

Shining Mountains Living Community Services

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General Knowledge



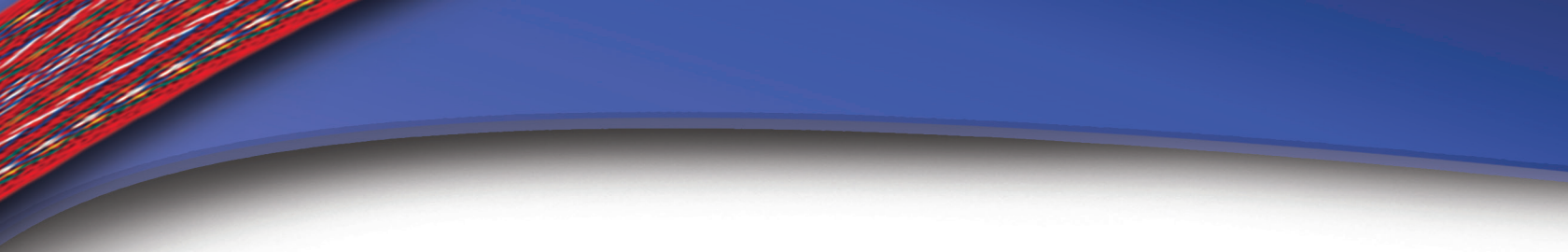


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INDIGENOUS MOVEMENT INTO CANADA

The earth is approximately four billion years old. Approximately fifteen thousand years ago, two major ice fields covered Canada – the Canadian Shield covered by the Laurentide ice sheet, and the Cordilleran, which covered British Columbia. and the lower south western corner of Alberta. The Yukon and Alaska were never glaciated. Between the ice shields, through the Rockies was an ice-free corridor. People came into North America by this corridor and in small boats like canoes down the west/east coast. This earliest migration occurred about eleven to fourteen thousand years ago.


The first migration people became known as the Clovis people, eventually evolving into the American Indian nations. The second migration of people across the Bering Strait became known as the Na-Dene and arrived about ten thousand years ago. The third and last migration of people across the Bering Strait about three thousand years. The migrating people spread out across the north, as well as travelling south into the United States. The peoples who continued down into the United States, and then back up to Canada, eventually became the various Nations that populated North America. Those who spread out across the north became the Inuit people who still live in the Northwest Territories, now known as Nunavut Territory, the Inuit people make up about 80% of the population of Nunavut.

CURRENT INFORMATION ON INDIGENOUS POPULATIONS

In 2010, Indigenous populations accounted for 4.6% of the total population or about 1.4 million Indigenous peoples.

- Status – on reserve: 371 400
- Status – off reserve: 252 800
- Non-status: 422 600
- Métis: 205 800
- Inuit: 57 000





There are currently over fifty distinct First Nations and more than six hundred First Nations communities. In Alberta, in the northern area are found Beaver, Slavey and Dene, central are Cree Nations (plains and woodlands) and in the south primarily Blackfoot Nations. Each Nation has multiple bands and separate languages, for instance, on the west coast, the Halqumalemspeaking people comprise fifty-one different bands or communities who share a common language.

Métis people are descendants of both Indigenous and European people, and originated in western Canada. They have a unique language “Michif”, which has three main dialects, they created laws and culture, distinct from First Nations or Caucasians. The land considered as their Historic Homeland stretches from the Red River in Manitoba to the foothills of the mountains in Alberta. There are Métis people, who live in mainstream communities either rural or urban as well as Métis Settlements people. Specific Métis Settlements are located only in Alberta.

Inuit peoples have lived on the islands and coasts of the far north of Canada for thousands of years. There are 55 Inuit communities in Canada.

Indigenous population is expected to continue its rapid growth (10.4% had been estimated) in contrast to just over an expected increase of 3.4% in the non-Indigenous population.

Prior to 1966, virtually no Indigenous people had a post-secondary education, as there was a law against Indigenous people attending post-secondary facilities until about 1960. By 1969, only 800 people had post-secondary education, but by 1995, there were over 150 000 Indigenous with post-secondary education. Indigenous people today make up the highest numbers of those applying for post secondary education facilities.

MÉTIS SETTLEMENTS OF ALBERTA

Alberta is the only province that has passed legislation specifically for Métis people. The Métis Settlements of Alberta are comprised of eight Settlement Corporations: (Buffalo Lake, East Prairie, Elizabeth, Fishing Lake, Gift Lake, Kikino, Paddle Prairie and Peavine). Each Corporation is run by an elected Council and headed by a chairperson selected from the council. The Métis Settlements Act

establishes Métis control over 1.25 million acres of Settlement land, legislated structures and systems of local government and financial transfers from the province of Alberta.

Political Groups

CONGRESS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Formerly known as the Native Council of Canada, represents the interests of off-reserve Indigenous peoples in Canada. These include First Nations, Non-Status First Nations, and Métis peoples. It works to achieve equality of all Indigenous peoples regardless of residence or status.

Assembly of First Nations

The Assembly of First Nations, is comprised of chiefs from every Nation across Canada. Each province has a Provincial Assembly which elects representatives to the National level. They are a strong voice for First Nations people, rights and strive to ensure that political, legal and ethical issues are addressed.

Métis Nation of Alberta

The Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) is comprised of 6 regions, the most of which are located in northern and north central Alberta, with only one large region covering from Red Deer south to the U.S. border. The MNA strives to develop and defend Métis rights for education, health, employment, land use such as hunting and gathering.

Métis National Council

The Métis National Council (MNC) is a body made up of provincial Métis organizations from B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. It provides a National voice for all Métis people.

Inuit Tri-partite Council



INDIGENOUS NATIONS IN ALBERTA

- Cree
 - Western Woodland Cree
 - Swampy Cree
 - Northern Cree
- Slavey
- Sarcee (have regained their tribal name of Blood)
- Blackfoot
- Saulteaux
- Beaver
- Stoney

MAJOR BANDS IN CENTRAL ALBERTA

- Hobbema
 - Ermineskin
 - Louis Bull
 - Sampson
 - Montana
- Rocky Mountain House
 - O'Chiese
 - Sunchild
 - Big Stone

Colonization began in Canada about five hundred years ago. Originally, the fur traders spread out across Canada looking for new hunting and trapping resources. With the advent of the larger fur trading companies – Hudson Bay and North Western, posts were built in areas that made for easier access to furs and trade. Most notable posts were built on major rivers, as these were the most frequently used travel highways. The present cities of Edmonton, Red Deer, and Calgary all had trading posts located there.

The most commonly spoken Indigenous language in Alberta is Cree.

Actual Effects OF Legislation

ROYAL PROCLAMATION

Made Indians subjects of the Crown (Her Royal Majesty)

INDIAN ACT

Made Chiefs and Councils responsible to the Crown/Department of Indian affairs and NOT to the people. Chief and Council no longer represented the best interests/needs of their communities, but became concerned with what was agreeable to DIA and what they (Chief and Council) wanted. Men inherited mainstream society's sexist ideology. Made it law to attend residential schools. Removed many basic rights from Indigenous people.

RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS

Taught children (often forcibly) to abandon their culture, spiritual beliefs and language.

Discrimination and abuse on reserves and other native communities stem from an inherited disrespect and dishonouring that was established in the Indian Act and residential schools.

Governments wanted only to communicate with males and ignored or belittled the roles and place/authority of women.


RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS IN CANADA

THE HISTORY

The purpose of the residential schools in Canada was to educate the Natives, "civilize" them, and back them "dark-skinned Europeans". By taking the children away from their parents, forbidding them to do anything related to their culture and forcing European religion on them, the schools were supposed to culturally assimilate them. There were two types of Indian schools – the residential schools and the day schools. I will focus mainly on the residential schools.

The first schools of this type were opened in the 1840s in Upper Canada (Ontario). Prior to this, the government wasn't very involved in Native education, although some of the churches had already started schools on reserves. The government got involved after the Bagot Commission of 1842 and the Gradual Civilization Act of 1857. These documents paved the way for government funded schools that would teach the natives English and hopefully eliminate the native culture. The Indian Act of 1876 gave further responsibility to the federal government for





native education. An order-in-council was passed in 1892 announcing the regulations for the operation of residential schools. It set up a grant arrangement stating that the government would give \$110-\$145 per student, per year to the church-run schools, and \$72 per student in the day schools.

The schools first appeared in western Canada in 1883-84, with schools opened in Qu'Appelle, High River, and Battleford. By 1898, there were fifty-four schools nation-wide, which increased to seventy-four schools by 1920. In the same year, the Department of Indian Affairs (DIA) decided to make school mandatory for children aged seven to fifteen. 1946 saw the peak of the residential schools with 76 schools in operation. After this, the numbers started to go down as rumours of the treatment of the children spread.

In the late 1950s, the focus began to shift. The residential schools were not accomplishing their purpose of cultural assimilation, and some people thought that the natives shouldn't be taught to compete with whites, but should rather be taught to make a living on the reserve. The DIA began to phase out the residential schools because they realized a new approach was needed towards natives. The National Indian Brotherhood spoke out in 1972, calling for native control over communities and schools. In 1993, there were only seven residential schools, all of them administered by bands.

TREATMENT AND CONDITIONS AT RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS

The residential schools weren't exactly the best place to live. This was partly due to the lack of funding, but much of it had to do with the way the schools were run.

One thing most former students remember is the hunger. The food was neither nutritious or plentiful, and usually not appetizing. One boy actually lost weight while attending the school, and he was growing at the time, so he should have been gaining weight. On the other hand, the staff ate like royalty in comparison to the students.

"For them it was different...they didn't eat the same food we ate; they ate much better food. We had mush and they had bacon and eggs. They were separate from everybody else in one room where the whole staff ate."

The students often stole food from the kitchen to appease their hunger, as well as eating whatever berries were in season.

The schools were very oppressive and strict. The rules, which were many, were enforced very rigidly. The school forced many regulations on the students. The sexes were completely segregated. Boys and girls were not allowed in contact with each other, not even brothers and sisters. There was even a partition built in some dining halls to limit eye contact. There were also strict rules about when a child could and couldn't talk. Everything the children did was supervised, including sleeping and, in some cases, going to the washroom.

Punishment was usually quite severe and usually involved physical pain. The most common punishment was the strap. However, what made these punishments worse was that they were meted out in front of everyone and the children suffered public humiliation. Often, punishments were totally uncalled for, such as strapping a child for wetting the bed.

Another example of mistreatment in the verbal, mental, physical, and sexual abuse that occurred in the schools. Students were abused by supervisors, as well as fellow students. This abuse involved everything from name calling, to fights, to sexual mistreatment.

Perhaps the worst problem with all these facts is that it didn't end when the student left the school. They still had to deal with it and all the problems caused by these terrible experiences in the schools.

THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF THE SCHOOLS


“...to me in my mind it's not surprising that we have situations like Oka and that we have situations like Gustafsen Lake. Our people are externalizing their anger from the abuse that they have suffered.”

- Charlene Belleau, Coordinator, Residential School Task

The residential schools in Canada have left behind a very negative legacy – one of alcoholism, dysfunctional families, and a lot of unhappy and angry people.

Some children were introduced to alcohol in the schools and used it as a way of escape. Other children were introduced to it when they went home. Many parents turned to alcohol when





their children were taken from them, and one former student recounted going home for the holidays and finding that her parents now drank. Another student remembers going home at Christmas and getting drunk. In this way, the schools helped contribute to the alcohol problem on reserves.

The heart of the native culture is the family. Children learn everything they know from their parents, and parents spend most of their time teaching and providing for their children. At the schools, the children failed to learn important parenting skills, cultural traditions, and the native way of life. This proved to be a huge cause of dysfunctional families, as students who didn't know how to be parents had children. The schools also caused a strain in the families. Many children felt ashamed of their families because the family did something that was against the Catholic religion.

It's no secret that a lot of children were abused in various ways at the schools. Punishment usually involved strapping and public humiliation. One boy had needles pushed through his tongue after getting caught speaking the native language. Many children were abused verbally by the nuns and priests. They were called animals, were told that their background and culture was evil, and were made to believe that they were worthless. There is, also, the sexual abuse. One student recalls:

"I learned how to use sexuality to my advantage, as did many other students. Sexual favours brought me protection, sweets (a rarity in the school) and even money to buy booze. But this had it's long term effects...including alcoholism, the inability to touch people, and an "I don't care" attitude."

Taken from 'Resistance and Renewal'

This boy was first abused at the age of six. Many other children also suffered the consequences of this abuse and have taken it out on others or themselves.

Another effect of the schools was that many native children lost their cultural history. They had to be re-taught their language and cultural traditions, a process that continues today.

OTHER IMPORTANT FACTS


From roughly the turn of this century, it was the policy of the Government of Canada to provide education to a portion of the Indigenous peoples in Canada through “Indian Residential Schools”. The schools were part of the general assimilationist policy of the government that was explicitly stated, even into the 1950s. Most of the schools were managed on contract by four churches: Roman Catholic orders, Anglican, Presbyterian, and United.

In 1969, the federal government completely took over management of the church-related schools. These schools tended to be in regions where mission activity and churches had been started among Indigenous peoples, but there is no immediate correlation between a particular denominational school and given Indigenous communities. Children from one community, or even one family, may have attended different schools run by different denominations, even at great distance from their homes. Chronic underfunding by government was always a concern.

UNITED CHURCH-RELATED “INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS”

Name	Province	Opened	Closed	BHM/WMS
Mount Elgin	Ontario	1849	1946	BHM
Norway House	Manitoba	1900	1967	BHM
Portage la Prairie	Manitoba	1886	1970	WMS
Brandon	Manitoba	1895	1969	BHM
Round Lake	Saskatchewan	1886	1950	WMS
File Hills	Saskatchewan	1889	1949	BHM
Red Deer	Alberta	1893	1919	BHM
Edmonton	Alberta	1923	1966	BHM
Morley	Alberta	1925	1969	BHM
Coqualeetza	British Columbia	1888	1940	WMS
Alberni	British Columbia	1891	1973	WMS





Ahousaht	British Columbia	1904	1939	WMS
Port Simpson	British Columbia	1874	1948	BHM

*BH: Board of Home Mission

**WMS: Women's Missionary Society

EXCERPTED FROM THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON INDIGENOUS PEOPLE:

We have provided some artificial structure to the catalogue of abuses here; we say “artificial” because these violations of human being did not, and in fact cannot, occur in isolation from one another. But in an effort to be as complete as possible, we have listed these crimes in something of limited, focused summaries.

Physical Abuses

- Sexual assault, including forced sexual intercourse between men or women in authority and girls and/or boys in their charge;
- Forced oral-genital or masturbatory contact between men or women in authority, and girls and/or boys in their charge;
- Sexual touching by men or women in authority of girls and/or boys in their charge;
- Performing private pseudo-official inspections of genitalia of girls and boys;
- Arranging or inducing abortions in female children impregnated by men in authority;
- Sticking needles through the tongues of children, often leaving them in place for extended periods of time;
- Inserting needles in other regions of children’s anatomy;
- Burning or scalding children;
- Beating children into unconsciousness;
- Beating children to the point of drawing blood;
- Beating children to the point of inflicting serious permanent or semi-permanent injuries, including broken arms, broken legs, broken ribs, fractured skulls, shattered eardrums, and the like;
- Using electrical shock devices on physically restrained children;
- Forcing sick children to eat their own vomit;



- Unprotected exposure (as punishment) to the natural elements (snow, rain and darkness) occasionally prolonged to the point of inducing life threatening conditions (e.g.: frostbite and pneumonia);
- Withholding medical attention from individuals suffering the effects of physical abuse;
- Shaving children's heads (as punishment).

Psychological/Emotional Abuses

- Administration of beatings to naked or partially naked children before their fellow students and/or institutional officials;
- Public, individually directed verbal abuse, belittling, and threatening;
- Public, race-based vilification of all aspects of Indigenous forms of life;
- Racism;
- Performing strip searches and genital inspections of children;
- Removal of children from their homes, families, and people;
- Cutting children's hair or shaving their heads (as policy);
- Withholding presents, letters, and other personal property of children;
- Locking children in closets (as punishment);
- Segregation of the sexes;
- Proscription of the use of Indigenous languages;
- Proscription of the following of Indigenous religious or spiritual practices;
- Eliminating an avenue by which to bring grievances, inform parents, or notify external authorities of abuses;
- Forced labour.

Enforcing Unsuitable Living Conditions

- Starvation (as punishment);
- Inadequate nutrition (e.g.: nutrition levels below that of needed to normal growth and subsistence);
- Providing food unfit for human consumption;
- Exploiting child labour;

- Forced labour under unsafe working conditions;
- Inadequate medical services, sometimes leading to children's deaths.

Omissions of Action

Church Inaction

- Failure to bring local incidents of abuse to the attention of higher church authorities;
- Failure to bring local incidents of abuse to the attention of federal and appropriate provincial governmental authorities;
- Failure to protect children under their care from the sexual predations of older children also attending residential school;
- Failure to remove known sex offenders from positions of supervision and control of children;
- Acquiescence to federal funding levels below those the churches themselves believed necessary for operation;
- Starvation (as a cost-cutting measure);
- Neglect of their educational mandate.

Governmental Inaction

- Failure to adequately inspect or otherwise maintain effective supervision of institutions into which their legal wards had been placed;
- Failure to fund churches at school levels sufficient for maintaining the physical health of their legal wards;
- Failure to live up to the spirit of treaties signed promising education for Indigenous peoples;
- Collaboration with church officials in covering up the criminal behaviour of officials, both governmental and ecclesiastical;
- Removal or relocation of internal personnel critical of residential school conditions.



SIX MOST COMMON MYTHS AND REALITIES

1. MYTH: All Indigenous peoples are the same.

REALITY: The Indigenous people are very diverse. The population is composed of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people – each of which has a different history, culture and society. There are over fifty different Indigenous languages spoken in Canada.

Indigenous peoples live in many different regions of Canada, urban centres, rural communities, and remote locations. Indigenous populations are as diverse as European populations

THINK ABOUT: Are people from England, Germany, Spain, and France different? Do they have different languages? Customs?

2. MYTH: Indigenous peoples have always had the same rights as others in Canada.

REALITY: Only recently have Indigenous people started to obtain the same rights as other people in Canada. Some of these rights are:

- The right to vote. First Nations people obtained the right to vote in 1960.
- The right to ownership of land. The 1973 Calder case and the 1997 Delgamuukw case gave the right that Indigenous title equals communal ownership of land (excluding individual ownership).

Throughout history, Indigenous peoples were denied certain rights given to others. In 1880, an amendment to the Indian Act, provided for automatic enfranchisement or loss of status for any Indian who earned a university degree, as well as any Indian woman who married a non-Indian or an unregistered Indian. This was an official law until 1985. In 1884, an amendment to the Indian Act instituted prison sentences for anyone participating in traditional Indigenous ceremonies such as potlatch, tawana dance, et cetera. Indigenous people living on reserve only became covered by Human Rights legislation in June, 2011.

THINK ABOUT IT: Can you think of another population that has been denied their rights in these ways?

3. MYTH: Indigenous people are responsible for their current situation.

REALITY: Many factors have contributed to the current situation of Indigenous peoples in Canada. Prior to European contact, Indigenous societies were strong and self-sufficient. Although Indigenous peoples were never conquered, the process of colonization resulted in a loss of control over their lives and communities. Policies of displacement and assimilation deprived Indigenous peoples of their traditional social, economic, and political powers through residential schools, banning ceremonies, and abolishment of tribal governance. Now, Indigenous people are re-establishing control through a process of healing, negotiation, and partnership.

THINK ABOUT: Are survivors of war responsible for having post-traumatic stress disorder? Are there similarities?

4. MYTH: Indigenous peoples have a lot of money.


REALITY: Indigenous individuals have lower incomes and higher dependency rates than others in Canada. In 1991, the average income was \$17 000, or only 70% of the national average. The rate of poverty in Indigenous populations is seven times the national average. Most reserves do not have paved streets, some are inaccessible by road, while others do not have indoor plumbing.

THINK ABOUT: Are there any non-Indigenous communities in Canada where these statistics are duplicated?

5. MYTH: Indigenous people have everything paid for – they don't pay for education, housing, or medical expenses.

REALITY: Certain services are paid for. What they are, and who they are for is defined by statute. Registered First Nations people living on reserve have certain services paid for as part of the Federal government's statutory obligations under the Indian Act. When





the person leaves the reserve, access to the rights are limited. Some Métis groups have agreements with provincial governments to provide services. Other than items defined by statute and agreement, Indigenous people pay for their own expenses. Health care services provided by the federal government are extremely limited, reserve housing is inadequate (often lacking good workmanship – for example, missing insulation). There is no recourse for Indigenous peoples dissatisfied with their housing or medical coverage. For example, a handicapped client living on reserve is refused services by other agencies. A blind person gets no help from CNIB.

THINK ABOUT: If you were refused medical services, how would you react? Who would you complain to if your home was inadequately built?

6. MYTH: Indigenous people do not pay taxes.

REALITY: Tax exemption occurs only in confined cases. Indigenous peoples pay significant amounts of tax each year. Inuit and Métis, non-status First Nations, and off-reserve First Nations always pay taxes. First Nations working off-reserve pay income tax.

THINK ABOUT: A reserve has a limited number of employment opportunities and is often geographically isolated. How many people qualify for tax exemption?

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

LEGAL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS

- Indigenous self-governance, similar to the system that existed in the 1500s, where each Nation played an equal role in the economy, and had its own legal and political ways, is resurfacing. The federal government, in 1995, established policy outlining Indigenous peoples' *Inherent Right to Self-Government* under the Canadian Constitution. The policy strives to act on the implementation of this fundamental right for Indigenous peoples.
- Only in this century, since 1960 (50 years), have Indigenous peoples been given the right to vote, to own land off-reserve, to become equals in Canadian society, and to have similar rights to those they had at the time of colonization (1500s).
- Until the 1960s, Indigenous organizations such as non-status Indians, Métis, were discouraged in society. Only since the 60s have the Indigenous people been able to exercise their legal and political rights form their own specific groups and organizations and be present to discuss their own futures. The *Constitution Act of 1982* explicitly recognizes and affirms the existence of the three Indigenous groups: Indian, Inuit and Métis.
- Transfer of authority from the federal government to Indigenous groups began in 1983. DEVOLUTION is the phasing out of government operations and allowing Indigenous groups to take responsibility for their futures.

TREATIES AND LAND CLAIMS

- Treaty rights apply to First Nations people who are signatories to a treaty. Still in effect today, treaties date back as far as the 18th Century. Negotiations are required to implement articles of the treaty. Alberta is affected by Treaties 6, 7 and 8.
- Land claim negotiations are present within each Indigenous group.
 - December, 1991, Canada agreed to negotiate with all British Columbia First Nations – none of their lands were ever surrendered in treaty.
 - Inuit land claims – the largest comprehensive claim came into effect on April 1, 1999, called the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, and created the Nunavut territory.



- Métis land claims – under the 1989 Alberta *Métis Settlements Accord*, and the resulting 1990 legislation, the Alberta Métis Settlements acquired title to the Settlement areas and were established as corporate entities, similar to municipal corporations, with broad self-governing powers. Additional forms of agreements between Métis people and various levels of government followed and are being implemented. Today Métis people still have to face legal challenges to their constitutional rights for hunting and gathering, even though the Supreme Court of Canada upheld these rights.
- When those involved in negotiations aren't able to agree on certain articles, claims can be brought before the courts. Decisions in the courts result in setting a precedence for future negotiations.

INDIGENOUS IDENTITY

- The scars remain and repercussions are still present, even though the detrimental events took place many years ago. Indigenous people learned to protect themselves from similar acts. Often, it is difficult to overcome the feelings of mistrust. It may take time and effort, but by working together and supporting each other, this country will become a better place.
- Society and government are gradually becoming more aware of the injustices that Indigenous people have faced. In 1998, the federal government's "Statement of Reconciliation" formally acknowledged the detrimental effects of the historical treatment of Indigenous peoples in Canada. Also, a community-based healing fund, committed by the federal government, helps deal with the legacy of physical and sexual abuse to Indigenous people in the residential school system.
- Some other dates that are now reinforcing Indigenous identity are:
 - 1951: Parliament repealed legislation prohibiting potlatches and the pursuit of land claims. This means that it was legal for Indigenous people to gather together to celebrate events, have socials or conduct grieving ceremonies.
 - 1969: Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND) started closing down residential schools.

- 1985: Bill C-31 was passed to amend the Indian Act. It removed discrimination, restores status and membership rights, and increases the control of Indian bands over their own affairs. It also begins to identify the elimination of individuals from “Indian Status” based on parentage.
- 2011: First Nations people were covered by Human Rights legislation

INDIGENOUS PEOPLE AND CANADA

HISTORICAL TIMELINE

- 10 000 BC: Earliest evidence of Indigenous civilizations in North America.
- 1763 AD: Royal Proclamation made Indigenous people subjects of the Crown.
- 1867 AD: British North America Act - federal government of Canada assumes responsibility for Indigenous land and people.
- 1874 AD: First Indian Act consolidates laws relating to native people.
- 1884 AD: Canadian government outlaws the potlatch and other traditional social gatherings.
- 1927 AD: Federal government prohibits native groups from raising money or retaining a lawyer to pursue land claims.
- 1951 AD: Parliament repeals laws against potlatch and land claims organizing.
- 1960 AD: Native people are granted the right to vote.
- 1982 AD: Canadian Constitution section 35 affirms treaty rights.
- 1983 AD: Last government or church operated residential school was closed.
- 1996 AD: Last band operated residential school was closed.




TERMS

- **Indigenous Peoples:** The descendants of the original inhabitants of North America. The 1982 Canadian Constitution defines Indigenous peoples to include First Nations (Indians), Inuit, and Métis peoples. These separate groups have unique heritages, languages, cultural practices, and spiritual beliefs. Their common linkage is their indigenous ancestry.
- **Indigenous Rights:** Rights that some Indigenous peoples in Canada hold as a result of their ancestors' long-standing use and occupancy of the land. The rights of certain Indigenous peoples to hunt, trap, and fish on ancestral lands are examples of Indigenous rights accorded either through treaties or formal agreements. Indigenous rights vary from group to group depending on the customs, practices, and traditions that form part of the group's distinctive culture.
- **Assimilation:** The process by which traditional Indigenous identity was absorbed into mainstream culture and subsequently lost.
- **Band:** A group of First Nations people for whom lands have been set apart and money is held by the Crown. Each band has its own governing band council, usually consisting of one or more Chiefs and several councillors by election or through traditional custom. The members of a band generally share common values, traditions, and practices rooted in their language and ancestral heritage. Today, many bands prefer to be known as First Nations.
- **Band By-Law:** A law made by the band council to regulate local or internal affairs. The Indian Act gives band councils this power, but it is only applicable within the community.
- **Band Council:** The band's governing body. The council has the power to self-govern locally, though the degree of power varies with each band.
- **Band List:** The official list of members of a particular band.
- **Bill C-31:** The pre-legislation name of the 1985 Act to Amend the Indian Act. This act eliminated certain discriminatory provisions of the Indian Act, including the section that deprived Indian women of their status when they married non-Indian men. Bill C-31 enabled people affected by the discriminatory provisions of the old Indian Act to apply

to have their status restored. Since 1985, about 105 000 individuals have successfully regained their status, many others are still waiting for their status.

- **British North America Act:** Created in 1867, it gave the new Parliament of Canada exclusive power to make laws in relation to Indians and their lands.
- **Culture Shock:** Is a disturbance of the mind and emotions that effects behaviour. It's caused by sudden and prolonged exposure to a social situation or culture that is unfamiliar or hostile.
- **Detribalization:** the post 1870s government policy to wipe out Indigenous culture and identity and replace them with European ways.
- **National Indigenous Day:** In May, 1996, the Government of Canada declared June 21st of every year to be National Indigenous Day. This day is a celebration of the cultures and heritages of the First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples, whose unparalleled contributions to Canada have helped make the country unique. This replaces National Solidarity Day, which was declared by resolution and declaration by the Assembly of First Nations in June, 1982.
- **Potlatch:** The potlatch ceremony illustrates the importance of sharing and giving. This ceremony was the cultural background of the Northwest Coast Indigenous peoples. A potlatch hosted by high-ranking chiefs to celebrate important public events, such as initiation, marriage, the investiture or death of a chief, et cetera. The ceremony lasted anywhere from a day to several weeks, and involved feasts, spirit dancing, and theatrical performances. The Canadian government banned potlatch ceremonies 1884, questioning their moral basis. The ban lasted until 1951.
- **Pow-Wow:** an ancient tradition among Indigenous peoples. Originally a time to meet, discuss hunting prowess, trade with other Nations and perhaps find future mates. It is a time for celebrating, socializing after religious ceremonies, and in some cultures, the pow-wow itself was a social/religious event when families held naming and honouring ceremonies.



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- **Wampum:** shell beads used by Iroquois in strings or “belts” to pledge the truth of their words and as symbols of high office, records or diplomatic negotiations and treaties and other important events.

RESOURCE LISTS

PROVINCIAL ORGANIZATIONS

- Métis Nation of Alberta: Offices in Edmonton and Calgary, Grande Prairie
- Métis Local: Offices in many communities such as Red Deer and Rocky Mountain House
- Native Friendship Centers: Offices in most cities such as Edmonton, Red Deer and Rocky Mountain House, Lethbridge
- Native Counselling Services of Alberta: Offices in Edmonton, Lethbridge, Wetaskawin, and Red Deer
- Rupertsland Indigenous Employment Services with both stationary and mobile services

ARTICLES

Royal Commission on Indigenous Peoples. Report of the Royal Commission on Indigenous Peoples. Ottawa: Supply and Services Canada, 1996. People to People, Nation to Nation: Highlights from the Report of the Royal Commission on Indigenous Peoples.

BOOKS

First Nations in Canada. Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Ph. 819-997-0380)

Seven Arrows – Homeostasis Storm

Sacred Tree – Four Words

Medicine Wheel – Sun Bear Books

NEWSPAPERS

Windspeaker

Native News

Native Journal

INDIGENOUS ROLE MODELS

ACTORS

- Tantoo Cardinal
- Gary Farmer
- Monique Monjica
- Graham Greene



- Evan Adams
- Adam Beach (Winnipeg, Saulteaux)
- Michelle St. John
- Irene Bedard
- Simon Baker
- Cody Lightning (Alberta, Cree)

SINGERS

- Susan Aglukark
- Buffie St. Marie
- Jani Lauzon (also an actor and puppeteer)

NOVELIST

- Tom King

POW-WOW DANCER

- Edna Rain

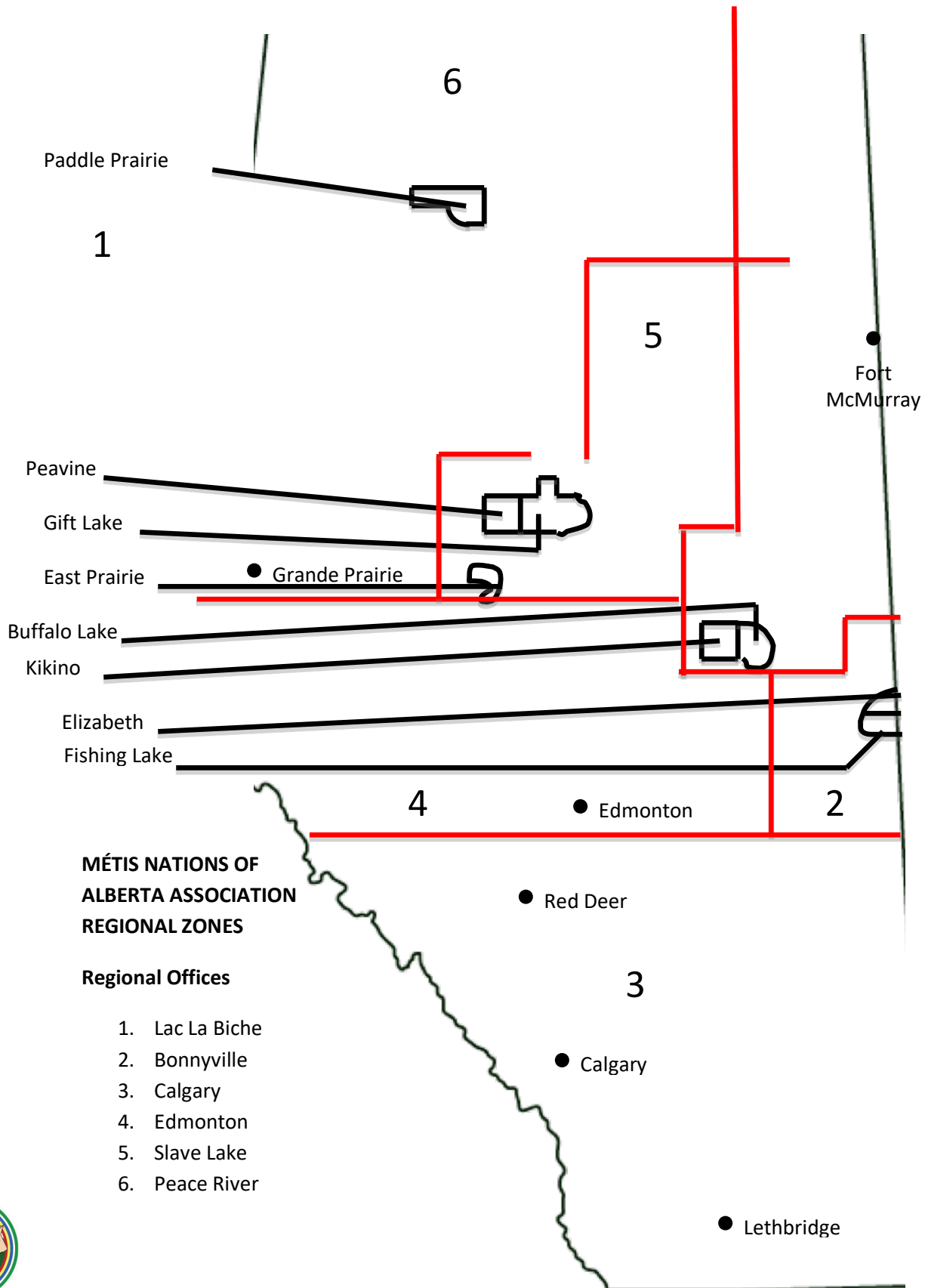
ARTIST

- Jane Ash Poitras (Edmonton)
- Norval Morrisseau (Ojibwa)

LOCAL

- Determined by the community

MÉTIS SETTLEMENTS OF ALBERTA







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