

The

# Rupert's Land

Newsletter

The Centre for Rupert's Land Studies at The University of Winnipeg

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## A Message to our Readers

From Jennifer S.H. Brown

This newsletter is the first of a new series to be published two or three times a year by the Centre for Rupert's Land Studies at the University of Winnipeg. It will carry on some of the traditions established in the Rupert's Land Research Centre Newsletter, and will also, we hope, introduce some new ones. Among the new, we would like to encourage your input. Please send us any announcements, information on forthcoming conferences and publications, news of new research and findings in Rupert's Land studies, or other material that comes to mind. We shall edit for length and format as required, but we hope to encourage the growth of the Newsletter as a vehicle for sharing information open to all members. We regret unavoidable delays in the production of this number, caused mainly by computer malfunctions and unanticipated demands on our staff and time.

This message comes to you from our new office at the University of Winnipeg. In the University's place-name code, our new home is 5C02, which translates as room 502 on the fifth floor of Centennial Hall, otherwise known as the top floor of the University of Winnipeg Library. If you seek us out, approach the University from Portage Avenue and locate Centennial Hall on the Visitors' Map just east of Wesley Hall. Enter the main floor of the library (which is Centennial's fourth floor). Take the elevator to the fifth floor, and steer to your left past the banks of current periodicals. Our door is beyond the main spiral staircase from the lower floors, behind it and to its right.

Our telephone numbers are: 204-786-9003 and -9253. These two numbers feed into the same voice mail port, shared with the University's art gallery assistant, Sharon August, who also gives us some office help. By fax, you may reach us at 204-774-4134; since this is a faculty fax number, address faxes to Jennifer Brown.

Our 1995-96 Harington Fellow, Scott Stephen, has continued to assist the Centre during the summer. Our Harington Fellow for 1996-97 is Alvina Block, who is in the Joint Master's Program (U. Winnipeg/U. Manitoba) in history and is researching a thesis on the Rev. George Flett, the first Native Presbyterian missionary in the West.

I am on sabbatical for 1996-97, but I am in Winnipeg most of the time and shall be in the Rupert's Land office for some time every week while in town.

The Rupert's Land Colloquium in Whitehorse, Yukon, gave great delight to all who attended, and we owe warmest thanks to Yukon Archivist Linda Johnson and her staff and organizing committee for all their work and enthusiasm. Counting day registrants, the number of participants came to about 190, a marvellous response indicating, too, a strong base of local support.

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## Message to Our Readers

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Memberships for 1997 are now payable, and we are holding the rate to \$15.00 for all those who pay 1997 dues by December 15, 1996 (so that they can be deposited before the University's holiday closing). Thereafter, the annual dues will be \$20.00. We are much heartened by the responses to our funding appeals, and several members of the new Founders' Circle will be acknowledged in the next Newsletter. But we need, as well, a broad and strong membership base to keep the newsletter, the publications, and the Centre healthy and on course. Some have asked whether the University of Winnipeg claims a percentage of funds you send us, for its own administrative purposes. The answer is no; memberships and donations go straight into our own University accounts and are used only for our work and expenses, for our publications, for student travel awards for the colloquia, and to advance the other goals outlined in the enclosed prospectus for the Centre.

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## The Rupert's Land Editorial Advisory Board

**Jennifer S.H. Brown, General Editor**

The following people have kindly agreed to join or to continue their service on the Editorial Advisory Board, which assists with the documentary volumes published in the Rupert's Land Record Society series.

Judith Hudson Beattie, Keeper, Hudson's Bay Company Archives  
J.M. Bumsted, Dept. of History, University of Manitoba  
Robert Coutts, Parks Canada, Winnipeg  
Harry W. Duckworth, Dept. of Chemistry, University of Manitoba  
Renée Fossett, Dept. of History, The University of Winnipeg  
Shepard Krech III, Dept. of Anthropology, Brown University  
Toby Morantz, Dept. of Anthropology, McGill University  
Trudy Nicks, Ethnology, Royal Ontario Museum  
Michael Payne, Alberta Culture, Edmonton  
William R. Swagerty, Dept. of History, University of Idaho  
Sylvia Van Kirk, Dept. of History, University of Toronto

All of the above editors are on the watch for likely projects in documentary publishing for the Rupert's Land Record Society series. Our series contract with McGill-Queen's University Press has just been renewed, and we look forward to more submissions of the highest possible quality in the fields of fur trade and native history.

If you have a project in mind, please approach Jennifer Brown or any of the other Editors with a prospectus, outline, and sample of work done so far. We find it best to polish manuscripts as carefully as possible before submitting them to McGill-Queen's and their readers, to maximize the prospects of favourable reviews and reasonably prompt publication. Acceptance of a manuscript for publication is contingent on the views both of relevant members of our Editorial Advisory Board and on the evaluations of McGill-Queen's University Press and their readers.

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## A Research Note and Query

Alan Ruffman shares with our readers the following information about a presentation he made at the Geological Association of Canada, 27-29 May 1996, on the Hudson's Bay Company Archives as a source of historic seismic and volcanic data. He has located several 18th and 19th century HBC records of seismic events at Albany, Moose, Churchill, Timiskaming, and elsewhere, and is interested in others. He may be reached at:

Geomarine Associates Ltd.  
P.O. Box 41, Stn 'M'  
Halifax, NS  
B3J 2L4  
tel. (902) 422-6482  
fax (902) 422-6483

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### The Centre for Rupert's Land Studies

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Jennifer S.H. Brown

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# News From The Hudson's Bay Company Archives

We enjoyed seeing so many of our favourite researchers at the Rupert's Land Colloquium in Whitehorse, Yukon. Congratulations to all those involved.

## **STAFFING:**

The permanent staff at the Archives remains the same as mentioned in the March 1995 newsletter, but we have benefited from the work of several students this summer. Gilles Lesage, an archival studies student, spent his internship helping us to plan and prepare a comprehensive guide to the holdings of the Archives. Thanks to the work of two students hired through Young Canada Works Grant, Scott Stephen and Jonathan Crowe, the Post records (Section B) have been thoroughly inventoried and marked up in HTML. The guide will be available on paper, but we hope to post it on the Internet. This would allow wide access to an easily understood and detailed description of the records of the Hudson's Bay Company. Anyone who has struggled through the catalogues in the Archives or the Microfilm Registers will look forward to the completion of this project. Two STEP students have also worked at rehousing our records in preparation for the move to the new vaults mentioned below.

## **ACQUISITIONS:**

Over the last year, we have received some major donations from private individuals and from Hudson's Bay Company. When *The Beaver*

moved to its new home on Lombard Street, it transferred the very useful vertical files on fur trade subjects, and some photographic collections and publications. The National Archives Appraisal Board appraised four collections last year: the Morris and Julie Norman Collections, consisting of a varied and extensive gathering of fur trade memorabilia, 1795-1959; the Ronald and Kathleen Wenham Fonds of copy photographs and letters describing missionary life at Fort Chimo 1937-1940; an addition to the McGowan Collection consisting of correspondence and memo books of the Taylor Family, relatives to the country wife of George Simpson, Margaret Taylor.

We also appreciate the many donations of publications (books and articles) by researchers who have used our resources. Please send in your latest productions so we can avoid charging publication fees, and also give our researchers access to the latest interpretations.

## **NEW VAULTS:**

We are now involved in the design phase of an ambitious project to build a new vault to house the Hudson's Bay Company Archives. The Hudson's Bay History Foundation has provided more than \$2 million to build a three-storey vault at the back of the present Archives building in what was a concert hall. It will provide the latest in security and environmental controls and include special facilities for viewing

during tours of the Archives. Once we have transferred the processed records to the new home, we will adapt the present vault to hold the library, cartographic records and still images, and to receive new records. We are all looking forward to the new and improved space, but not to the inevitable disruptions in service that we project to take place in the Spring of 1998. I will keep you posted.

## **HOURS:**

Once again, we are operating on winter hours (Tuesday to Saturday, 9:00 to 16:00).

Judith Hudson Beattie, Keeper  
Hudson's Bay Company Archives,  
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# General Meeting of Membership, Centre for Rupert's Land Studies

Yukon Archives Meeting Room  
3 June 1996  
Whitehorse, Yukon

## Present:

Judith H. Beattie (Winnipeg), Jennifer Brown (Winnipeg), Wilson Brown (Winnipeg), Jane Buckley (Ottawa), Michael Buckley (Ottawa), Robert Coutts (Winnipeg), Harry Duckworth (Winnipeg), Ann Harper Fender (Gettysburg, Pennsylvania), Renée Fossett (Winnipeg), Peter Geller (Winnipeg), Pat Hardy (Winnipeg), Elizabeth B. Losey (Germfask, Michigan), Sheila MacDougall (Victoria), Pat McCormack (Edmonton), Eileen McFadden (Brandon), Veronica Malerby (Whitehorse), Maureen Matthews (Winnipeg), Michael Payne (Edmonton), Katherine Pettipas (Winnipeg), Laura Peers (Winnipeg), Paul Ruebsam (Thunder Bay), Helen Slama (Whitehorse), Bill Sloan (Castlegar, B.C.), Elaine Sloan (Castlegar, B.C.), Bill Swagerty (Moscow, Idaho), Sylvia Van Kirk (Toronto), Bernard Webber (Osoyoos, B.C.), Jean Webber (Osoyoos, B.C.), Karen Wiederkehr (Whitehorse), Len Wilson (Kirkwall, Orkney), Lily Wilson (Kirkwall, Orkney), Shirley Wishart (Calgary), Wanda Young (Saskatoon).

## Colloquia and Proceedings

**Jennifer Brown** opened the meeting with an invitation for ideas regarding the upcoming Colloquia. [The latest thinking is to meet in Winnipeg in May or June of 1998, but we would be glad of other offers and suggestions.] The availability of papers from previous Colloquia was reaffirmed; those from the 1994 meeting in Edmonton will be available by early fall, through the Centre for Rupert's Land Studies, in electronic form (on disk, IBM compatible and Macintosh formats). This is also a possibility for the papers from the present Colloquium.

## Publishing

The documentary publishing program continues with the McGill-Queen's series. The current Editorial Board was announced (see above), as was the forthcoming volume, *Voices from Hudson Bay*, edited by Flora Beardy and Bob Coutts.

## Reorganization

A brief explanation of the current status and the restructuring of the organization was provided, covering the following areas: need for support from members and others (including donations to the Founder's Circle); the University of Winnipeg's interest in providing an institutional base; the formation of an organizing committee which is working on defining the organizational structure and other issues, with the intent of founding an executive committee in the near future.

## Discussion

**Len Wilson** noted that the procedure to join the membership of the Centre could be better publicized.

The topic then turned to fundraising. **Bill Swagerty** asked about targeting corporations for fundraising; **Pat Hardy** noted that these efforts were at a initial stage and welcomed suggestions from the membership. Following a question from **Jane Buckley** regarding the need for a professional fundraiser, **Jennifer Brown** introduced Pat Hardy, Development Officer at the University of Winnipeg, whose enthusiasm, initiative and assistance have been central to our progress.

Following a general question from **Shirley Wishart**, discussion ensued about the records and books of the Centre and their current status. **Shirley Wishart** moved that the membership support the transfer of books, records and assets of the Rupert's Land Research Centre to the newly reorganized Centre for Rupert's Land Studies. **Harry Duckworth** seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

**Pat McCormack** moved that the membership offer as a group its collective support for the new developmental initiatives being undertaken by the reorganized Centre for Rupert's Land Studies. Seconded by **Ann Harper Fender**. Motion carried unanimously.

**Bob Coutts** solicited the assembled members regarding an elected or appointed Council. **Sylvia Van Kirk** suggested that the newsletter be used as a means for the executive to come forward and to reach the membership not attending the 1996 Colloquium. **Harry Duckworth** noted the need to consider the constitutional aspects of the new organization and its relationship to the University of Winnipeg; that as a first step the duties of the proposed Council be defined and reported to the membership, and then nominations solicited. **Peter Geller** outlined the initiatives undertaken by the Interim Organizing Committee in the weeks before the Colloquium, and the work that remained to be done.

**Bill Swagerty** suggested that at least one member of the Council be from the Hudson's Bay Company Archives; and also to have representation from the corporate community.

**Michael Payne** suggested that the organization clearly define its relationship between its broader constituency and its university affiliation. Given the different models of how research centres operate, the Centre for Rupert's Land Studies should consider whether it would operate entirely within the University or whether it would be more desirable to be associated with the University yet not directly underneath

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## General Meeting

*continued*

university administration. **Jennifer Brown** stated the possibilities in incorporating both aspects, taking advantage of University of Winnipeg affiliation (which would also include faculty and student involvement) and at the same time looking outward. **Laura Peers** noted that one of the strengths of the Colloquium and the work of the Centre was in bringing together the participation of academics, Rupert's Land descendants (including those from Orkney), and Native people, and that this aspect should be preserved in the Centre for Rupert's Land Studies. **Len Wilson** stated his agreement with the value of this aspect of the Centre's work. **Sylvia Van Kirk** suggested that the double vision of the Centre (as both a University Centre and part of the wider community) was a viable option.

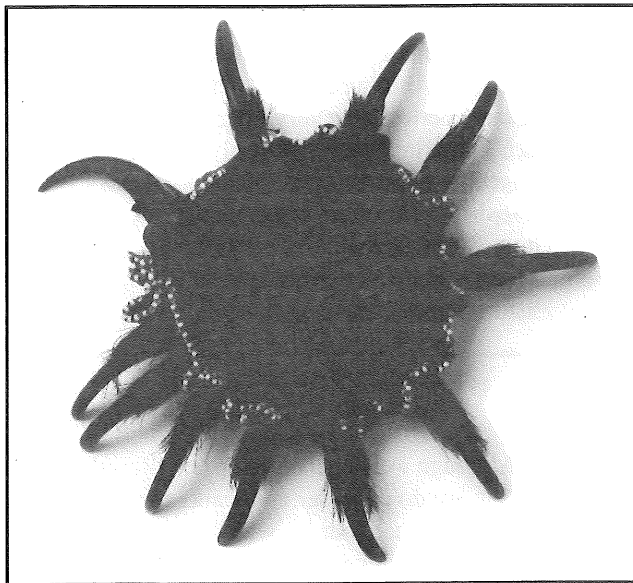
**Shirley Wishart** offered to donate her tapes of the Orkney Colloquium (1990) to the Centre for Rupert's Land Studies.

**Paul Ruebsam** observed that, in his work as a heritage interpreter, it appears as if organizations are becoming more insular; he applauded the efforts of the Centre for Rupert's Land Studies.

**Sylvia Van Kirk** stated that, on behalf of the membership, Jennifer Brown's initiatives be noted and duly thanked.

The meeting was then closed.

*Recorded by Peter Geller  
Whitehorse, 3 June 1996.*



*Grizzly bear claw necklace, c.1820. Given by an Ojibwa man to Reverend John West in the Red River Settlement. Please see note, page 16.*

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## Harington Fellows at the Centre, 1995-97

The 1995-96 Harington Fellow has been Scott P. Stephen, originally of Edmonton, AB. Scott did his B.A.(Honours) degree at the University of Alberta, where he studied under John Foster and was active as the Vice-President (Academic) of the History Undergraduate Association. His work, including papers on fur trade historiography, the HBC in the 1840s, English- and French-Canadian images of the West from 1840 to 1870, and his Honours thesis on patronage in the HBC under Gov. Sir George Simpson, was good enough to win him the 1993 Prairie History Medal. His graduate studies have brought him to Winnipeg, where he is presently studying under Jennifer Brown and was awarded the 1995 Robert Painchaud Scholarship. His M.A. thesis (hopefully to be completed by Christmas) promises to be both interesting and controversial, as it re-examines Anthony Henday and his exploration journals.

Those of you who have visited the reconstructed HBC Fort Edmonton at Fort Edmonton Park have doubtless already seen Scott putting his academic endeavours to practical use: he has been involved in educational programming and heritage interpretation there since 1987. This summer, he was delighted to be employed for two months at the Hudson's Bay Company Archives, helping to update and consolidate finding aids and working on the upcoming website.

The 1996-97 Harington Fellow is Alvina F. Block of Winnipeg, who did her B.A. degree at the University of Winnipeg with a major in English. She graduated in 1991 and was awarded the Lieutenant Governor's Award and the Gold Medal in English. Beginning in the fall of 1991, she took pre-Master's history courses at the University of Manitoba and entered the Archival Studies program in 1994. In the summer of 1994 she appraised, arranged, and described the Simma Holt collection at the Dafoe Archives and Special Collections at the University of Manitoba. During the past two summers she has been working at the Centre for Mennonite Brethern Studies under a grant from CCA (Canada Council of Archives). In 1995-96, while taking the "Special Issues in Social History" course with Jennifer Bown, she began to research the life of George Flett, bicultural Presbyterian missionary to the North West in the last quarter of the 19th century. Currently she has begun a Master's thesis on the problems encountered by a bicultural missionary in his relationships with "native" parishioners and a "white" mission board. Alvina Block received a Manitoba Graduate Fellowship twice, as well as the Donald V. Snider Memorial Fellowship at the University of Winnipeg.

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## SSHRC Post-Doctoral Fellows at The University of Winnipeg

### I. Peter Geller

Peter Geller, currently a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada Post-doctoral Fellow in the History Department at the University of Winnipeg, has long been associated with Rupert's Land studies. Formerly a Harington Fellow of the Rupert's Land Research Centre (in 1989), he presented papers at the last three Rupert's Land Colloquia on aspects of his work on the cultural history of the fur trade and Native-white relations in northern Canada. He is currently on the Interim Organizing Committee of the Centre for Rupert's Land Studies.

Dr. Geller took up his post-doctoral award following the completion of his Ph.D. at Carleton University (Ottawa). He is currently in the second year of his two-year research project on "Images of the Inuit in Photography and Film: Cross-Cultural Meanings and Contexts," working with Professor Jennifer Brown as his project supervisor. Geller's project is an investigation of the modes and methods of picturing the Inuit, both in terms of the construction and dissemination of images of the "Eskimo" by non-Native observers and the incorporation of photographic technologies into Inuit cultural practices. In addition to working in the collections at the Hudson's Bay Company Archives, his research has taken him to the National Film and Television Archives of the British Film Institute (London, England); the Scott Polar Research Institute (Cambridge, England); and the Yukon Territorial Archives (Whitehorse, Yukon).

One of the most significant elements of Geller's findings while in England was the identification and viewing of an extensive collection of Hudson's Bay Company film material, held by the National Film and Television Archives. Included in this collection was the 1920 film, *The Romance of the Far Fur Country*, produced for the HBC's 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary. This fascinating visual document includes rare moving images of Inuit at various Baffin Island fur trade posts, views of west coast Aboriginal material culture, and a lengthy section on fur trapping techniques set in Fort Chipewyan, Alberta and environs. An essay on this film will appear in a forthcoming anthology on *Canada's Unknown Cinema* (co-edited by Christopher Faulkner, Carleton University and William O'Farrell, National Archives of Canada).

Geller also participated in a number of scholarly conferences this past year. In addition to the recent Rupert's Land Colloquium, he presented papers at the Congress of International Historical Sciences in Montreal (September 1995), and "Imagining the Arctic: The Native Photograph in Alaska, Canada and Greenland" (see his synopsis in this issue of the Newsletter). Recent publications include "Hudson's Bay Company Indians: Images of Native People and the Red River Pageant, 1920," in S. Elizabeth Bird, ed., *Dressing in Feathers: The Construction of the Indian in American Popular Culture* (Boulder, Co.: WestView Press, 1996) and "Visions of a Northern Nation: Richard Finnie's Views of Natives and Development in Canada's 'Last Frontier,'" *Film History: An International Journal* 8:1 (Spring 1996).

### II. Laura Peers

We are delighted to announce the arrival of a second SSHRC postdoctoral fellow at The University of Winnipeg in September 1996. Many of us know her, both as a Rupert's Land member and as a frequent Rupert's Land Colloquium Participant; and many more know her fine book, *The Ojibwa of Western Canada*, published in 1994 by the University of Manitoba Press. Laura Peers has just completed her doctoral degree in anthropology at McMaster University, where her research focused on the representation and communication of Native histories at reconstructed fur trade sites such as Lower Fort Garry and Old Fort William. Her research demonstrated, among other topics, the importance of including Native interpreters at such sites, especially because most visitors report that they have never before had the opportunity to meet an Aboriginal person and the sites offer the opportunity to dispel many myths and stereotypes. Peers is continuing to consult with historic sites to refine their portrayals of Native participation in the fur trade.

Peers' SSHRC research project will take her back to intensive archival research on Aboriginal people in the Red River Settlement in the 19th century, looking particularly at the lower settlement. She also hopes to write a popular history of Aboriginal people in the Red River Settlement, and has been working on Reverend John West's collection of artifacts from the Red River area in the early 1820s as well as Peter Rindisbacher's paintings and sketches of Aboriginal people in the settlement from the same period. One very interesting discovery has been that Rindisbacher closely copied one of his images from the illustrations in Jonathan Carver's published volume of his explorations around the Great Lakes in the 1760s! Peers will be affiliated with both the Centre and with our Department of History during her two-year fellowship tenure.

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### The University and the Centre as a base for postdoctoral fellows

Although we ourselves have no fellowship funds to offer, we do consider applicants for postdoctoral funds from other sources who seek a university affiliation in Winnipeg. The University of Winnipeg also accepts occasional non-stipendiary Visiting Research Fellows in need of an academic affiliation. Please contact Prof. Jennifer S.H. Brown at the Centre for further information.



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## 1994 Rupert's Land Colloquium Proceedings

Ian MacLaren, Heather Rollason, and Michael Payne have completed editing of a collection of 27 papers presented at the 1994 Colloquium in Edmonton. The collection also includes an introduction and Bryce Wilson's "Orkney-eye view" of the conference tours to Jasper and the Peace River country.

The papers included represent about 70% of the formal presentations at the conference, and along with the introduction which indicates where material from other papers has been published, it represents a remarkably full summary of the conference proceedings. Given the size of the manuscript—almost 500 pages—and its specialist appeal, the editors and the Centre for Rupert's Land Studies have decided to publish the volume in electronic form.

Members of the Centre may purchase a copy of the publication on diskettes for \$12.00 in any of three formats—Wordperfect, Word, or Word for MacIntosh—from the Centre. The proceedings should be available for distribution by November.

This is the Centre's first experiment with electronic publishing and, if successful, we hope to make other conference proceedings and research studies available to members and the public in this way.

We shall also keep individual printed copies of the papers on file, to reproduce at nominal cost on the same basis as the Colloquium papers of past years.

The next newsletter will list the table of contents of the 1994 Proceedings.

[We thank Sylvia Van Kirk and Shirley Wishart for the following volunteered contributions]

## Reflections on the Whitehorse Colloquium

By Shirley Wishart

What is history but a telling of stories? What is the value of the Rupert's Land Colloquia? Value beyond measure for those who would have their stories to tell and those who would listen and learn.

A poster on the wall at the Yukon Archives features a Yukon First Nations person in bed reading a book. The caption reads "Reading makes you Wise". As I listened to First Nations speakers without benefit of scholarly treatises, I sensed that, while reading makes one wise, listening and experiencing make one more wise.

A First Nations woman, when asked to explain some aspect of her belief, replied, "You do not read a book on how to tan a moose hide, you learn to do it by doing it." My thoughts were of my native foremothers, of whom, like so many of the native women who were wives and companions of fur trade men, very little, if anything, is known of how *they* thought about life and *their* experiences. No written history by them, not even oral history, passed down. Oral history as practiced by non-native persons is in fact not practiced. Aboriginal persons perfect it to an art by telling and retelling their stories, based on their experiences and expressed in their movements as they speak. I listened to them speak, as I had listened to Orcadians speak at the 1990 Colloquium in Stromness, Orkney—I was fascinated. I am drawn equally to both; to their stories. "Nindal Kwadindur: I'm Going To Tell You A Story", the theme of the 1996 Rupert's Land Colloquium, is an evocative title. It is what history is all about. It is what my heritage is about. I am a descendant of those Orkneymen and their native wives. I cannot experience what they experienced, but I can listen and learn. The tragedy is that only part of their story is being told. Listening to the Yukon First Nations people speak and visiting the site of Fort Selkirk, I experienced once again a feeling of connectedness. My wish is that, at future Colloquia, even greater opportunity is given for aboriginals, whether native or halfbreed, to speak, to tell their stories, and for the newcomers to their land to listen and to learn. In truth, after all, none of us would be able to hold fur trade history colloquia had these people not been here to help the newcomers survive.

I have told you my story. In the language of some of the Yukon First Nations people, I say "Maksi Cho"! Thank you.

Shirley Wishart  
Calgary, AB

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# A Fan Letter

from Sylvia Van Kirk

As yet another fantastic Rupert's Land Colloquium has come to a close, I am moved to reflect on what an enriching experience these biennial get-togethers have become. I arrived in Whitehorse pretty exhausted, having come almost directly from the annual CHA meeting held at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ontario. While this academic gathering certainly has its merits, it provides a sharp contrast to the friendly, informative interactions of the colloquia. I've been on record for some time now as saying that the Rupert's Land Colloquia are my favourite conferences. This is because of the unique combination of three ingredients—subject, place, and people. I always get an intellectual 'high' from being in a smallish gathering of like-minded people sharing their researches about various aspects of the history of Rupert's Land.

The Whitehorse colloquium was outstanding for the contribution of the various First Nations people. Significantly the format allowed for some of this to be spontaneous: I was very moved by the words of Mary Jane Johnson and others who shared experiences about native life in the Yukon at the morning session entitled "Getting the Whole Story". These were not formal presentations but I learned a lot. In the session on "Family Ties", it was humbling to give my presentation after Wally Firth, former Yukon MP, who with his natural gift for storytelling held the audience spellbound as he talked about his native and Orkney ancestry. I certainly agreed with him about the important links created by family photo albums. From another native elder, Maria Van Bibber, I was introduced to the merits of spruce gum — "Indian tooth paste." At Fort Selkirk, she told us that her grandmother, who died at the age of 106, had kept all her teeth — not by visiting the dentist but by chewing spruce gum. She gave me a piece of hardened sap to chew — it was grainy at first, but then turned to the most refreshing pink gum — much better than any commercial product!

What a marvellous outing the day trip to Fort Selkirk was. This is the second aspect of the colloquia that is always so enjoyable and educational—"going on location" to sites of historical significance. Whitehorse itself has an

impressive site but Fort Selkirk was such an evocative step back in time. I found that almost everywhere I looked there was a picture (and I took lots): from the canoes beached by the river, to the trappers' cabins with their sod roofs, to the fiddle music of Bill Stevens (Alaska) and Len Wilson (Orkney) which floated across the junction of the Pelly and the Yukon. I hadn't realized before that Fort Selkirk was also the headquarters of the Yukon Field Force who made the heroic cross-Canada trek to maintain our dominion during the Klondike Gold Rush.

As you might expect we were most hospitably entertained in Whitehorse with a traditional feast in the Kwanlin Dun Potlatch House featuring caribou, moose, and arctic char; there was even popcorn for the movies about the paddle steamers (shown in a tent down by the river) which we could really appreciate after seeing the marvellously-restored S.S. Klondike, now a historic site. There were also several excellent presentations about various forms of canoe travel on the mighty water of the Yukon. As usual, something for everyone!

And indeed our interests and our backgrounds are not all the same. This is the third vital ingredient — the lively mix of people. Historians, naturalists, canoeists, descendants of HBC families and interested community people soon get to know one another and share mutual enthusiasms. Again, as at the Edmonton colloquium, I was delighted to see some of the Orcadian contingent, first met in 1990. For me, reunion is part of the joy of these gatherings, but it is wonderful to make new friends from among the newcomers who are "bitten" by the Rupert's Land bug.

I was also heartened by the first business meeting to be held at a colloquium. Jennifer Brown spoke about the initiatives now under way at The University of Winnipeg to establish a Centre for Rupert's Land Studies. I know she has been a dedicated worker behind the scenes and deserves a lot of credit for helping chart this promising new course. So I left Whitehorse feeling privileged for the experience of another memorable meeting and encouraged that under the auspices of a new centre they will continue.

*Sylvia Van Kirk  
Victoria, BC  
Toronto, ON*



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# The New Parks Canada Agency:

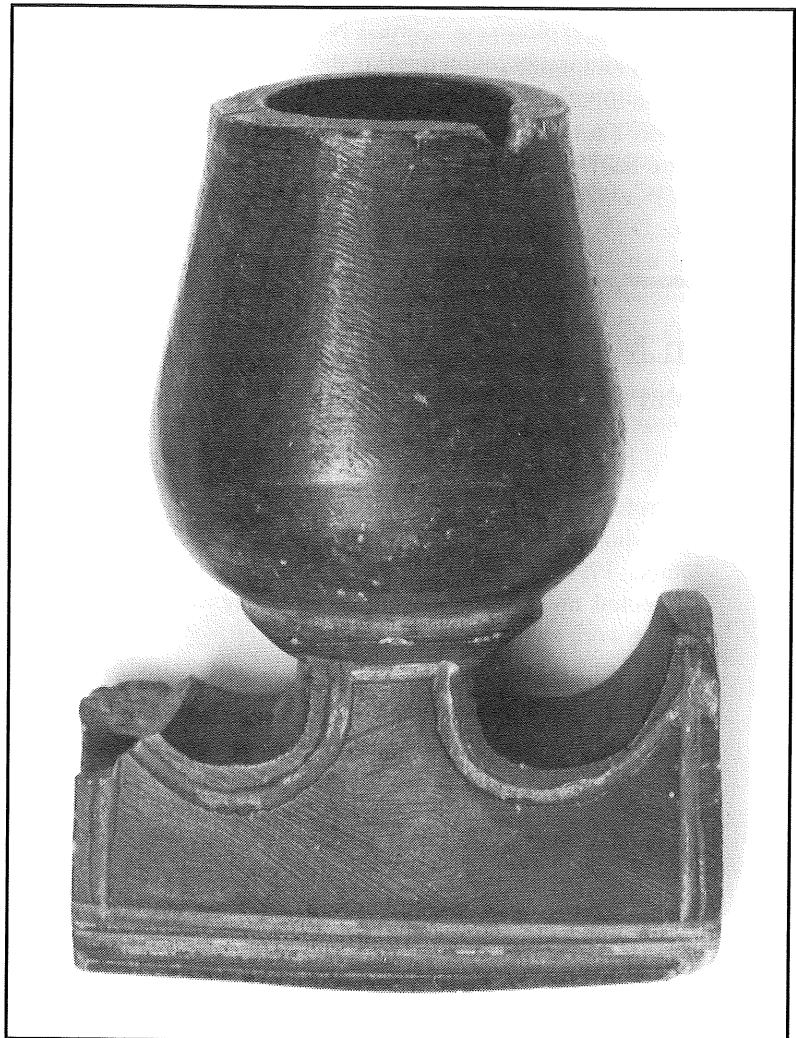
## A Note to our Readers

By Bob Coutts

Many members of the Centre for Rupert's Land Studies are familiar with national historic sites and national parks in Canada and have supported Parks Canada's attempts over the years to communicate our country's heritage through the protection and operation of these places of national importance. Participants in the 1988 Colloquium will remember touring Prince of Wales' Fort at Churchill and their unforgettable visit to York Factory National Historic Site. In 1992 Colloquium sessions were held at St Andrew's-on-the-Red and at Lower Fort Garry, while the recent meetings in Whitehorse included visits to Kluane National Park and the S.S. Klondike, a restored sternwheeler from the days of the Yukon goldrush.

Many of these parks and sites are now under threat. In its last budget the federal government announced plans for the creation of a Parks Canada "Special Service Agency", a new organization that would have an arms-length relationship with government and one that would see the privatization of many of those functions traditionally associated with the operation of national parks and national historic sites. While planning for this agency continues (with little or no input from staff or interested members of the public), it is becoming apparent that the government sees this new agency as a means to offload much of the protection of the country's cultural and natural heritage onto the private sector. From park maintenance to interpretation to re-

search, the government has sent out signals in recent months that it intends to privatize many of these functions. Revenue generation and the continuation of only those activities that create profits have become the new watchwords for parks and sites —soon to become "business units" in the terminology of the new agency. If you object to these initiatives by the federal government please read and complete the enclosed card and send to the Minister of Canadian Heritage. (Please note that Ms. Sheila Copps has returned to the Heritage portfolio and replaces former acting minister, Ms. Lucienne Robillard.) No postage is required when mailed in Canada.



*Pipe bowl with traces of red ochre in incised decorations.  
Collected by Reverend John West in Rupert's Land, 1820-23.  
See note, p. 16*

# Books & Publications

*Voices from Hudson Bay: Cree Stories from York Factory*, compiled and edited by Flora Beardy and Robert Coutts

In *Voices from Hudson Bay* Cree elders recall the daily lives and experiences of the men and women who lived and worked at the Hudson's Bay Company post at York Factory in Manitoba. Their stories, their memories of family, community, and daily life, define their past and provide insights into a way of life that has largely disappeared in northern Canada. Forthcoming in late 1996 in the Rupert's Land Record Society series, co-published with and distributed by McGill-Queen's University Press. [See enclosed flyer.]

*Reading Beyond Words: Contexts for Native History*, edited by Jennifer S.H. Brown and Elizabeth Vibert. Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press, 1996.

This collection of original essays by Canadian and American scholars explores, in a broad North American context, some major issues in interpreting the Native North American past through documentary sources. Authors from the fields of history, anthropology, literary studies, women's studies, and geography examine a range of historical and cultural "texts", from French exploration journals to Inuit

maps to twentieth-century anthropologists' field notes. Focusing on issues of voice and perspective, bias and context, the volume presents some of the best of current thinking about the problems, and challenges, of understanding and representing the historical experiences of indigenous peoples. Written in a lively and accessible style especially for this volume, the essays will be of interest both to specialists and general readers. [New articles by several of our members appear in this book. See enclosed flyer.]

*Ellen Smallboy: Glimpses of a Cree Woman's Life*, by Regina Flannery, with Laura Peers and John S. Long

Ellen Smallboy's life spanned a period of immense change among the Cree of northern Ontario. Born in about 1853 near James Bay, for most of her lifetime Smallboy led a semi-nomadic life that revolved around seasonal hunting. By the time she was an old woman, however, Cree lifestyle and culture were undergoing dramatic changes. Flannery draws on her meetings with Smallboy, then aged eighty, to produce a detailed picture of her life during both these periods. Through Smallboy's anecdotes and episodes in her life, long-vanished values and norms of Cree society are illustrated and recorded. Co-published by the Rupert's Land Record Society and McGill-Queen's University Press, distributed by MQUP.

## In Memoriam

*John Elgin Foster by Scott Stephen*

It is with great sadness that we report the loss of Professor John Foster, past Rupert's Land member, who passed away on the evening of 13 September 1996 in Edmonton, AB. Dr. Foster was a respected member of the academic profession, whose work on the history of Rupert's Land is well known, and was always a welcome addition to our Colloquia. His passing will leave a hole which his colleagues and students will find difficult to fill.

Former students, such as myself, will also feel the loss. I am certainly not the only Masters or PhD student who owes a debt to Dr. Foster. He was always animated by a great love for Rupert's

Land and all who have inhabited it, both past and present. That love could not help but have an effect on those who had the privilege of studying with him. Though I know he would never have thought of using the term himself, I did look upon him as a mentor, who nurtured my early interest in the discipline of history and the history of Rupert's Land, and who set me on the course which I now follow. I, for one, will miss him greatly.

All of us here at the Centre for Rupert's Land Studies would like to extend our sincerest condolences to Dr. Foster's family.

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[The following comments by Laura Peers reflect on the reception of, and some responses to, this recent Rupert's Land Record Society volume.]

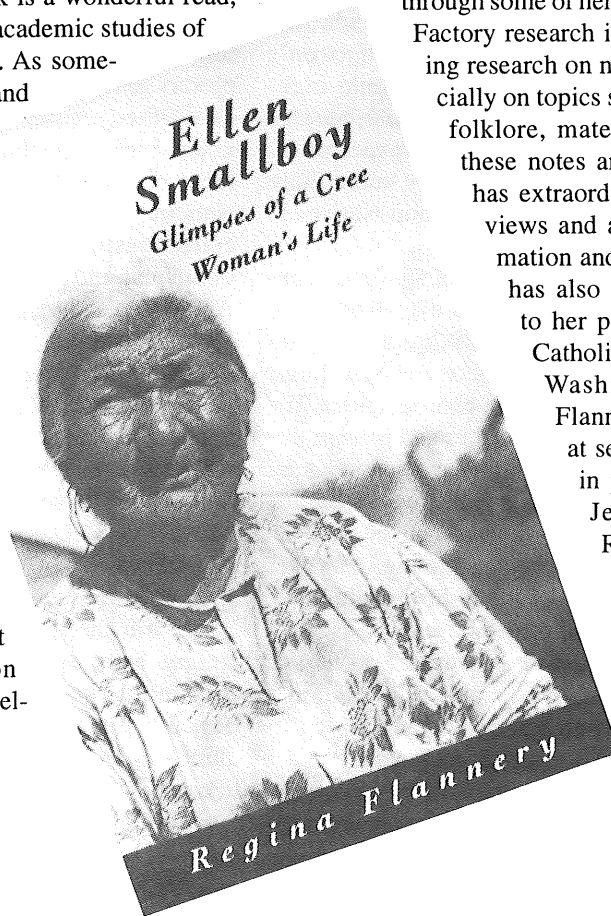
## ***Ellen Smallboy: Glimpses of a Cree Woman's Life***

**An Appreciation, by Laura Peers**

*Ellen Smallboy: Glimpses of a Cree Woman's Life* is a very special book, a warm account of the life of Ellen Smallboy who was born in the 1850s in the Moose Factory area. Regina Flannery, Emeritus Professor of Anthropology, pieced the book together from interviews she did with Ellen in the 1930s, and from her reflections on the meaning of Ellen's words since. The book is a wonderful read, as well as being a point of entry for academic studies of James Bay Cree culture and history. As someone who was involved in shaping and editing the manuscript, I have been interested to see how the book would be received. I am very pleased to report that it is being well received in the Moose Factory area as well as by southern academics: people are reading it to their children up North and placing it on reading lists for university courses in the South! The Frontier School Division of Manitoba, whose student clientele is largely First Nations, has expressed interest in using the book, and gift copies have been sent to several of Ellen and Simon Smallboy's descendants as well as to el-

ders and cultural resource people in Moose Factory. We are working with McGill-Queen's University Press to make the book available at small gift and craft shops in Moose Factory and Moosonee.

I had the opportunity to visit with Regina Flannery at her home in Washington, D.C. this past spring, and went through some of her field notes from her Moose Factory research in the 1930s. For those doing research on northern Cree culture, especially on topics such as the roles of women, folklore, material culture, and religion, these notes are invaluable. Regina also has extraordinary recall of those interviews and a fund of contextual information and wonderful anecdotes, and has also compiled a detailed index to her papers, which are all at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. Professor Flannery expressed her delight at seeing the *Smallboy* volume in print, and her gratitude to Jennifer Brown and the Rupert's Land publishing series for helping to make this project happen.



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Conference Report:

**“Imagining the Arctic:**

**The Native Photograph in Alaska, Canada and Greenland”**

(London, 18-20 April 1996)

by Peter Geller

*[Thanks to Peter Geller for furnishing the following report on an outstanding conference he attended in London, England.]*

As Elizabeth Edwards, curator of the Pitt Rivers Museum (Oxford) suggested at a recent conference on “Imagining the Arctic,” photography is, arguably, *the* historical source of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries; at the same time, the meaning and depth of the photographic record tend to be ignored. This conference, organised by the Department of Ethnography of The British Museum, in bringing together researchers, curators, archivists and contemporary arctic photographers from Canada, the United States and Europe, clearly demonstrated not only the pervasive nature of arctic photography (and highlighted existing depositories of historical images), but also the richness of this source in opening up avenues of inquiry into Inuit, Inupiaq and Yup’ik history and culture and the relationship between Natives and non-Natives in the polar regions.

Conference organizers at the Museum of Mankind (London) set the stage with the small exhibit displayed at the Museum, giving a brief sketch of the history of arctic image-making, from the early endeavours of arctic explorers to the contemporary practice of Native photographers. The ongoing relationship between past images and present-day meanings was, in fact, an emerging theme throughout the conference, beginning with the keynote address by George Quviq Qulaut (Commissioner for Nunavut) on the personal and family meanings of photography. Among the slides which he presented was a photograph of his grandmother, taken in Hudson Bay by Geraldine Moodie in the first decade of this century; featured in the conference poster and programme, this image stood as an emblem for the intersection between the public and private values and uses of arctic photography as individual images move across time and space.

A number of presentations focused on the nature of the production and consumption of arctic photography in relation to popular perceptions of northern Natives. Kesler Woodward discussed the use of photography by polar promoter Vilhjalmur Stefansson; Robert Christopher traced the photographic work of Robert Flaherty in his pre-*Nanook of the North* period; and Alan R. Marcus explored the relationships between government policy and images of the Ahiarnut, as backdrop to the disastrous arctic relocations of the 1950s. My own paper was an attempt to re-contextualize the use of photographic imagery by Archibald Lang Fleming, first Anglican Bishop of the Arctic, as he

disseminated a fascinating view of the “Eskimo” through his publications and lantern slide lectures; this was followed by a contemporary example of northern image-making, as Zebedee Nungak presented a series of slides documenting the recent political history of northern Quebec, as carried out by photographers for the Makivik Corporation of the Inuit of Nunavik.

Other papers, while not as directly concerned with the dissemination of arctic images, detailed aspects of the history of arctic photography, from nineteenth century explorers and whalers, to twentieth century photo-journalists. Other presenters highlighted specific collections of image-makers, including Jim Burant on Canadian government photography of the arctic before 1905 held in the National Archives of Canada, Dianne Brenner on several collections in the Anchorage Museum of History and Art of Inupiat and Yu’pik, and Ann Christine Eek on Roald Amundsen’s photographs of the Netsilik at the Norwegian Polar Institute.

Other presenters tackled the personal meanings of arctic photography. Molly Lee suggested one way into understanding the significance of Gladys Knight Harris’s pictures of Inupiaq women in the late 1940s was through the lens of her personal biography as a professional woman photographer. Donny White painted a vivid picture of the life and work of Geraldine Moodie; his reading of her remarkable life as a committed photographic artist did much to inform the legacy she left behind, which includes a unique body of work taken in western Hudson Bay (and now at the Museum of Mankind) as she accompanied her Royal North West Mounted Police husband on his tour of duty. On an even more personal note, veteran arctic anthropologist Nelson Graburn took a reflexive look at his own production as photographic documenter of the Inuit, arguing, among other things, that photography, like ethnography, while reflecting the interests of the observer can nonetheless provide a unique record of “ordinary” people and family life.

Graburn’s comments drew attention to the distinctions between images taken by “outsiders” and “insiders” versus categories of Native versus non-Native photographers, a point which was taken up in the open discussions which formed a valuable aspect of the conference. Bill Hess’s commentary and slide show on Inupiaq whaling culture provided an impressive example of a contemporary “non-Na-

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## Conference Report

*continued from previous page*

tive" photographer sponsored by a Native community, and suggested the changing complexity of the relationship between the observer and the observed. In a related vein, the ethical and political dimensions of collecting and archiving photographs of Native people, and issues of access to this material, was a topic of much debate during the discussion periods.

Several presentations addressed both the historical and contemporary dimension of the production of arctic photography by Native people. Dorothy Harley Eber drew on her knowledge and work with the late Peter Pitseolak to draw attention to the relationships between his photographic practice (as a committed documenter of his own community and family from the 1940s) and his drawings and carvings. Inge Kleivan discussed the life and work of John Moller, "Greenland's first native photographer." Christopher Wooley and Eileen Norbert presented the lives and work of two Alaska photographers, both highlighting the continuing connections and relevancy of their images. As Chris Wooley remarked, photographs are not just historical documents but also heirlooms. And, interestingly, in one of the few presentations not accompanied by slides, Simeonie Keenainak of Pangnirtung discussed the subjects and motivations of his photography.

As Hugh Brody remarked in his thoughtful summation, this bringing together of research, the ensuing discussion, and just as importantly, the flow of images viewed during the two days of the conference, vividly brought forward the extraordinary power of photography as a unique medium of our times. As Brody remarked, photography, though strangely silent, tends towards becoming an aspect of oral history (as when photographs of long dead ances-

tors make their way back to arctic communities). In another sense, photographs, while inviting interpretation retain an aura of unreliability, as we struggle to attach captions and invoke authoritative commentary in an effort to pin down fixed meanings.

"Imagining the Arctic" succeeded admirably in evoking the diversity and richness of research into arctic photography, as well as highlighting aspects of contemporary practice. Participants came away with a fuller appreciation of the value of photography as a window into understanding the history, the imagery and the reality of arctic society (and of the complex relationships between them). I look forward to the published conference proceedings, currently being edited and likely to be published by the British Museum Press.



*Man's beaded collar, collected by Reverend John West 1820-23, probably in the Red River Settlement. See note, p. 16.*

# CALLS FOR PAPERS

## 1997 Rocky Mountain Fur Trade Symposium

Pinedale, Wyoming  
11-13 September 1997

The conference theme will be THE FUR TRADE ERA: THE INFLUENCE OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN FUR TRADE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE AMERICAN WEST. The symposium will examine the significance and ramifications of the fur trade in the Rocky Mountains and Upper Missouri River on the economic, cultural, and social development of the peoples and the geographic area involved.

Suggested topics for presentations include the effects of the western fur trade on the regional Indian tribes, the development and influence of economics and trade in the Rocky Mountain West, and the contributions of the fur trade to the political, economic, and geographical evolution of the western American continent.

The academic community, students, art historians, living history experts, and other interested persons are invited to submit an abstract of 300-500 words by 15 January 1997.

Proposals for papers or questions regarding the symposium can be addressed to:

Fur Trade Symposium  
Museum of the Mountain Man  
Box 909  
Pinedale, Wyoming  
USA 82941

Calls can be directed to Laurie Latta at (307) 367-4101 or by fax at (307) 367-6768.

## KLONDIKE!

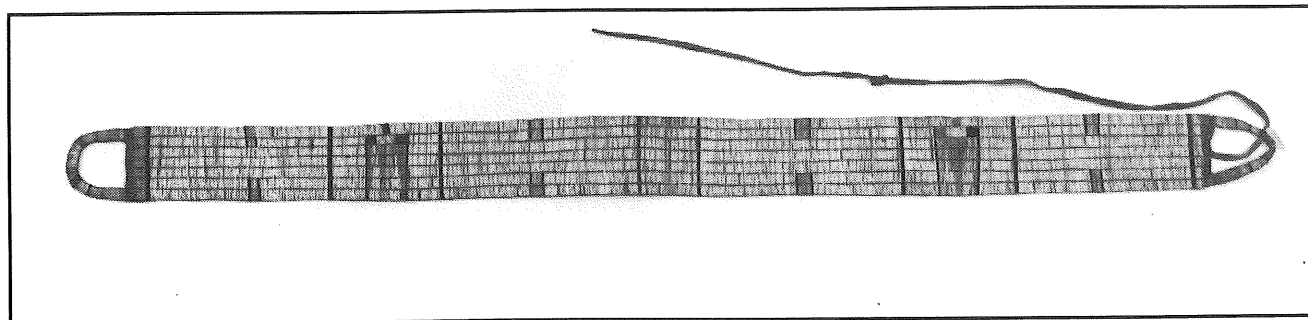
University of Edinburgh  
2-4 May 1997

Proposals for papers are invited from all disciplinary backgrounds on the theme of the Klondike Gold Rush. Presentations on topics which relate broadly to the theme are also strongly encouraged: for instance, the Canadian North in literature and in history, aboriginal peoples in the North, the challenges of "boom and bust" economies, comparative studies of other gold rushes, and so on.

Proposals, in English or French, should be submitted by 4 NOVEMBER 1996 (on a single sheet of paper, accompanied by a one-page curriculum vitae) to:

KLONDIKE!  
Centre of Canadian Studies  
21 George Square  
Edinburgh, Scotland  
EH8 9LD  
Fax 44-011-131-662-1118 (from North America)  
or 0131-662-1118 (from the U.K.)

*Bird-quill belt with Thunderbird motifs, collected by Reverend John West 1820-23. See note, p. 16.*



# CONFERENCES

## **25-27 October 1996**

28th Algonquian Conference, Toronto, ON  
Registration fees are \$40 for non-students, \$25 for students before 1 October; after 1 Oct., \$45 and \$30 respectively.

Contact Deborah James  
Division of Humanities  
U. of Toronto,  
Scarborough Campus  
Scarborough, ON  
M1C 1A4  
tel.: (416) 694-6276  
fax: (416) 287-7116  
e-mail

: james@lake.scar.utoronto.ca

## **30 October-2 November 1996**

Society for Ethnomusicology, 41st annual meeting (held jointly with the Canadian Society for Traditional Music), Toronto, ON

Contact Beverly Diamond  
Dept. of Music  
York University  
4700 Keele St  
North York, ON  
M3J 1P3  
fax: (416) 736-5321  
e-mail: bdiamond@yorku.ca

## **30 October-2 November 1996**

54th Annual Plains Anthropological Conference, Iowa City, IA

Contact William Green  
Office of the State Archaeologist  
U. of Iowa  
Iowa City, IA  
52242-1411  
fax: (319) 335-2776  
e-mail: billgreen@uiowa.edu  
website: www.uiowa.edu/~osa/events

## **7-10 November 1996**

American Society for Ethnohistory, Portland, Oregon

Contact Jacqueline Peterson  
Dept. of History  
Washington State U.  
1812 E McLoughlin Blvd.  
Vancouver, WA  
98663  
tel.: (360) 737-2179

## **15-16 November 1996**

TALKING ON THE PAGE: EDITING ABORIGINAL ORAL TEXTS, The 32nd Annual Conference on Editorial Problems, University of Toronto  
E-mail editprob@chass.utoronto.ca  
or phone (416) 978-1763 (Karen Rice, Linguistics, U. of Toronto) or (613) 545-2153 (Laura Murray, English, Queen's University)

## **22 November 1996**

Society for the Study of Native American Religious Traditions, annual meeting (held in conjunction with the Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion and the Society of Biblical Literature), New Orleans

Contact Fritz Detwiler  
Dept. of Religion/Philosophy  
Adrian College  
Adrian, MI 49221  
tel.: (517) 265-5161  
e-mail: fdetwiler@adrian.edu



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# A Postscript to our Members and Friends



This Newsletter comes to you in a new format, with a new logo designed by Warren Schuetz, compositor in the Printing Services department of The University of Winnipeg, in consultation with Jennifer Brown. Our thanks to him and to everyone else who has contributed to its production and content. Your comments and suggestions on both content and format are invited.

We are in process of forming a Rupert's Land Council as a working body to advise us, to help provide us with a new organizational structure, and to solidify our partnerships with some of our most important constituencies and sister organizations. Its initial members, drawing largely on the Organizing Committee that began work in late spring 1996, will be announced in the next Newsletter, which is to appear before the end of this year! We hope that they will serve until the Colloquium of 1998, by which time a more regularized system of appointments, nominations, and elections from the membership will be in place. Harry W. Duckworth and Peter Geller have formed a subcommittee to look at these matters; they would welcome your ideas, which can be addressed to them (in written form, please) c/o the Centre.

We have a core Program Committee for the 1998 Rupert's Land Colloquium; they too would welcome your input. Its members are: Susan Gray, Renée Fossett, Peter Geller, and Laura Peers. Proposals and ideas may be addressed to any or all of them through the Centre, or c/o the Department of History, The University of Winnipeg, 515 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, MB R3B 2E9

We hope to make many 1996 Colloquium papers available both in hard copy (as in past years) and in electronic format. The next Newsletter will announce more about these plans. For now, would all presenters who are ready and willing to have a clean, revised copy of their papers circulated to others by the Centre on demand, at nominal cost, please supply two master copies of their papers for us to keep on file? We would be happy to begin making these presentations available as soon as possible. The title page of your paper should specify any restrictions you wish to place on its use and distribution: copyright, restrictions on quoting without permission, or the like.

## About the Photos

The artifacts illustrated in this newsletter were collected by John West, the first Protestant missionary to Rupert's Land, in the early 1820s. They have recently been loaned by The Cathedral of St. John, Winnipeg, to the Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature. Their early date gives us a glimpse into the world of Aboriginal peoples—and West's relations with them. See Laura Peers and Katherine Pettipas, "Reverend John West's Collection: Red River, 1820-23," *American Indian Art Magazine* summer 1996, pp.62-73. Illustrations courtesy The Cathedral of St. John, Winnipeg.

*Laura Peers*



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of WINNIPEG  
The Centre for Rupert's Land  
Studies at The University of  
Winnipeg