're a speaker, you wouldn't understand unless you understand Oneida. My late husband was raised in a foster home, and my Oneida family calls me Bidady (phonetic), which means the well spoken one (1).

I got a call late last night, last night anyways, asking me to come and present some materials that my brother, Mark, had selected. And I had to go into London, and I spent the morning photocopying those materials, and made a hundred (100) copies of each page. And they still need to be collated, so hopefully you're back tomorrow.

I don't think I'm going to get them ready before you leave today. And I do encourage you, they're -- they're handouts that you can take back with you and reflect upon, based on the medicine wheel teachings that

have been prepared for Native language teachers.

And it's a good summary of materials that are helpful in understanding and I'm not sure when I would speak to those, to explain a little more.

So, I -- I'm in their hands. Miijwetch.

MS. DEBRA NEWELL: Good afternoon, I'm Debra Newell, I'm with Counsel for the Ontario Provincial Police Association, pleased to be here this afternoon.

MR. DON PROCTOR: I'm Don Proctor, representing the Mennonite Central Committee, I coordinate their Aboriginal Neighbour's Program and it's an honour to be here to listen and learn.

MR. BRUCE BRESSETTE: Boozhoo, Bruce Bressette, Kettle Point.

MS. MELISSA SHERWIN: Melissa Sherwin (phonetic), Kettle Point.

MR. NYE THOMAS: I'm Nye Thomas, Policy Director of the Inquiry.

MR. MURRAY KLIPPENSTEIN: Murray Klippenstein, legal Counsel for the estate and family of Dudley George and I'm here because Sam wanted me to come and listen to him sing.

MR. WILLIAM HENDERSON: Boozhoo. Bill Henderson, I'm one (1) of the lawyers for the Chippewas of Kettle and Stoney Point. Like everyone else, I'm appreciative of this opportunity and -- and of the drums and the elders, who are sharing with us, and I'm also here to see what Bonnie Bressette is up to.

MR. JONATHAN GEORGE: My name is Jonathan George, I'm from and live at the Kettle and Stoney Point First Nation, and I along with Mr. Henderson, am one (1) of the Counsel to the First Nation at the Inquiry.

MR. VINCE GEORGE: My name is Vince George, I'm from Kettle and Stoney Point First Nations, and I'm here to observe and learn.

MR. AL O'MARRA: I'm Al O'Marra, and I'm Counsel to the Chief Coroner, thank you.

MS. DEBRA STRAUSS: I'm Debbie Strauss, and I'm part of the Commission Staff and I'm here to listen and to learn.

MR. ED KINEAR: Ed Kinear (phonetic), Ontario Provincial Police Association.

MS. ALICE MROZEK: Hi, I'm Alice Mrozek,

one (1) of the Counsel to Robert Runciman.

MR. KEVIN SCULLION: Hi. My name's Kevin Scullion. I'm of the Counsel to the Residents of Aazhoodena.

MR. BRUCE ELIJAH: (SPOKEN IN NATIVE LANGUAGE). My name is Kalihwakelu and what that means is one who -- who interprets. And I'm from what we call ourselves Onyota'aika, which means the people of the standing stone.

And my clan is, we follow on the mother's side, is at -- it's a wolf. We have three (3), the turtle, the bear, and the wolf. And so my mother's wolf clan and so this is who we follow. This who we follow.

And I'm here to learn. Thank you.

MS. SHERRY WADDILOVE: Good afternoon, my name's Sherry Waddilove. I'm here to listen and learn and be a supporter of the Forum. My daughter Jodie-Lynn who is assisting to work with the Commission Inquiry. Thank you.

MS. JODIE-LYNN WADDILOVE: Yes, that was my mother. I'm Jodie-Lynn Waddilove. I'm part of the -- well, I'm assistant Commission Counsel and I'm -- also from the Munsee-Delaware Nation, so I'm here also in support of -- of the Forum and what the Inquiry is doing.

MR BRIAN EYOLFSON: My name's Brian Eyolfson and I'm Counsel for Aboriginal Legal Services of Toronto.

MR. JULIAN FALCONER: I'm Julian Falconer and I'm Counsel, as well, for the Aboriginal Legal Services of Toronto. I want to thank the elders and the drums. I want to express my appreciation to -- to Commission staff, Nye Thomas, Justice Linden and all for giving us this opportunity.

The idea that you can learn something about yourself by learning about others is -- today, is a -- a perfect example and it's a real honour and I cherish the opportunity. Thank you.

MR. JULIAN ROY: My name is Julian Roy and I'm also Counsel to the Aboriginal Legal Services, Toronto, and I'm a long-suffering colleague of Mr. Falconer's here next to me.

MS. KATHERINE HENSEL: My name's Katherine Hensel. I am assistant Commission Counsel with

the Ipperwash Inquiry. I wanted to thank the elders and all the presenters and the drums for -- for your assistance today and your generosity and also to say that we're honoured by your presence here, everyone that's here today. So, miijwetch.

MR. GEORGE REEVES: My name is George Reeves. I'm Registrar with the Commission, and thank you so much for allowing us to be immersed in your wonderful culture.

MS. PAT SHAWANOO: Boozhoo. (SPOKEN IN NATIVE LANGUAGE). My English name is Pat Shawanoo. Shawanoo is the people from the south. My spirit name means the one who watches over the spirit world, so I'm here watching what you guys are doing.

No, but I'm here as a student and as a community member. I'm part of TAHM which is Traditional Aboriginal Healing Methods, native community worker. I'm a student of the Anishinaabek Education Institute.

So I'm another one, my partner in crime over there is Cindy. We're here escaping school and hopefully -- don't tell nobody, eh, that we're going to learn and be able to process the information that the elders and everyone that come here to -- to offer what -- what it is that they share that will be able to help our community in the healing process. Miijwetch.

MR. BILL GALLIGER: Hi, my name's Bill Galliger. I'm a lawyer in London. I help parties reconcile their rights in resource disputes. I've recently been through New Brunswick, War in the Woods and helped the Incom (phonetic) at Voyages Bay (phonetic), two (2) year stint.

I expect there'll be many interests and recommendations coming out of this Inquiry of interest to the general public and to corporations.

MR. DOUGLAS SULMAN: And I guess, finally. Good afternoon, I'm Doug Sulman. I'm a lawyer for Marcel Beaubien and, like everyone else, I'm here to listen and learn and pass the baton over to Professor Susan Hill.

PROFESSOR SUSAN HILL: Now, --

MR. DAVE GEORGE: My name's Dave George from Stoney Point. I'm here to drum.

MR. MIKE GEORGE: My name's Mike George

from Aazhoodena.

MR. MARTIN KUEGESHC: (SPOKEN IN NATIVE LANGUAGE). My name's Martin Kuegeshc (phonetic) and I'm here to share my voice with you and sing some songs, as long as my voice holds out, I guess. Thanks.

MR. DALE PLAIN, JR.: Hello, my name is - my English name is Dale Plain, Jr. I live at Aazhoodena First Nation and I'm really -- really glad everybody's here to learn -- learn about everything. Every -- every colour of man needs to -- needs to be educated, I guess, or whatever because I -- I don't even know myself.

I'm really glad this is -- this is taking place. Gashmgadeau (phonetic) Creator, Walkontonka (phonetic) God, whoever we like to call him, he's -- he brought me here. I don't know -- I don't know why I don't know my spirit name yet. But when I do I will tell you.

I'd just like to say miijwetch for everybody being here. The drums, the spirits. Miijwetch.

PROFESSOR SUSAN HILL: Okay, ymmas (phonetic). It's nice to know, sort of, names to go with some of these faces although I probably won't remember very many of them.

But I think it's good to know, sort of, what brings us here and with that knowledge we can, I think, have a better chance at figuring out what we can take from here that is going to be of benefit to everyone.

When I -- I first got the phone call about this -- this meeting, in the back of my head I was thinking, well, what does a Mohawk girl have to do with what's going on over here.

And then I was reminded that, even though I'm a Mohawk girl, I grew up in Odawa territory in Michigan and by their -- their generosity of sharing their territory with my family, I was able to grow up in that place and I have very fond memories of -- of western Michigan and later years living in Ann Arbor I've spent a lot of time travelling through this territory, made friends in this area and so I have a connection there as well.

But going even further back and I'm actually a historian, in terms of my formal academic training, our people have old agreements of friendship and peace between the Haudenosaunee people and the Anishinabek peoples.

And we agreed hundreds of years ago that we would support each other. Now, there have been ripples in that relationship from time to time but the relationship still exists and we still have a responsibility to each other.

And so in that spirit I hope that I can live up to my responsibilities to the Anishinabek people here and that I have something to offer, at least to -- to get you thinking maybe about some things that you haven't thought about in a while.

In -- in the old days when treaties were being talked about and negotiated we would begin those councils with words of condolence because we understood that when we were apart from each other that things happened sometimes that would cause us grief.

And that when we came together we wished each other to be relieved of that grief. And those are words that were very common amongst the Olbahoin (phonetic) people and I Olbahoin meaning all native people.

And so the -- the indigenous peoples of -- of this area greeted each other and treated each other within this framework of condolence. And the British were really quick to pick up on that.

If you've ever read any of the old treaty documents you may hear things or see things in there that say, "usual ceremonies". And the usual ceremonies usually took **four (4)** or **five (5)** days and those usual ceremonies were words of condolence.

And they were those words to relieve each other of the grief that may have happened to us since the last time we had seen each other. And the British caught on to that very quick and they realized that they had to comply with that aspect of the way we did business in order to have a relationship with us.

So, I want you to remember that, it'll come back. As I said, I'm a historian, although I teach contemporary studies. And right now I'm teaching global

studies which is a bit shocking to me as well as provincial politics, which I think is a bit shocking to everyone. But I'm actually really thankful that one (1) of my students is here today, shocked, I think, for both of us.

But Wally's summary about time is really relevant to what we talked about when we're discussing globalization, but that clash about concepts of time. And I could really have just stood up and said, Okay, Wally said everything I need to say.

And so I hope that you heard what he was talking about in that -- especially the part about that, our concept of time isn't better than anybody else's, but that it's equal to and important. And if you're going to deal with native people, especially in a native context, you have to have an appreciation for that.

Probably a lot of you think of history as something dull and boring and in books and not something that you like to spend a lot of time thinking about except when you have to. For people in the room who are lawyers and there's a lot of you. I don't think I've ever been around this many lawyers in my life, that's an experience for me that's new for sure, but you know, you had to study law -- or you had to study history to some extent.

For probably most everyone else in the room, it was something you had to do in school, but probably something you didn't really enjoy a whole lot. But for some of you, you are part of a family or a community that embraces history and that has taught you to -- to have a love and an appreciation for it.

Probably not sitting in the National Archives and reading microfilm like some geeks that I know, but a different sense of history and a different appreciation for it. It's often also not called history. It's often just called, Well this is what my dad told me; this is what Grandma always said. But within an indigenous context, that is history and that is a part of who we are and it explains how we got to where we are today.

A lot of you, if you've studied about native people, you've heard things like mythology and sometimes maybe if they're real progressive, oral

tradition. But what I want to tell you is that, in our context, that's history too. We're typically taught in school that history didn't happen in the Americas until Columbus landed.

So, and you know, I almost forgot. Yesterday was the anniversary -- October 12th. And I didn't even get to mention it to my students, but Sara's here, so -- you know, so history has happened in the Americas for five hundred and twelve (512) years now, but guess what? We weren't just standing here waiting for the boats to arrive.

We had events that happened before Columbus got lost and after, and they're all connected. But in the academic world, anything that happened before October 12th, 1492 is archeology, because we are not the holders of history within an academic context.

Well, I'm here to tell you that history is much longer than five hundred and twelve (512) years. And that we are the manifestation of things that happened thousands and thousands of years ago. Within -- especially in Haudenosaunee teachings.

And I actually want to kind of point that out -- and it has been mentioned, but we're different in terms of our beliefs, our values, and they are specific to each nation of people. There are things that are common amongst us, in terms of being indigenous. Unfortunately, the -- probably the biggest thing that we have in common today is the colonization aspect of our reality.

But there are other things that are more important than that, that we have in common as well. But there are extreme differences in certain cases, too. So I do speak as a Haudenosaunee woman who is young in my -- my own teachings and learnings about my own people.

But I've been told I have a job to do and that this is where I'm meant to be in the sense of speaking to other people. We have what we consider to be our oldest treaty arrangement with Europeans. We have older treaty arrangements with other native people, but our oldest treaty relationship is known as the Guswhenta, the two (2) are wampum or the -- the deohady (phonetic).

And that is an agreement that we made first with the Dutch in 1613. And it's represented in a

wampum belt, that's a white belt with two (2) purple rows. It's really four (4) rows, but two (2) lines of purple that intersect that belt.

And in that agreement, we're separated as two (2) peoples and they talk about it as travelling down a river together. The Dutch were in their ship, the Mohawks were in their canoe and we agreed to travel a river together.

And that -- as parallel lines, we would never cross our paths. But at the same time, we're bound together by three (3) rows of white wampum that join it into one (1) belt.

And I've been taught that those three (3) rows represent peace, friendship and mutual respect. And that the most important of those -- of that aspect of that relationship is that we don't interfere in each other's affairs.

If you've read some of the discussion of the Treaty of 1664 between the Confederacy, the six (6) Nations -- well, five (5) Nations Confederacy then, and the British, they refer to the previous agreement you have with the Dutch when they're talking to our chiefs. And they're saying, we like that agreement but we want to build on it.

And they use the metaphor of a silver chain. A chain of friendship that would link us together forever. And they chose silver because it won't rust and it will, sometimes, get a little tarnished. But what they said is that we will come together and polish that chain and when we do that we renew our friendship and we renew that agreement to be bound together forever.

Now, if you're not Haudenosaunee, but you know something about other native peoples' history in this area, you know those same words were repeated in a whole series of treaties that were made with Anishinaabek peoples, with Shawnee people, with Delaware people, lots of other nations.

When the British came knocking on their door, asking for their allegiance and their alliances, and really alliance is the better word there, asking for them to become partners in terms of trade, in terms of military, those were the words they used.

And it goes back to that relationship of

condolence again. Because condolence talks about how we relate to each other as relatives. And so when they made these treaty arrangements with our people, with our ancestors, they called upon those relationships of peace and friendship.

Someone this morning talked about the war of 1812. When the British knew this war was coming, they came to our people and they said, we have an agreement. You are our friends and we need your help.

Those are the words that they were recalling. And they remembered them quite well then. And I would like to suggest that we all need to refresh ourselves about those terms because they're relevant for everyone in this room in some form or fashion.

Getting back a bit to history and sort of concepts of history. As I said, a lot of times you'll hear terms like mythology, referring to that pre-Columbian experience for indigenous peoples.

I prefer to use the term cultural history. Other people will have other words as well. But I think it's important to remember that those are histories no different than what you're going to find when you're talking about the -- the formation of the Canadian Confederation and all those Prime Ministers and all of that.

That's history in the same way that the history of our people existed prior to Columbus. Our cultural histories explained how we got to this place, they explain our conceptualization of the world.

And I would like to throw out the idea that really isn't odd for most Native people, but is a bit shocking sometimes for non-Natives, in that while it's different than, it's equivalent to the creation stories that you'll find in the Bible, in the Koran and in the other religious texts known in the world.

Those are histories, as well, those are the stories that those people maintain to help them understand how the world came to be. Our cultural histories do that for us. And so they are just as relevant and binding for us, as those stories are for other people in the world.

Oral tradition is something that has been bounced around a lot in the Canadian Courts. Partly due

to the requirement to determine what Aboriginal rights mean, post 1982. And it's an issue that's been ruled upon in cases like Delgamuukw, cases like Mitchell (phonetic) and a whole series of other ones that those of you who are lawyers, are going to have a lot more remembrance of the names.

And as a Native person primarily, but also as a historian, I'm extremely concerned about the manner in which our histories are treated in the Canadian Court system. And I don't know if there is a resolution because we come from two (2) very different ways of looking at the world.

And in the end the Courts are still firmly based within a western way of looking at the world. And so I fear actually when our oral histories are introduced as evidence. Not because I don't believe in them, but because I know that we are giving the power to someone else to determine their validity.

Now, whether or not you take what I have to say out of here or not, is up to you, but I would like remind you that it's not just random in terms of who ends up being a carrier of our oral histories. It's not just by chance that the people that you've heard from today are seen as carriers of our histories.

They are trained to do that. Maybe not in a classroom. Maybe not, you know, with a whole bunch of letters after their name like I'm going to have soon, but instead with really important things. Because their parents sat them down and said, you need to know this.

You need to know it, because it's going to determine your ability to survive. And that's way more important than any degree is ever going to -- and all that does is guarantee you maybe a job. Survival is about a lot more than that.

And so there is a rigour involved in oral history. There is a whole methodology. There is an entire framework of training that is involved. It's not articulated in the same way that western historical methodology is articulated.

And in many ways, I couldn't even find the words to explain it. And I'm trained in that western model and generally I'm fairly good with the use of English, not always. But -- and yet there are aspects of

the way that Native people preserve and live their history that basically supercede, I think, the English language.

I also want to articulate and you've probably seen evidence of this, that our history is more than just words. We talk about oral history or oral tradition. But, there's much more to it than just the words.

We have wampum belts. We have strings. We have pictographs, baskets, pottery, different things that might be classified as art or craft, depending on that debate. But we have lots of items, I guess, that are also aspects of the cultural historical record. And so it goes beyond just words.

It also goes even beyond just words and items in that in reality, our histories are something that we live regularly. For my people, our ceremonies usually recall what our histories are. They remind us of how a woman fell from the sky and what she did that made this place happen and we re-enact that, not as, like, some kind of weird historical, like, re-enactment that you might find at Niagara Falls or something, but as in reminding ourselves that we are here because of that woman and that through her actions, this place was created and so we teach history in that manner.

This week, back at home, at Six Nations, we have what's known as the Six Nations Convention happening and that's a time where men who are trained to tell the story of one (1) of our former leaders re-tell his -- his experience and his journeys. A man who was known as Cognacdio (phonetic) or Handsome Lake and for four (4) days, they tell his experiences and it takes us back two hundred (200) years and connects us back through those generations.

And when we participate in this event together, it's not just commemorating something two hundred (200) years ago, but it's reminding us about our responsibilities to the future and about how it all connects.

My research that I'm doing to get those letters behind my name deal with issues of land tenure in my community on the Grand River and it's taking me all kinds of interesting places in terms of looking for --

for information.

But I think the most critical part of -- of what I've learned in that process has come from studying our languages and we are Six Nations so we have six languages and I've chosen to focus on -- on one (1) and that's Cayuga, the language of the Mohawk people, because I'm Mohawk, but also because many of the records I'm looking at, if they are written in our languages, are written in Mohawk.

And very early on, I came across a word that, by itself is Otarra (phonetic), but it's usually used in -- in other context, but what that means, basically, is clay. But it's also the root word when we want to talk about our clans and so if we want to ask someone what clan they are, we're literally asking, What's the kind of clay you're made out of? And so the -- one (1) of the most basic elements of our identity, our clan family, our clan relationship, talks about the clay that we're made out of.

Now, I can't speak specifically to the Anishnaabek clan system, but my guess and my experience with them is that there are very similar ideologies there.

We're also told from our creation story that our Creator, when he formed us, he made a body out of clay and then he breathed life into it. And the word we use to talk about him is Sungwyodeesun (phonetic) and that literally means, he completed out bodies.

So he formed us out of clay and then gave us his breath and we know that when our breath leaves us, and that's one (1) of the ways that we talk about saying that you've passed on -- when our breath leaves us, our bodies are returned to that clay and so it's what we are literally made out of, we live our life in this place, and then we are returned to what we were born out of.

In our communities, and I also know there are very strong similarities there with -- with Anishnaabek peoples -- is that we have a responsibility not only to those who are alive, but to those who are dead as well.

And for us it specifically involves taking care of those graves. And it involves feeding and many of the things that you've heard talked about today and

that we've even seen as well; right?

And so it's not just about a duty to the people who are here right now and we also talk about the duty to those who are to come. And that's important in our way as well. But we also have a duty to those who've come before us.

And we tie all of that in, in our communities, based upon that clan relationship again and our family ties. And so, again, we have another connection based upon who are families are to the land that we come out of and to the land that we go back to.

In some of the -- the literature that we're reading actually in my globalization class, we're talking about things like cultural landscape. And that's a kind of -- a pretty lofty word that my students are grappling with.

But I think that it's an important term to think about. Now, again, if you're back on the reserve at Kettle Point sitting in somebody's kitchen they're not going to talk about cultural landscape.

Same thing back home. But, what they'll talk about is about the land. And they will talk about the relationship and the responsibilities that they have to those places and about how those places connect to each other.

Back to the Canadian courts. There's a discussion often about things like sacred sites. And not to diminish the importance of that because they are important but it segments out parcels of property and in many ways I think it does that because in the western frame of mind that's the way that they deal with property and land.

But within our context we don't separate those things out. That place is important but you have to go through this place to get there and so that makes that place important as well. It's about the journey; right? Not just the destination.

And, again, it goes back to having a relationship. That site is important because we have a relationship to it. We have a responsibility to it. And, in many ways, we are important because of that place.

And so that the two are intricately tied

and you cannot separate one (1) from the other and be able to define one (1) without the other.

How am I doing on time? I guess I can keep you here until 4:30.

But, as I said, I grew up in Michigan and it took me a long time to make my way back to my father's community at Six Nations but I'm finally there. But I'd like to tell you a little bit about what it -- what it has felt like for me being what I used to call "a displaced Mohawk".

First, living amongst Odawa people who were very kind and generous. Then living in Ann Arbor in a very, sort of, multicultural community on all kinds of levels, but even the native community there being very multi-national.

And then moving to Buffalo hanging out with the Senecas who are our relatives but still reminding you, it's Seneca country. But when I lived in Buffalo I would travel back to Grand River regularly.

And I wouldn't take the regular highways of the QEW and all that, I'd take the back roads along Highway 3 and then up what they call River Road and that follows the river, logic right, and I remember feeling very angry about driving that road and knowing, just a quick history, the Grand River, 1784, Halderman who was a general wrote out a deed that acknowledged that **six (6)** miles on both sides of the Grand River belonged to the Six Nations forever and ever.

It was already our land. It was also shared territory in many contexts but they had already acknowledged that it was ours eighty-five (85) years before that -- now, eighty-three (83) years before that, but anyway we have a deed from General Halderman saying **six (6)** miles on both sides of the river.

If you know anything about Six Nations today you know that that's not the case. And, instead, rather than about a million acres of land we have about forty-eight thousand (48,000) acres of land which means we fared better than a lot of other native communities.

But we also have about twenty-two thousand (22,000) members these days and our land base is very small, relatively speaking, to our population. But when

I was living in Buffalo and travelling back and forth, I had no land in my own community.

So, there I was, a landless Mohawk. Not only displaced but landless as well, and driving along and seeing mansions on territory that I knew had been promised to my people. Half of them were empty which is even more frustrating.

But knowing that something went terribly wrong. Which is how I ended up back in school and which is how I've spent most of my life back in school but I'm looking forward to not being that anymore. But -- so I tried to find out how did this happen?

And that's, sort of, what my work has been has been trying to understand the history and trying to understand what went wrong in terms of that covenant chain agreement.

And I won't bore you with my rant about the British not complying with their agreements. I think most of us understand that anyway. But, I would just like you to try to imagine what it feels like.

And for those native people in the room, you know what it feels like whether you own land or not in your community. But you know what it feels like to travel through a place that you know you have a responsibility for.

Because it's not about land rights. We use that word because it's what works in the court system. But it's about responsibility and we know that we are born onto this earth with a set of responsibilities and when we're inhibited from being able to fulfil our responsibilities, there's a huge disconnection that goes on and a lot of anger for some of us.

Some of us it comes out in lots of other ways but that connection to land and then the result of being disconnected from it is immense. And for most people who are not indigenous you come from a history of people who moved every few generations of so.

Often because you had to. Often because you were forced to. But many of you have become accustomed to that. Our people haven't and I don't think we're interested in that. Some of us are. Some of us are quite comfortable moving around. But I would say

most of us are not. Most of us are not ready to give up that responsibility.

There was a question earlier about **seven (7)** generations and I really enjoyed the stories that were given in response to that. You talked about your personal responsibilities that had been given to you and your families.

Within our culture we're taught about the **seven (7)** generations within the context of our governance system which we call the gianaregoa (phonetic) or the great law.

And under the great law when the peacemaker instructed our leaders about how it was they should treat each other and about how it was they should govern their territories he told them that every decision you make you have to consider the **seven (7)** generations who will follow you because it will impact them for that far into the future.

Now, a lot of people complain, even today, that it takes a long time for our chiefs to make decisions. But think about the weight on their shoulders when they take that responsibility to heart that their actions will affect **seven (7)** generations forward.

Now, with that we also know that we are here because of the actions and forethought of the **seven (7)** generations before us. And so we're responsible not just to the future but to the past as well.

And we have a responsibility to act in a manner that is respectful to those who came before us. And in a manner that respects the generations that will come after.

(BRIEF PAUSE)

PROFESSOR SUSAN HILL: And I think I've gone through my list, the last thing that I want to leave you with. And I had contemplated having like a nice academic paper to read to you, which is where I'm becoming oddly more comfortable with these days, probably because I have to give these crazy lectures four (4) times a week. And I have to convince my students that I know something, which is sometimes I stretch on some of

the topics that I'm forced to teach about.

But in one (1) of the, sort of, lists of things that I went through, I had a quote from a paper that I had written that had quoted this guy Donald Fixico, which some of you may know. He's a historian from Oklahoma, I think Sac and Fox Nation.

And he talked about the need for historians to put on a cultural lens when they're examining Native histories. And my reaction to that was, they need more than that. Because we don't need you to try to think about -- or to try to think like an Indian or to try to imagine what it is to be, even though I've asked you to do that.

What we need you to do is to find out what your responsibilities are to us. Because most of us know what our duties are to you. We know what our treaty relationships are. But we need the other side of that belt to pick up the slack.

The other end of that chain has been dragging for awhile. And we need you to pick that up, dust it off, polish it up. And then look at our relationship within that lens, within that lens of the treaty rights that you hold.

Because everyone in this room has treaty rights. If you didn't you couldn't be here. Canada wouldn't exist. Now, there's some people in the room who are saying that wouldn't be a bad deal.

But we know we made agreements. And we're willing to uphold them, but you need to do that as well.

And so when you're looking at our issues, what you call our issues, I'm asking you to remember that they're your issues too.

And it's not just about what's good for the Indian, or what they want. It's about how can we live together in this place under that agreement of peace and respect and friendship that our ancestors promised each other.

So those are my last thoughts. And I want to thank you for your time and your attention and hopefully I've at least got you thinking about something, if nothing else, what you're going to do after I'm done talking. Dane'toh.

(BRIEF PAUSE)

MR. WALLY MCKAY: Thank you very much Susan for that presentation. It's very, very interesting. Now, questions or comments. Do you have any questions for Susan?

Yes, say your name and ask your question.

MR. MURRAY KLIPPENSTEIN: It's Murray Klippenstein here. Just wondering if you could elaborate if you wish, for our benefit on the point you mentioned about driving through territory which you felt was promised to your people in an agreement or in a treaty relationship that now was not any longer in the possession of your people.

But if I have a bit of a vague idea of the situation in your community, that a lot of that displacement or dispossession that you talked about has actually been sometimes tested in the legal system, in the -- in the non-Native legal system and has been upheld by the non-Native legal system against your people.

And if you have any thoughts on -- or perspectives on what that means for you and your people, how it makes you feel or any insights about that for us, who as you say, people such as myself, who are on the other end of the treaty relationship. Or for us as legal people who work in that system?

PROFESSOR SUSAN HILL: I could rattle on about this for a long time, but I'll try to keep it short. Many of those court cases, and I don't know which part of the history you know, but our relationship with the Canadian court started before there really was a Canada, per se, and it actually started with grievances in the Mohawk Valley that were never really dealt with beyond the -- the Royal Proclamation that talked about great -- great wrongdoings.

I can't remember the actual quote out of the -- the Royal Proclamation, but they were talking about lands that had been stolen in the Mohawk Valley.

Now you'd think, and I have to say at times I get a little angry with my ancestors and I say, Why would you trust these people again, but I know that there's more to it than even what I know and I have to trust that they did the best they could with what they

had to work with.

And so, sort of the -- the history of our -- our land grievances go back, you know, two hundred and forty (240) years, at least, but in terms of the Grand River territory lands, many of our -- our land cases were in the courts starting in the 1820s and 1830s when, you know, the laws of Upper Canada were pretty shaky and what they fell back on, the judges, in interpreting those cases, was English common law.

They were making law at the time and so they talked about -- they -- they ruled based upon their interpretation of English law as it pertained to land rights and we lost a whole lot of land to squatters along the Grand River in that time, partly because Indians couldn't testify, Indians really couldn't own land anyway under their interpretation of -- of English law. And so, it's been a downhill battle for almost two hundred (200) years in terms of our experience with the Canadian court system.

Now, many of the acreage -- many of the acres that are now in the hands of non-Six Nations People were fairly legitimate agreements and that's part of what I've had to learn about in the process as well. I may not have liked them much, but for whatever reason, our leaders at the time did make decisions to -- to lease -- often sometimes to sell -- large tracts of land in order to support our people.

And so that is basically sort of in compliance with -- with our legal system and theirs, but much of what hasn't been tested in the courts deals with the upper end of the Grand River, the Kitchener-Waterloo area.

Like, I have to say, like I haven't felt that -- that same sort of anger in a while, except I had to go to main campus a couple of weeks ago -- Wilfred Laurier University -- the -- the real campus, I'll say that here -- It's in Waterloo and we're sort of like the -- the stepchild down river in Brantford and I had to go up there for some meeting and as I was driving along the Grand River I got really angry again, because I know that that land was taken from us without any sale on our part. And it does violate the Haldimand agreement and that's an extremely frustrating reality to live with.

And again, I -- I'd say that's probably what forms my statement about fearing what cases are going to end up in the Canadian courts. Canada is -- is -- like they've really learned well from their neighbours to the south about interpreting native rights very narrowly, but interpreting what we can't do very broadly.

And they've -- I'd say they've almost perfected the system. They're way more effective than the Americans at that. I'm not saying the Americans are a whole lot better in other ways, but because of the Indian Act and because of the mass legislation that Canada has opted for, which differs from the US relationship, they've really sort of, gotten very good at narrowing our ability to do certain things based upon their interpretation of the law.

And again, Haudenosaunee people are known to be a little bit revolutionary, I guess, in some context, but it goes back to what we've been taught about that relationship.

I've always been told you can't hold a treaty with yourself and so -- now that gets -- other native peoples in other places interpret that differently, but the way we interpret it is that the only way we have treaty rights is if we are sovereign and separate from Canada. And so for us to take our cases to Canadian court is in opposition to our basic philosophy of sovereignty.

For other native peoples, they choose to look at it differently and I respect their right to do that. I just fear that there's a growing conservatism coming out of the Canadian court system which has never been all that in favour of us anyway and that I think that every time a case goes, especially to the Supreme Court, that the implications are -- are really frightening for all of us.

I don't know if that answered --

MR. WALLY MCKAY: Thank you. Any other questions or comments for Susan?

**(BRIEF PAUSE)**

MR. WALLY MCKAY: Thank you very much.

Susan, I'd like you to accept our gift for -- thank you very much for being with us today. We really appreciate that.

(GIFT PRESENTATION)

MR. WALLY MCKAY: We had a phone call out last night because we felt it important with the information that was coming to see if we could get this lady to come and make a presentation. And we didn't know that she would head out someplace and go and make all those copies because the information that was given to us is very important and will give insight and understanding to the people here.

We've -- a document was given to us, it was quite thick but they said, you know, we will just be able to deal one (1) small part of it. So, this afternoon, we're very fortunate to have this lady with us.

On my first trip here what I did is try to visit as many people as I could and we visited her at her home and it was getting quite late and I enjoyed the visit. Enjoyed the sharing of food and the tea and everything. And we talked about so many different things.

And I'm glad she's here. She said there's copies for us. We'll circulate the material tomorrow I would say. But we would like her to make the presentation this afternoon and it's going to be on the medicine wheel and she's only going to touch a small part of it.

And I'm glad that Marcia's here with us. Marcia, could you make the presentation for us now?

(BRIEF PAUSE)

MS. MARCIA SIMON: Miigwetch. I also was rushing and I stepped out of bed and stepped on my glasses, my tri -- so all I've got left are my television watching glasses. I have to take them off to read.

The first thing I want to read to you is out of the Ojibwe curriculum that started to be taught in

the Provincial system here in Lambton County in 1988 where our language was on a reverse path where our mother's generation was beaten for speaking and now they turn around and start teaching.

And in the introduction to that curriculum document there's a -- called Nishnaabe Bmaadziwin. It's the -- the Anishnaabe way of life. The medicine wheel.

And in this introduction it says:

"The Anishnaabe people have at their centre and all around the story of the medicine wheel. The medicine wheel is the very way of life of the people. It is an understanding of the universe. It is the way given to the peace chiefs, our teachers and by them to us.

The medicine wheel is everything of the people. The medicine wheel is the living flame of the lodges and the great shield of truth written in the sign of the water. It is the heart and mind. It is the song of the earth. It is the star fire and the painted drum seen only in the eyes of the children.

The medicine wheel begins with the touching of our brothers and sisters. Next it speaks to us of the touching of the world around us, the animals, the trees, the grasses and all other living things. Finally, it teaches us to sing the song of the world and this way to become whole people.

Let us teach here each other here in this great lodge of people and the ways of each other in this great medicine wheel, our earth. In many ways the circle, the medicine wheel can best be understood if you think of it as a mirror in which everything is reflected. The universe is the mirror of the people, the old teachers tell us and each person is a mirror to every other person.

They include a drawing of a simple

medicine wheel there and it can be done with simply placing stones in a circle and a smaller circle inside. Among the people, those teachers usually did construct it with stones or pebbles, which they would place before them on the ground and each one (1) of those little stones, within the medicine wheel represents one (1) of the many things of the universe. One (1) of them represents you, one (1) of them represents me. Others hold within them our mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers and our friends. Still others symbolize hawks, buffalo, elks and wolves.

There are also stones which represent religions, governments, philosophies and even entire nations. All things are contained within the medicine wheel in the total universe. If you and I were sitting in a circle of people and if I were then to place a painted drum or an eagle feather in the middle of the circle, each of us would perceive these objects differently. Our vision of them would vary according to our individual positions in the circle, each of which would be unique. Because of this, a particular object or event may appear fearful to you at the same time that it gives pleasure to me or appears completely uninteresting to a third person.

All things that we perceive stimulate our individual imaginations in different ways, which in turn, causes us to create our own unique interpretations of them. Love, hate, fear, confusion, happiness, envy and all the other emotions we feel act upon us to paint our perceptions of things in different colours. If the thing I

were to place within our circle should be an abstraction such as an idea, a feeling, or a philosophy, our perceptions of it would then be even more complicated than if the object had been a tangible thing and further, the number of different perceptions of it would become greater and greater as more and more people were added to our circle.

The perception of any objection, either tangible or abstract, is ultimately made a thousand times more complicated whenever it is viewed within the circle of an entire people as a whole. The understanding of this truth is but the first lesson of the medicine wheel in our teachings."

So that's taken from the curriculum document of the Lambton County Board of Education that started the Ojibwe language programs in the provincial schools here in 1988.

I believe that my mother was greatly helped in her latter years of her life to teach things that she knew and it was a reversal for her because she had been beaten in a residential school for speaking and she never taught any of us to speak. We grew up speaking up English because she didn't want us to follow in that same path and bear the same hurts that they did.

In 1990, my father passed away, and was buried in Stoney Point. And I was rather proud, my father only had two (2) years of schooling, and he was very proud when I graduated from University. But I was very proud of him, because he died as a University student, he had been accepted into Trent University, into the Ojibwa language course that was offered by extension.

And after his death, my mother found great solace in working with the language, and it was almost like many of the hurts that had been inflicted upon her were being healed and soothed by teaching.

And many times in her later years, she would recall things that she had said as a little girl, and had never said them since, and they would come back

to her at -- at opportune times.

This book was put together by the Ojibwa Cultural Foundation in Manitoulin Island, and they're the teachings of the Medicine Wheel, and my brother Mark went through it in trying to assist with the materials to be presented here.

And for -- for him to be reading something, I thought was -- was really great. And I had to honour that, that he went through this document and selected pages to share with you, that's why I went to Staples in London and photocopied, I think it turned out to be almost three thousand (3,000) pages, copies.

But something like twenty-six (26) or twenty-seven (27) pages, a hundred (100) -- a hundred (100) copies of each. And so going through it, some -- some of the things that are touched on are traditional teachings, Medicine Wheel teachings, four (4) sacred plants, there's the teachings of the Seven (7) Grandfathers. Those -- those we call grandfathers are values, that we strive for, to be Anishnaabe, Anishan (phonetic) is good, Aabe is a being -- to be a good being. You must live by those seven (7) values and strive to attain them.

So, we have got those copied and we will collate them and make them available to you and you can look through them. And there's a lot of teachings in there that would go on and on and on, and you would reflect upon those things many times in many different ways. So, I will let you do that.

And in closing, one (1) of the things that I can relate to what Susan Hill was saying, I many times feel that the brokenness, the trail of tears that the Potawatomi have come through, and there were nations that helped us, that came and wiped the tears from our eyes.

I've heard of the Delawares that had ceremonies for us like that. We have ceremonies that help. We have our literature and things, and this one (1) is the legend of the strawberry, that I wanted to leave with you. I compiled it from my mother's notes from her 1997 attendance at the Advanced Institute at Lakehead University, where she was studying our literature.

"Once upon a time when the world was

new, there lived a little Anishnaabe boy and his sister, and they loved one another very much, they played together, learned to hunt together, gathered shells along the shores of lakes and rivers, they made necklaces and wampum belts, and learned the language of the forest together.

And one (1) day, the two (2) quarrelled. It started like most quarrels do, about a very small matter.

Brother and sister parted in anger at the edge of the encampment and the little girl ran as fast as she could to the east where she knew the great sun lived, while the brother filled with bitter feelings, started towards the west.

After several days' travelling he decided to follow his sister as he loved her too much to lose her. He turned toward the east to try to find his sister but, alas, after many moons he had still not caught up with her. The little sister at last reached the sunrise place where the sunbeams stretch down in the -- to the earth forming a man dressed in such splendour of shining clothes and wearing a crown that she was dazzled by the brightness. When he spoke to her she knew at once that he had heard the quarrel with her brother and that was why she had run away.

Would you like to see your brother again, asked the sun? Very, very much, answered the little girl. Turn back toward the west and travel to where you left your brother, the sun commanded her. And the little girl turned and started back.

She was very tired and hungry but her desire to see her brother drove all

thought of food and rest from her mind.

On the way she began to notice berries starting to spring up along the path. First the shoots, then the flowering branches and at last the berries themselves hanging ripe in the warm summer air.

First she came to a bush with the finest ripe blueberries. They were growing quickly on low bushes within her reach, but the little girl could think of nothing but her wish to find her brother so she passed the berries without picking one.

When she had travelled a little further, she came to a bush of fat ripe blackberries. They were as large as her thumb and the bush was covered with them. They would have made a fine dinner but still she went on, not once stopping to think of her hunger.

More berries spring up in her path. Wild plums, low hanging bunches of grapes, cherries, delightful fruits that she had never seen before. They were touched by the sun with bright colours. The air was sweet with their fragrance but she passed them all.

Suddenly something brighter and sweeter than anything she had passed met her sight. They were berries with a beautiful crimson colour. They grew close to her feet and she was unable to resist them.

She wanted to gather them for her brother as a gift to make up for their silly quarrel so the little girl knelt down to the earth and gathered the berries in her hands and as she did so, the berries grew in size until she could scarcely hold them.

She looked up and there stood her

brother, brought there by the kind wish that had brought him to her just as the sun had planned.

And ever since, the Anishnaabek people have used the wild strawberry as a peace offering when they ask -- when they wish to ask pardon for any wrong they think they have caused the neighbour."

And we do use the berries as a very prominent part in our ceremonies and they have very special meaning and I thought this was very fitting a story. I love this. Cha Miigwetch.

MR. WALLY MCKAY: Thank you very much, Marcie. Do you have any questions or comments you want to make? We're going to be circulating those -- that information that she has made tomorrow morning. We'll have them available for everybody.

Have any questions or comments?

Marcia, I'd like to thank you very much and from the group we'd like to -- you to accept this gift and thank you very much for sharing with us. Thank you very much.

(GIFT PRESENTATION)

MR. WALLY MCKAY: How are people feeling? Getting tired? It's a lot to absorb. A lot of information. And sometimes you may be sitting there and wondering how do I relate these things over to what I'm doing.

If you listen carefully enough before you do that, the first step you have to do is how do you relate to the people. That's the most common -- the most important part that's been presented is relationship. If we can relate to each other, and establish foundations for a good relationship, we will find the answers that set us apart.

And as I listened to the elders present it, look at things, the -- the connectivity of all their existence, looking at the presentations that have been made so well by Tom White, and Susan and Marcia. It's a lot of information that has been given to you.

We're going to be closing very shortly, and what I'm -- what I'd like to do is start tomorrow morning -- is it okay if we start at nine o'clock?

Start at nine o'clock, and maybe we can quite a little earlier and get people on the road, many people would like to be on the road tomorrow, so early in the afternoon we can finish.

So, with that, what I'm going to ask is this place is going to be locked, so if you want to leave your stuff over here, feel free to do so. But the drums -- this drum will be here, I don't know if you guys are going to take yours or not, but it will be locked for us.

So, it's going to be available in that room.

What I'm going to ask is the Kettle Drum to do the first song, and then we'll go to the Stoney Drum for the closing drum, okay?

With that, we're going to be adjourned after this -- these two (2) songs.

(CEREMONIAL SINGERS PERFORM)

MR. WALLY MCKAY: Thank you very much, we'll see you tomorrow morning at 9:00.

--- Upon adjourning at 4:13 p.m.

Certified Correct

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Wendy Warnock, Ms.