



## In this Issue...

### •Archives News:

Hudson's Bay Company  
Archives

Minnesota Historical Society  
Plans for Cutbacks

### •Meet our newest Council members

### •Upcoming Conferences and Announcements

### •New in Print

### • Book Review: Lynn Whidden, *Essential Song*

### • Legend to Reality: The Story of the Whitestone Mammoth by C. Richard Harington



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
WINNIPEG

## A Message to our Readers

As we live through a late spring and too much water in Manitoba, we are also thinking of what will happen here just over a year from now—our next biennial Rupert's land Colloquium, to be held at the University of Winnipeg, May 20 to 23, 2010. We look forward to another rich and varied program, complemented by historical tours and visits co-organized with Parks Canada in Winnipeg, and with some of the major archives and other organizations that make Winnipeg such a centre for Aboriginal and fur trade history. Mark your calendar, keep your membership up to date for the coming year, and count on joining us next May!

We are very pleased to welcome to our Advisory Council three new members who bring to us great enthusiasm and a fine range of interests and qualifications. As some of you already know, Peter Geller who had served for over a decade, bringing us a link with Northern Manitoba through his work as faculty member and dean at the University College of the North, left Manitoba last September for an administrative position at Grant McEwan College in Edmonton. In his place, we now have Patricia Harms who is a professor of history at Brandon University, strengthening our links with that university and its faculty and programs. Of Manitoba Mennonite background, she has returned home from doctoral studies in Arizona. Along with her wide interests in Latin American and women's history, she maintains strong interests in Canadian Aboriginal history, and in the work of the Centre.

This winter, another longtime Council member, Bob Coutts, found that his new higher responsibilities at Parks Canada did not allow him to continue active on the Council. His seat has passed to Scott Stephen, known to many of you through past Colloquiums and for his work on HBC history, and he will have an active role in the May 2010 Colloquium.

Finally, we brought you word in the last newsletter of the much regretted passing of Lloyd Keith, who also served the Council for many years in the members' category. On consultation, our Nominations Committee and the Council decided to offer this seat to Judith Hudson Beattie, long an active CRLS member who had served on the Council as representative from the Hudson's Bay Company Archives until her retirement from the HBCA. We are happy that she has enthusiastically accepted to return in the members' category, as she has been a good friend and colleague to so many of us. You will find profiles of our three new Council members in the pages of this Newsletter, and we warmly welcome them all, with great appreciation for their willingness to serve.

You will find in this mailing an insert from McGill-Queen's University Press announcing the next three documentary volumes with which we have been involved: the first of the three new David Thompson volumes being edited by William Moreau; and the next two volumes in the Rupert's Land Record Society series: Letters of James Hargrave 1826-1840, edited by Helen Ross; and the stories and memories of Ojibwe chief William Berens as told to A.I.

## Director's Message

*continued from page 1*

Hallowell, edited by J.S.H. Brown and Susan Elaine Gray. The Press is offering a special price on these and a selection of other books to our current CRLS members, so do take advantage of this special offer.

We are very pleased to include in this issue, with Dr. C. Richard Harington's permission, his personal account of how an old Aboriginal story contributed to his finding of an important mammoth fossil, back in 1967. A fine example of the importance of listening and making connections.

I conclude with my usual reminder about checking your membership status on your mailing label, to be sure you remain a member for the year 2009. Of course we shall welcome renewals any time for 2010, as well as kind donations that contribute to our work and the maintaining of the Centre and this newsletter, as costs rise and as endowments suffer from current economic conditions.

Also, we always welcome your comments on the Newsletter, and on any other feature of our activities: for example, on any research assistance you have received from the Centre and its resources, on our web site, or on other areas of our activities.

Do also begin to think about the next Colloquium; we shall not have a single overarching theme, but welcome proposals for sessions and events. With all best wishes for the spring and summer,

*Jennifer S.H. Brown, Director*

## News from The Hudson's Bay Company Archives

*Maureen Dolyniuk  
Manager, Hudson's Bay Company  
Archives*

### Staff

There have been several staff changes over the past several months. **Kathleen Epp**, Head of Description and Automation has recently moved to a new position at the Archives of Manitoba with responsibility for government records and private sector records. During her nine years in HBCA Kathleen has taken a lead role in developing and customizing the Keystone Descriptive Database and implementing its use so that a substantial amount of HBC records are now described in Keystone and accessible on the Internet. She also played a lead roll in the improvement of the website and worked with HBC to manage the 2007 HBC donation of records and the ongoing work of processing them after the donation. Her work has provided the foundation for ongoing progress on multiple fronts. HBCA will continue to benefit by her expert knowledge, ongoing energy and enthusiasm in her new role within the Archives of Manitoba. **Kim Rey**, Archives Assistant left the archives in July to take up a new position with Aboriginal and Northern Affairs Canada. **Joanna McMann**, Conservator joined us in January 2009, filling Rob Ridgen's position. Rob left the archives in July 2008 to take up a position in the Yukon Archives.

### Doors Open Winnipeg, May 23, 2009

The Archives of Manitoba and the Legislative Library which are housed in the former Winnipeg Civic Auditorium will participate in Doors Open Winnipeg on Saturday, May 23, 2009 between 10:00 am - 4:00 pm. Built as a make-work project during the Great Depression, the Winnipeg Civic Auditorium opened in 1932 and served as a vibrant cultural hub for nearly 40 years. Behind the scenes tours will provide glimpses of the building's original design and allow visitors to see first hand how the building has been adapted to its current use. Visitors will also see photographs, plans, concert programs and have the chance to find out a little more about the memory institutions that share a roof at 200 Vaughan. Further information about the building is available on the Archives of Manitoba Website: [www.gov.mb.ca/archives](http://www.gov.mb.ca/archives). We hope you can join us on May 23!

*continued on page 3*

### *The Centre for Rupert's Land Studies*

SCM12 Centennial Hall (Library)  
The University of Winnipeg  
515 Portage Avenue  
Winnipeg, MB, Canada R3B 2E9  
*Director:* Jennifer S.H. Brown  
*Office Assistant:* Anne Lindsay  
*Harington Fellow*  
(2008-2009): Mallory  
Richard  
Tel./Voice Mail:  
204-786-9003  
e-mail: [rupert.land@uwinnipeg.ca](mailto:rupert.land@uwinnipeg.ca)  
<http://uwwebpro.uwinnipeg.ca/academic/ic/ Rupert/index.html>

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## Hudson's Bay Company Archives

*continued from page 2*

### Online Resources

We always pleased to receive feedback when new resources are added to our website. The availability of the biographical sheets and the Rearview Manitoba exhibits has been a big hit. Here are comments from some recent web visitors:

#### Biographical Sheets:

*Today on a casual google search I came across the bio sheet of my grandfather, Reginald (always called Rex) Handford at here:  
<http://www.gov.mb.ca/chc/archives/hbca/biographical/h.html>*

*Thanks to the anonymous archivists who ... produce[d] this priceless genealogical material!*

*Rearview Manitoba - Alexander Kennedy exhibit ([www.gov.mb.ca/rearview/index.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/rearview/index.html)) from a descendant of a HBC fur trader living in the United Kingdom:*

*The snapshot of day-to-day life as recorded on your website gives some fascinating insight into the life of my ancestors and, for a family historian, is deeply rewarding. Thanks to the project team for making such archived resources available to the public across the globe... it is a foresightful use of modern technology that enables many more people to benefit from the rich heritage contained in your archives.*

The Archives of Manitoba, including HBCA is committed to continuous improvement of online resources and invite your comments at any time about the kinds of resources you find most useful ([archiveswebmaster@gov.mb.ca](mailto:archiveswebmaster@gov.mb.ca)).

### Hours

Research Room hours are **Monday to Friday, 9:00-16:00** throughout the year. We are closed for inventory for one week, the first full week in September after Labour Day. Researchers traveling from out of town are encouraged to check with the Archives before planning a visit.

### Contact Information

Maureen Dolyniuk  
Manager, Hudson's Bay Company Archives  
130-200 Vaughan St.  
Winnipeg MB R3C 1T5  
HBCA general - telephone: (204) 945-4949, fax: 948-3236, e-mail: [hbca@gov.mb](mailto:hbca@gov.mb).

Maureen's direct telephone and e-mail: (204) 945-2620, [mdolyniuk@gov.mb.ca](mailto:mdolyniuk@gov.mb.ca)

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## Minnesota Historical Society Plans for Cutbacks

*In anticipation of a reduction in government funding, and declining revenues, the Minnesota Historical Society has announced a plan that, if implemented, will result in significantly reduced services. The Society would merge its Reference and Collections departments, reduce the hours at the Minnesota History Centre, a reduce publications by 30 per cent, and reduce hours at some historic sites, while closing others statewide.*

*Included in the cutbacks and closings would be: Closing three*

*historic sites on 1 July 2009, although these would still be maintained by the Society. These sites include the North West Company Fur Post in Pine City. Historic Fort Snelling would be open to the public five days a week, and Mille Lacs Indian Museum and Trading Post in Onamia would be limited to only 2 days a week.*

*Until the Minnesota State legislature announces its budget, the Society will continue to maintain its present schedule and services. Current hours and services are listed at [www.mnhs.org](http://www.mnhs.org)*

### Fort Whoop Up presents:

*9 to 13 September 2009*

### *"Last Blast" at the Fourth International Fur Trade Symposium*

For more information,  
visit [www.fortwhoopup.com/  
furtradetentative.pdf](http://www.fortwhoopup.com/furtradetentative.pdf)

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## *New Advisory Council Members*

*As mentioned in the Director's Message, we are welcoming three new members to the CRLS Advisory Council, Patricia Harms, Scott Stephen, and Judith Beattie. Here are brief biographical sketches of each that they have provided.*

A native of Manitoba, **Patricia Harms** graduated with a PhD from Arizona State University in 2007 with a specialization in Latin American women's history and the history of Guatemala. Her dissertation, which she is currently converting to book format, is entitled "Imagining a Place for Themselves: The Social and Political Roles of Guatemalan Women, 1871-1954." She holds a joint appointment as an assistant professor in History and Gender and Women's Studies at Brandon University. Patricia also has a particular interest in Canadian aboriginal and Guatemalan indigenous history and has just started a comparative project on history and education between the two regions.

Her personal statement on her interests in Aboriginal history follows.

I am interested in Aboriginal history from both a personal and academic perspective. I lived in the community of Pauingassi, Manitoba as a child (now, First Nations, Pauingassi). My family and I returned several times throughout my adolescence and remained abreast of community events. As an academic, I have been privileged to integrate my lived experience into scholarly investigation with several conference presentations and an article on the trading post at Pauingassi (my father was the store manager for several years). Although my academic training is in Latin American history, and specifically on Guatemala and women, I am currently in the early stages of a monograph on the community of Pauingassi, the trading post, and the social interaction

between the Anishenabe people and those who came in from the outside to work at the store. Along with this project, I am exploring a comparative project on the role of gender and education at Pauingassi and its community impact, with an indigenous community in Guatemala.

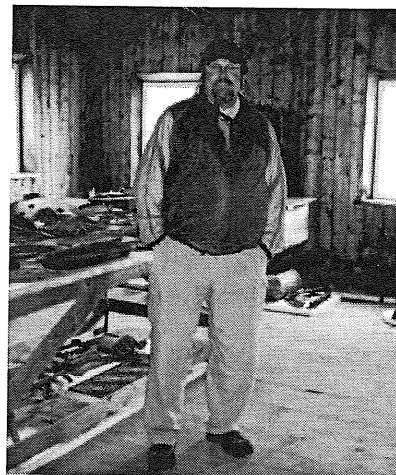


**Patricia Harms**

**Scott Stephen** writes: I was born and raised in Edmonton, where I was active in the local museum and theatre communities through my undergraduate years. Graduate school brought me to Winnipeg, where I have had opportunities to work as an archival assistant and a university lecturer. I completed my doctoral studies under Jennifer Brown in 2006, and my dissertation is currently being considered for possible publication by a major academic press. In 2007, I

took a position with Parks Canada in Winnipeg as an historian focusing on the fur trade of the west and north. I have been a member of the Council of the Manitoba Historical Society (MHS) since 2004 and sit on the Management Committee of Dalnavert, a museum owned and operated by the MHS.

Although the first Colloquium that I attended was in 1992, my active involvement in the Centre for Rupert's Land Studies really dates from my year as the Harington Fellow (1995/6). I served on the planning committee for the 1998 Colloquium, assisted with the 2004 Colloquium, and presented papers in 2000, 2004, 2006, and 2008. I look forward to serving on the Advisory Council as we prepare for the 2010 Colloquium and for the future beyond.



**Scott Stephen in the old Depot at York Factory**

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## New Advisory Council Members

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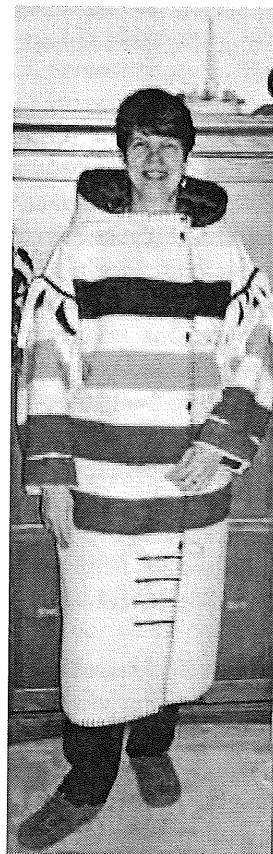
**Judith Hudson Beattie (aka Judy Valenzuela)**, retired Keeper, Hudson's Bay Company Archives, worked in the Archival field from 1969 to 2003. She held positions in the Centre de Recherche en civilisation canadienne-française at Université d'Ottawa, the Anglican General Synod Archives, and the Government Records Section of the Ontario Archives before moving to Manitoba in 1981 as Head of Research and Reference and later Keeper of the Hudson's Bay Company Archives, Archives of Manitoba. She has an Honours B.A. degree in Canadian History from Carleton University and a Master of Arts degree in Canadian History from University of Toronto, with a certificate from the National Archives of Canada and training in Records Management from the Ontario Archives. She has been an active member of the Centre for Rupert's Land Studies, the Association for Manitoba Archives, the Association for Canadian Archivists, the Eastern Ontario Archivists' Association and the Toronto Area Archivists' Group.

She has given many presentations and published on a variety of topics related to the Hudson's Bay Company Archives and the records preserved there, as well as other topics. Her talk at the first Colloquium [then the Hudson's Bay Archives Research Centre] was an attempt to interest members in the undelivered letters

in the Hudson's Bay Company Archives. Fortunately no one followed up on it, and a book she co-authored with Helen M. Buss, *Undelivered Letters to Hudson's Bay Company Men on the Northwest Coast of America, 1830-57* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2003), was launched at her retirement from the Hudson's Bay Company Archives in January 2003. Book launches were also held in Calgary and Stromness, Orkney as well as two in Winnipeg, and half-hour radio programs on CBC with Peter Gzowski, CBC Winnipeg, BBC Cambridge, BBC Scotland and BBC Orkney focussed on these evocative letters. For six years she recorded weekly broadcasts on CBC Radio North: stories from the Hudson's Bay Company Archives, 1999-2003 and from the United Church Archives 2003-2005. She has been a regular contributor at the Colloquiums, missing only Stromness and St. Louis.

She continues research and writing: preparing a book, *The Colinda*, about the fate of 40 Ayrshire miners and their families and 40 Norwegian labourers who deserted ship in Chile while on their way to the HBC coal mines in Nanaimo in 1853 and editing the forthcoming publication of stories by Red River HBC descendants following a 2005 Reunion.

She also volunteers in many areas including the Manitoba Historical Society (Chair of Young Historians and the History Book Club); choir and Archives Committee at Westworth United Church; office volunteer at West Broadway Community Ministry; and enthusiastic participant in Village Green English Country Dancing.

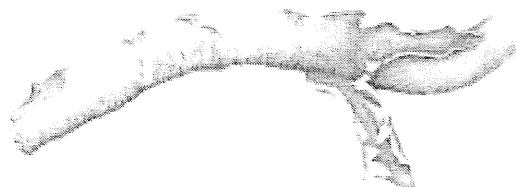


*Judith Hudson Beattie Valenzuela.*

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*There is also to be found, in this part of the Red River, abundance of "Bois Tors," ...the wood is soft and spongy with a thick bark....often made use of by the natives as a substitute for provision in the time of famine.*

*Alexander Henry*



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## Conference Announcements

### *American Society for Ethnohistory*

The American Society for Ethnohistory is happy to make the following announcement:

#### **CALL FOR PAPERS - 2009 Conference**

2009 Annual Meeting of the American Society for Ethnohistory, New Orleans, LA, Hotel Monteleone, Sept. 30-Oct. 4, 2009

**\*\*Please note the early deadline for abstract submissions-May 15, 2009\*\***

**Bridging the Gulf: Connecting the Ethnohistories of the Americas**  
This year's conference theme builds on the history of New Orleans as a nexus between North America, the Caribbean, Central America, and South America.

You can find out the full details online: <http://www.ethnohistory.org/sections/news/index.php?id=43>

### *Communities of Change - Building an IPY Legacy*

9th Annual ACUNS Student Conference on Northern Studies

October 2 to 5, 2009

Yukon College - Whitehorse, Yukon, Canada

This conference, organized by ACUNS, in partnership with Yukon College, encompasses the following areas:

The impact of sustainable development, economic activity and polar law on communities, governance and natural habitats.

The use of natural, physical and social sciences to help understand the causes and effects of the changing polar climate.

Changes to polar marine and terrestrial communities over the short and long term. Changes in research communities and how research is undertaken in the Polar Regions.

The Communities of Change - Building an IPY Legacy Conference will highlight research occurring at both poles, including interactions between the cryosphere, hydrosphere, biosphere, atmosphere and society.

For guidelines and for more information about the Abstract Submission and the conference, please visit: [www.communitiesofchange.ca](http://www.communitiesofchange.ca) or contact [info@communitiesofchange.ca](mailto:info@communitiesofchange.ca)

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### *The 41st Algonquian Conference*

The 41st Algonquian Conference will be held at Concordia University in Montreal, Quebec from Thursday, October 29 to Sunday November 1st, 2009. This conference is an international meeting for researchers to share papers on Algonquian peoples, the largest First Peoples group in Canada. Fields of interest include anthropology, archaeology, art, biography, education, ethnography, ethnobotany, folklore, geography, history, language education, linguistics, literature, music, native studies, political science, psychology, religion and sociology.

If you are interested in making a presentation, please send a title and abstract of a maximum of one page to the following address: [manon@alcor.concordia.ca](mailto:manon@alcor.concordia.ca)

The subject line of your e-mail must read Algonquian Conference and the text of your e-mail message must include your name, postal address, institution, telephone and fax numbers as well as the electronic address of each speaker. Please indicate your preferred format and your audio-visual requirements. The deadline for submission of abstracts is September 1, 2009.

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## Conference Announcements

continued from page 6

### **44<sup>th</sup> Annual Northern Great Plains History Conference**

October 14-17, 2009  
St. Cloud, Minnesota

Saint Cloud State University is proud to host the 44th annual gathering of historians who live and work in the Northern Great Plains region. The conference hosts scholars working in a variety of fields, including those interested in European, Asian, African, Canadian, and American history.

The event will take place at the Best Western Kelly Inn located near downtown Saint Cloud. For more information about accommodations and the conference site, please see [www.bestwesternstcloud.com/](http://www.bestwesternstcloud.com/)

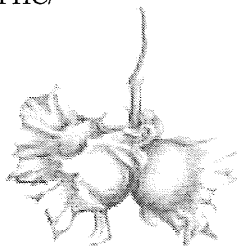
The Society for Military History will also hold a meeting at the conference. For more information, please see <http://personal2.stthomas.edu/jcfitzharris/>

NGPHC/

For more information, contact Betsy Glade, Department of History  
St. Cloud State University  
720 Fourth Avenue South  
St. Cloud, MN  
56301-4498

Email: [beblade@stcloudstate.edu](mailto:beblade@stcloudstate.edu).

Website: <http://stcloudstate.edu/history/NGPHC/>



### **Native American and Indigenous Studies Conference**

On May 21-23, 2009 the Department of American Indian Studies at the University of Minnesota will host the first meeting of the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association (NAISA). This is the third of three meetings that culminated in the creation of a new professional organization for scholars who work in American Indian/Native American/First Nations/Aboriginal/Indigenous Studies. The Native American Studies program at the University of Oklahoma, Norman hosted the first meeting in May of 2007, and the Institute of Native American Studies at the University of Georgia hosted the second meeting in April of 2008.

The American Indian Studies Department at the U of M is excited to host the third meeting. 2009 marks the 40th anniversary of the department's founding – the oldest such program in the country with departmental status. Founded amidst the civil rights struggles of the sixties and early seventies, the department has long been committed to the development of theories and methodologies that reflect American Indian perspectives and it embraces ways of knowing that stand in contrast to the linear analytic Euro-American studies typically found in colleges and universities. The department's base of formally educated and institutionally trained academicians is being supplemented increasingly by community resource people, including traditional leaders, elders and American Indian artists, writers, film makers, and musicians. Incorporation of such contributors into the teaching program acknowledges unique cultural wisdom and skills that are not typically available in formal, western institutions, but that are nonetheless essential to an understanding of American Indian cultures.

A local host committee of faculty and staff members will arrange accommodations, meeting space, and a set of events that will give conference participants an opportunity to experience the beautiful Twin Cities and U of M campus.

For more information: <http://amin.umn.edu/naisa2009/index.html>

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### **Native American Art Studies Association Conference: 21-24 October 2009**

Norman, Oklahoma

The 16<sup>th</sup> biennial conference of the Native American Art Studies Association will be held in Norman, Oklahoma, 21-24 October 2009. The program will include organized sessions and volunteered papers, and some travel awards are available. For more information: [www.nativearts.org](http://www.nativearts.org).

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## *New in Print*

### *The Writings of David Thompson*

**Volume One: *The 1850 Travels***

**Edited by William E. Moreau**

As North America celebrates the bicentennial of the great explorer David Thompson's travels to the West, The Champlain Society is proud to be associated with the publication of a new series of his writings. The first volume *The 1850 Travels*, will be available in the fall of 2009. It will bring David Thompson and his world to a new generation of readers, and will be a major event of the 2007-2012 Thompson Bicentennial celebrations.

David Thompson's *Travels*, or "Narrative" as it is sometimes called, is not only a spectacular geographical journey, but a spirited intellectual one as well. While the *Travels* generally follows Thompson from childhood to retirement, it is also structured spatially, as a series of regional vignettes which synthesize the geography of the West as the author's journeys unfold. Complex and nuanced, the work is an extended meditation on the land and peoples of the West, reflecting many of the central preoccupations of the nineteenth-century mind. Thompson's *Travels* is a distinguished literary work, alternating between the empirical and expository prose of the scientist, and the immediate and vivid language of the storyteller, animated throughout by a restless spirit of inquiry and sense of wonder.

The *Travels* remained a work in progress throughout the explorer's last years, and this edition will present his work as it evolved.

Volume I presents the narrative as it stood in 1850, when the author had to abandon his work, and consists of about 60% of the entire *Travels* manuscript. The remaining portions will appear in Volume II. It includes the story of Thompson's adolescent years inland with the Hudson's Bay Company, an account of his transfer to the North West Company, the tale of his 1797-1798 journey to the Mandans and the narrative of the Piegan elder Saukamappee.

This new edition presents an entirely new transcription of Thompson's manuscript. It meets the highest standards of textual editing, and includes material not published in the editions of J.B. Tyrrell (1916), Richard Glover (1962) or Victor Hopwood (1971). Volume I orients the reader with an introductory essay placing Thompson in his historical and intellectual context, and describing the central themes and characteristics of his work. The volumes also includes a textual introduction, extensive critical annotations, a biographical appendix and historical and modern maps.

Coming years will see the publication of two more volumes. Volume II will comprise early drafts of the *Travels*, including the story of Thompson's years west of the Continental Divide, and several texts closely associated with the narrative. Volume III will include a selection of Thompson's letters, reports, contributions to newspapers and prose sketches.

From his intellectually and physically adventurous years with the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company, to his declining years in Montreal, struggling in poverty and with blindness approaching, Thompson persisted indomitably with his writing. This

new edition will bring Thompson's narrative faithfully to the general reader and will ensure accurate citation by the scholars who so frequently refer to it. To order, see enclosed discount offer.

### *History of the Ojibway People, Second Edition*

**William W. Warren. Annotated and edited, with a new introduction by Theresa Schenck.**

St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2009.

William W. Warren's *History of the Ojibway People* has long been recognized as a classic source on Ojibwe history and culture. Warren, the son of an Ojibwe woman, wrote his history in the hope of saving traditional stories for posterity even as he presented to the American public a sympathetic view of a people he believed were fast disappearing under the onslaught of a corrupt frontier population. He collected firsthand descriptions and stories from relatives, tribal leaders, and acquaintances and transcribed this oral history in terms that nineteenth-century whites could understand, focusing on warfare, tribal organizations, and political leaders.

First published in 1885 by the Minnesota Historical Society, the book has also been criticized by Native and non-Native scholars, many of whom do not take into account Warren's perspective, goals, and limitations. Now, for the first time since its initial publication, it is made available with new annotations researched and written by professor Theresa Schenck. A new introduction by Schenck also gives a clear and concise history of the text and of the author, firmly establishing a place for William Warren in the tradition of American Indian intellectual thought.

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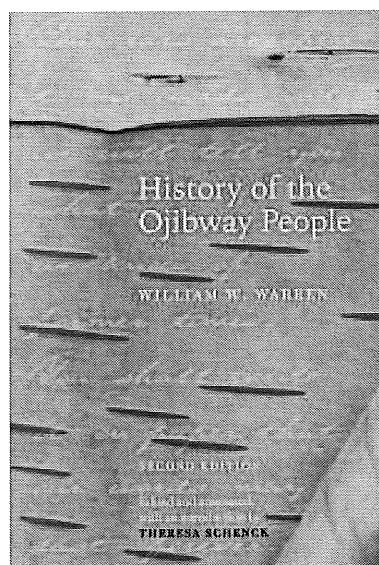
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## New in Print

continued from page 8

Theresa Schenck is an associate professor in the American Indian Studies Program at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. An enrolled member of the Blackfeet Nation, she is also of Ojibwe descent through her grandmother. She is the author of *William W. Warren: The Life, Letters, and Times of an Ojibwe* and *The Voice of the Crane Echoes Afar: The Sociopolitical Organization of the Lake Superior Ojibwa, 1640–1855*.



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## Book Review

### *Essential Song: Three Decades of Northern Cree Music*

Lynn Whidden. Waterloo ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press. 174 pages.

Reviewed by: **George Fulford,**  
*Department of Anthropology,*  
*University of Winnipeg*

This is a wonderful book, filled with insight and erudition. As the title suggests, it is based on 30 years

of ethnomusicological fieldwork and teaching in Cree communities in northern Manitoba and Québec. Dr. Whidden's strong affinity to Cree musicians and their music is obvious from the outset. And while she does a fine job of documenting and contextualizing recent phases and fashions in music popular in northern communities, it is clear that Whidden's heart lies with the six East Cree hunters (William Jack, George Pepabano, Robert Potts, Abraham Martinhunter, Samson Lameboy and Joseph Rupert) who allowed Whidden to record 86 of their *nituu-nikamuwin* 'hunting songs' in Chisasibi, Québec as part of her PhD research in 1982. These recordings are on a CD included in the back cover of the book. Brief descriptions of the songs, including comments by the performers, appear in an appendix.

The hunting songs Whidden recorded consist almost entirely of vocables (i.e., melodic syllables) sung on a pentatonic scale. Such scales are characteristic of folk-music traditions in many parts of the world. Whidden likens the quiet, understated East Cree hunting-song style to "the low sound levels of the northern terrain" which she characterizes as "a world of nuances". She suggests that all but two of the songs in her collection are comprised of non-lexical vocables. However a discerning listener will recognize that many are in fact composed of short phrases repeated over and over again. For example, in his "Goose Song" on track 32 of the CD Abraham Martinhunter repeats the phrase *awa pineshiwa awa wiyaaw* 'this bird [obviative] this body [proximative]' six times – presumably to call in a living goose from the spirit boss who is its master. Mr. Martinhunter progressively shifts this phrase into purely melodic (i.e. non-lexical)

vocables towards the end of his song, reflecting the high regard Cree hunters traditionally placed on the process of metamorphosis.

The melodic phrasing of individual performers exhibits considerable rhythmic variation ("some beats were dense with notes and others had a single note and syllable"). Nevertheless, the structure of particular songs is stable from performance to performance. Phrase length is limited by what performers can utter in a single breath. Such utterances typically contain 10-12 vocables which are repeated over and over and sometimes punctuated by the performer with commentary about the song. Whidden says the phrasing of hunting songs echoes the polysynthetic and fusional nature of the Cree words, which makes sense only if the songs use lexical vocables. Thus, distinct Cree words and phrases provide a melodic template for hunting songs rather than the other way around.

Whidden describes Cree hunting songs as "essential" inasmuch as they express "the human need for song" and "the metaphysical basis for hunting". They comprise "an organic part of the singer's environment" containing "information about the animals, the local environment, and hunting practices." An important part of Cree hunters' traditional toolkit, they "energized the hunter, both mentally and physically, helping him to 'see' the animals." However, the impact of what Leroy Little Bear has called "jagged worldviews colliding" has precipitated the virtual disappearance of Cree hunting songs, which have been supplanted by Scottish fiddle music and Christian hymns, as well as more contemporary and commercial genres such as

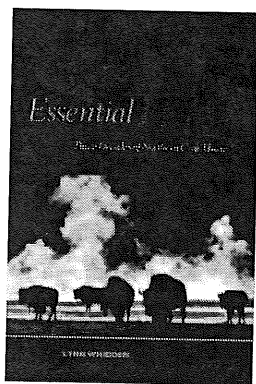
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## Book Review: *Essential Song*

*continued from page 9*

gospel, soul and country and western. Most recently, Plains powwow music has emerged as a powerful symbol of transnational Aboriginal identity across North America and in Europe. But, according to Whidden, unlike hunting songs, these recently-imported musical traditions can never become “essential song”.

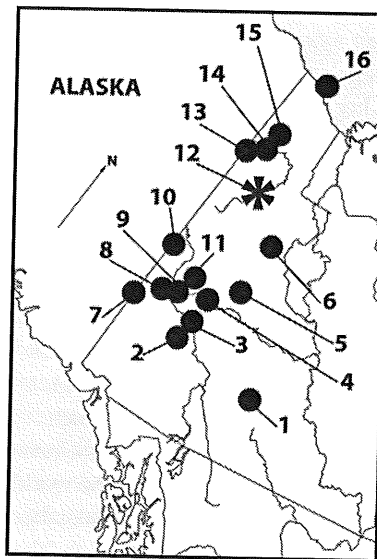
The hunting songs and commentaries Whidden has recorded in *Essential Song* are eloquent testimony to East Cree people’s spiritual relationship with game animals, providing fluent Cree-speakers with invaluable information for further analysis and interpretation. It is regrettable that this important work contains numerous typos and errors. These include the misspelling of Mistassini (mistakenly situated in Manitoba rather than in northern Québec), a misquote on page 64 in which “bird” is substituted for “birch”, and numerous examples of deficient referencing. Nevertheless, *Essential Song* contributes much to our understanding of northern Cree musical traditions. In recognition of this, the editorial staff of *ForeWord Magazine* awarded Lynn Whidden a bronze medal in the music category of their 2007 Book of the Year competition.



## *Legend to Reality: the Story of the Whitestone Mammoth*

by C. Richard Harington

In early July 1967, while sitting on a bench overlooking the Porcupine River at the settlement of Old Crow in the northern Yukon, I heard a strange story. This story was told by Joe Kay (his proper native name is Joe Kyikavichik), an elder of the community, to my field assistant Peter Lord and me following a field trip to Old Crow Basin – the richest area in Canada for collecting remains of ice age mammals, such as extinct woolly mammoths, long-horned steppe bison, horses and giant beavers. I assumed it had been handed down to some of the natives of Old Crow. The tale involved a “monster” that had broken out of a lake bed near the upper Porcupine River, trudded up that river and died under a bank on Whitestone River (Figure 1), a tributary of Porcupine River.



*Figure 1: Map showing the Whitestone Mammoth Locality*

Bearing in mind that such legends may have a core of truth to them (in this case one that could relate to large ice age animals), and wanting to survey drainage basins associated with the upper Porcupine River in case other rich fossil sites could be located, I decided to investigate. Peter Lord and I left Old Crow on July 27 for Whitestone River. We traveled upstream in a long, narrow river boat in frigid weather, with rapidly dropping stream levels. We examined several bluffs and sand bars for fossil bones on the way upstream, but found little of interest.

On July 31 after stopping briefly at Johnson Village, an abandoned Kuchin settlement, we checked the base of a peat-capped bluff on the next bend up the river with little success. Finally, there was no use proceeding farther because the stream was too shallow and we were up on the tundra level with no more bluffs in sight. On August 4 we camped on an extensive gravel bar where I collected plants for the national museum.

We turned back the next day. Perhaps the sighting of a rare Bald Eagle was a portent of success. I recalled that we had not examined the upstream part of the bluff near Johnson Village, so we went ashore there. While I was securing the boat, Peter, who was walking downstream let out a cry and pointed toward

*continued on page 11*

## Legend to Reality

continued from page 10

the river. While running toward him, I noticed a complete mammoth jaw with teeth embedded in sand at the water's edge and then saw the upturned part of a mammoth skull farther out in the water. The rest of the day was spent excavating the skeleton associated with the skull – first the lower jaw (Figure 2), the cranium and broken right tusk, forelimbs, a series of vertebrae and ribs and the pelvis. The hindlimbs were missing, and may have been washed downstream years earlier.

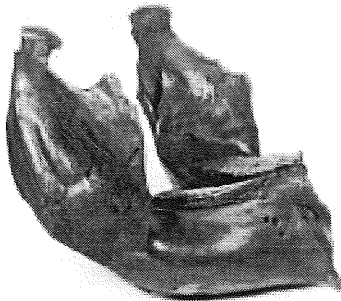


Figure 2: Complete Lower Jaw of the Whitestone Mammoth

The last and most difficult job was releasing the complete left tusk, which was almost vertically lodged in the river bottom. We worked with shovels, thigh-deep in swift, freezing water, but could not make much headway, for as fast as the gravel was scooped away, it was washed back in by the current. In desperation, Peter got on one side of the base of the tusk with me on the other. We heaved it back and forth until the suction was released and we tumbled into the water with a complete, beautifully preserved tusk on top of us. We laid the bones on the stream bank nearby the way they had been found in the water, and I photographed them (Figure 3). Later examination of the skull showed that most of the right tusk had been broken off before the animal died – a situation not uncommon in living elephants. It was the end of an

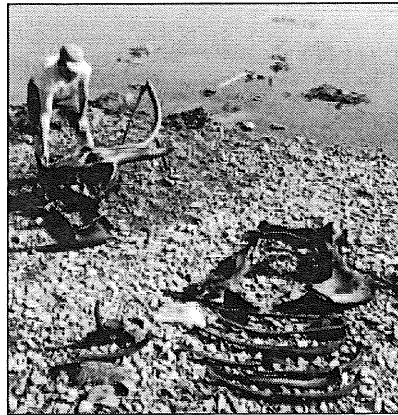


Figure 3: Peter Lord beside skeletal remains of the adult female Whitestone Mammoth

exciting quest. The monster legend was partly true.

I later speculated that the tale had been an attempt to explain two unusual and startling phenomena: the discovery of bones of an unknown, gigantic animal (the “monster”) once seen near the base of a bluff on Whitestone River – perhaps by early occupants of Johnson Village whose descendants had moved to Old Crow; and the observation of a lake suddenly and violently flushing its turbid water into the Porcupine River farther south – which happens on rare occasions when the river cuts back to the edge of a lake near its margin (the part of the tale involving the “monster” breaking out of a lake bed).

A radiocarbon date on a rib indicates that this adult female woolly mammoth (*Mammuthus primigenius*) died about 30,000 years ago during a relatively warm interval before the cold peak of the last glaciation. Discoveries such as that of the Whitestone Mammoth provide invaluable information about the ice age fauna that survived in unglaciated, grassy areas hemmed in by ice sheets in what are now the Alaska, Yukon and adjacent Northwest Territories.

Many of the best specimens in the Canadian Museum of Nature collections are used in displays, the Whitestone Mammoth being a prime example. I worked with artist/modeller Doug Watson to produce a small model (one-twelfth scale) incorporating the skeletal dimensions and characters (including the broken right tusk) of the Whitestone Mammoth. This was later scaled up to life size and displayed with life-size, life-like sculptures of an adult male and baby woolly mammoth. They can be seen on the grounds of the Victoria Memorial Museum Building in downtown Ottawa.

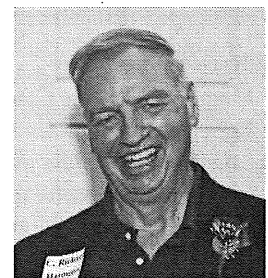
### Additional Reading

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Dr. C.R. Harington, at the University of Winnipeg, fall 2008. photo by T. Fricke



*The Centre for Rupert's Land Studies*  
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