

NOVA SCOTIA NATIVE WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

October 2020 Newsletter



A MESSAGE FROM KAREN PICTOU EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NSNWA

October is a busy month for the Mi'kmaq beginning with Treaty Day and moving into the month-long Mi'kmaq History month. October events looked differently this year due to Covid with Nova Scotia continuing its state of emergency and many parts of Canada entering the second wave of the pandemic. This year more than ever, with the opening of the Mi'kmaq moderate livelihood fisheries across the province, and the violence and racism that ensued, Nova Scotia needed the public awareness of Mi'kmaq culture, heritage and Rights that Treaty Day and History month brings.

The staff of the Nova Scotia Native Women's Association (NSNWA) have been busy over the summer and continued to work from home. With the reopening of all public schools in Nova Scotia brought the return of most of the staff members to the office full time. We reorganized our office space and expanded staff members working in the Sipekne'katik sub-office and three staff members continue to work from home due to the overcrowded office conditions. The staff members who work from home continue to have a presence in the office when needed and work with their colleges and clients in small groups when it can be safely accommodated.

Covid-19 has not slowed down the NSNWA office. We hired two summer students because we felt strongly that it was important to support our students who are struggling to find work during the pandemic and often rely on summer employment for work experience and to finance their education. The staff have adapted to working in a pandemic and moved into the fall expanding the NSNWA programs and employee base. I am extremely pleased to announce that there are three new employees starting employment with the NSNWA in November, Human Resources/Executive Assistant, Director of Sexualized Violence and Systems Mobilization and Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Prevention Worker. Watch out for their updates and introductions in the next edition of the newsletter.

We are closing off the month with Halloween which is still a possibility in Nova Scotia because the province has been social distancing, hand washing, travelling only within the Maritime bubble, or self-isolating if outside the bubble, and most importantly wearing our masks. Have fun trick or treating, a much-needed fun filled family break!

NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTS

- Introducing Gryphon Clark, Historical Interpreter (p. 2).
- The grand reopening of the new Jane Paul Indigenous Women's Resource Centre took place on September 30th, 2020 (p. 5-6).
- Chapter updates, including Acadia First Nation, Sipekne'katik First Nation, and more! (pgs. 7-10).
- Updates from NSNWA staff (p. 11).
- Please email jessicalong12@gmail.com to submit content for the next newsletter in January 2021.



HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE

It is with regret that we must announce in this newsletter that Carley Gloade has departed the NSNWA, effective September 1, 2020. Carley will be greatly missed by everyone at NSNWA and on behalf of everyone, please let us all wish Carley good luck for the future. Please direct all human resource and administrative questions to Karen Pictou or Mary Jane Abram until we can secure a replacement. The replacement will have big shoes to fill!

INTRODUCING GRYPHON CLARK, HISTORICAL INTERPRETER

Gryphon Clark was employed with the NSNWA for the summer as an Historical Interpreter working with Mary Jane Abram. Gryphon researched and gathered as many details as possible on the history of the NSNWA including information to develop biographies of founding members and the key events of the NSNWA.

Gryphon finished their summer with the NSNWA and returned to Memorial University to complete their Bachelor of Arts majoring in Folklore building on their diploma from Nova Scotia Community College in Library and Information Technology. Gryphon has a strong interest in information, research, and storytelling.

Read Gryphon's final report below!



Gryphon Clark, Historical Interpreter.

HISTORICAL INTERPRETER SUMMER STUDENT ARTICLE



One of the main goals of this summer-term role was to research information on the founding, and founding members, of the Nova Scotia Native Women's Association. The search started and revolved around scanning the articles of the Micmac News for information; a newspaper published for the native people around the Canadian Atlantic. Digitized by the Beaton Institute and available for public access are years 1965, 1966, and 1971 through 1991 with most volumes having monthly issues and a supplement or yearly review. It is an invaluable resource and includes not only the main events involving the union and government, but smaller spotlights on births, graduations, weddings, and deaths within the reserves as reporters were assigned.

Starting with the knowledge that the Association was founded in early 1972, the newspaper did not yield much until an article in May of 1971. Here on page three was a description of a conference in Alberta that had four representatives from Nova Scotia: Helen Martin of Membertou, Sandy Julian and Mrs. Steve Marshall of Truro, and Helen Sylliboy of Eskasoni. In the article Mrs. Sylliboy wrote: "we all agreed that the women of Nova Scotia had the right to speak for themselves when it comes to a national organization, and they could do this by the formation of a provincial organization, which we hope will happen in the near future."

As the conference was sponsored by the Native Women's Society of Alberta, more details could be found in the Kainai News: a Southern Alberta newspaper digitized by the University of Lethbridge. An article published in March of 1971 declared that the society had received funding for the First National Native Women's Conference and women from all over Canada had been requested to attend. Motivated by the desire for native women to be able to "voice their views on both the role of women in Canada and on how they can participate more effectively in Canadian society" ("First National Parley of Native Women"). Kainai News reported that between 175 and 200 women attended the conference with topics of important including culture preservation, education, the wrongfully imprisoned, and the issue of status being removed and attributed due to marriage. The result was the formation of the National Native Women's Organization, with delegates assigned to speak with the women in their home provinces about provincial level organization as well. The official recommendations of the Native Women of Canada were published in Kainai News and Micmac News divided by province. The overarching themes were the need for structured support and concerted effort in giving women more opportunities in decision making.

HISTORICAL INTERPRETER SUMMER STUDENT ARTICLE (CONTINUED)



At this conference, Helen Martin was chosen to lead the steering committee in Nova Scotia. She spoke of her work in a number of self-written articles in Micmac News stating that by August of the same year she had visited every reserve in Nova Scotia except one. In later interviews she described the reserves as being cautious of what she had to say, but once she explained the women were very interested. By the start of the following year she was publishing an announcement in Micmac News of plans to hold a Nova Scotia Native Women's Provincial Conference and this was confirmed in the February issue. This conference, less than a year after the national one and having received funding even sooner than that, was the formation of the Nova Scotia Native Women's Association. Held between February 28 to March 1 at the Isle Royal Hotel in Sydney the topics echoed those of the National conference: status, increased involvement of women, and preservation of culture. The constitution was drafted, and the association was made open to any women with a level of native ancestry. Another meeting was scheduled for the same year which solidified the first executives and the constitution. This is a small scope of what has been pulled from the Micmac News. With over two-hundred articles related to the Nova Scotia Native Women's Association and Women's Clubs on the reserves.

Written by Gryphon Clark, Historical Interpreter

References:

Kainai News, "First National Parley Of Native Women," vol. IV, no. 3, March, 15, 1971, p. 8. Southern Alberta Newspaper Collection, University of Lethbridge Library.
<https://digitallibrary.uleth.ca/digital/collection/sanews/id/19429>

Sylliboy, Helen M. "National Native Women's Conference," Micmac News, vol. 1, no. 6, May, 1971, p. 3. Newspaper #54. Beaton Institute, Cape Breton University.
<http://beaton.cbu.ca/atom/newspapers/Micmacnews/MicmacNews-1971-05.pdf>



JANE PAUL INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTRE



KAREN BERNARD, DIRECTOR OF THE JANE PAUL INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTRE

It has been an amazing journey as we worked so very hard towards the grand reopening of the Jane Paul Indigenous Women's Resource Centre on September 30th, 2020, which was an invite-only event due to the COVID-19 pandemic. When this pandemic is officially over, we will be able to host a proper feast and ceremony for all to attend. The centre has undergone an amazing transformation from what it used to be and what it will become as we strive to build capacity for all women to access services. Thank you to Maillard Electric and Mitch who have gone above and beyond in taking on the task to make sure the centre was ready for our reopening day.



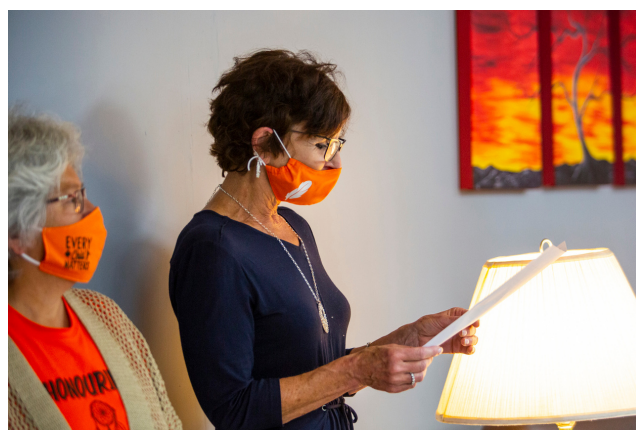
Main room of the new centre.



Annie Daisley, NSNWA President makes remarks surrounded by Jane Paul's family and attendees.

NSNWA and the Jane Paul Centre have partnered with the Mi'kmaq Native Friendship Centre to hire a housing coordinator whose office will be situated at the NSNWA sub-office located in Sydney River so that all our Indigenous men, women and two-spirited people can equally access services to housing supports.

We have also partnered with the Y.W.C.A. in Halifax to hire an Indigenous peer outreach worker who will have an office at the Jane Paul Centre and will be able to travel in Unamaki to all those who require our services.



Eileen Bruleigh, council member from the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women (NSACSW), speaks on behalf of Status of Women.

JANE PAUL INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTRE



The MMIWG Prevention Worker position applicants will be going for interviews soon and that employee will be primarily working at the Jane Paul Centre. It's so exciting that the Jane Paul Centre will be able to offer more quality services to our clients.

Tiana Fusco will also be returning and will be posting her schedule soon. Tiana will be working in our new counselling room. Other services that will be provided include the grandmothers mentoring program, meals, clothing, counselling, employment and skills training, continuing education, traditional and cultural workshops, internet and harm reductions services. A reminder that as we are still in the midst of dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic, therefore there are limits on how many will be allowed in the centre, including staff for the safety of all who access the centre as we work together to prevent any transmission of COVID-19.

See you all very soon again!



Lorraine Whitman, Native Women's Association Canada (NWAC) President, makes remarks at the grand opening of the Jane Paul Indigenous Women's Resource Centre.



Counselling area in the new centre.



Karen Pictou, NSNWA Executive Director, makes remarks at the grand opening.

NEWS FROM THE CHAPTER PRESIDENTS



Karen Boyles, Piktukewaq First Nation President

Our quilting group has resumed since the pandemic. We will be meeting weekly and participants will be making star quilts. We are also looking for a male to help run a men's groups in the community. Funding has been approved for men's activities. Additionally, a women's moose hunt in the Highland was scheduled October 1 to 4, 2020 (dates were tentative due to the pandemic). More details will be announced shortly.

Marie Sack Sipekne'katik First Nation President

We held an outdoor drive-movie movie night for the community on August 28th, 2020 at the LSK School. We gave out popcorn and treats for the children and water and juice as refreshments. There were door prize draws of Tim Hortons gift cards and a family pizza was donated by Mary Ellen Syliboy. We had a good turnout!



Amazing quilts made by the quilting group in Piktukewaq First Nation!



Piktukewaq First Nation.



Piktukewaq First Nation.

NEWS FROM THE CHAPTER PRESIDENTS



Janey Michael,

Waycobah First Nation President

Janey Michael would like to remind the communities of the names of Waycobah First Nation's NSNWA Executive Team:

Chapter President: Janey Michael

Vice-President: Gina Poulette

Treasurer: Cynthia Googoo

Secretary: Tara Julien

All members are from Waycobah First Nation.



Piktukewaq First Nation!

Mary Susan Lafford

Potlotek First Nation President

Kwe', my name is Mary Susan Lafford, I am the interim President for Potlotek First Nation. I am the proud mother of 2 handsome young boys.

I work as the Comprehensive Community Planner for Potlotek First Nation. I have been in this role since October 2019.

Potlotek is my home and I love to volunteer with events that happens in my community as often as I possibly can. For the last 4 years, I have been a part of the Potlotek Pow-Wow committee. I truly enjoy putting the pow wow together as it gives my people a spiritual place to gather and celebrate our culture. I also enjoy volunteering my time to our Food Bank. Food Security is a major issue in most First Nations and I feel good about doing my part to help families in need.

Due to the pandemic, we could not do much within the community in the last 7 months and could not hold any events. I was however able to get family board games and reusable facemasks for children and adult's during the isolation period. This provided families with a little extra to help pass the time.



Mary Susan Lafford, Potlotek First Nation President.

NEWS FROM THE CHAPTER PRESIDENTS



Marilyn Francis

Acadia First Nations President

We had a welcoming and naming Mi'kmaq ceremony, performed by Elder Jane Meader and Paulina Meader on August 15, 2020, which was the first Mi'kmaq ceremony of its kind held in Kespuwitk (Yarmouth, NS). Yarmouth Mayor, Ms. Pam Mood, opened the doors to Frost Park, which was the location used for this sacred ceremony. It was attended by pipe carriers, knowledge keepers, grandmothers, fire keepers and family from Unamaki, New Brunswick and the United States. Photos from the event are below:



We are planning two proposed events, but waiting confirmation from our partners:

- **Medallion Workshop (Quill Work)**
Date proposed: Saturday, October 24, 2020
- **Drum Making**
Date proposed: Saturday, November 14, 2020

Other updates include:

- A Zoom meeting was scheduled for October 11, 2020 to discuss activities for the Kespuwitk District L'nu Womens Group.
- I have personally been going to Saulnierville Wharf supporting the L'nu people and bringing supplies and food.
- We had a successful ribbon skirt workshop for four days. Each participant completed a skirt.
- I attended the MMIWG in Baddeck as a support person and learned basic quill work and made a medallion with the help of Summer and Crystal.

NEWS FROM THE CHAPTER PRESIDENTS



The Kespuwitk District L'nu Womens Group hosted the Four Season Youth Group on Orange Shirt Day (September 30) in honour of residential school survivors. Ms. Rose Francis, respected elder and residential school survivor, was a guest speaker at the event. Check out the pictures of the event below:



NSNWA STAFF UPDATES



Dawn McDonald,

Intergovernmental Liaison/Tripartite Coordinator

Now that we are into September and some COVID-19 restrictions are being loosened, the strategic planning sessions and Tripartite will be resuming this fall. I am currently working with Sipekne'katik on scheduling a strategic planning session in the community. We are reviewing safety requirements for the location and number of participants. If successful, we will follow this model for the remainder of the chapters. Where we are unable to follow the model, we can still do a virtual session.

Justine Maloney,

Employment/Economic Development Coordinator

Justine will be visiting each of the communities to meet with women to discuss populating an E-commerce website for our sisters looking to advertise and expand their businesses. Stay tuned for more details!

Marie Sack,

Family Information Liaison Unit (FILU)

Community Outreach Specialist

NSNWA hosted a MMIWG Family Healing Gathering in Baddeck, Nova Scotia. The event went very well, and the family members enjoyed it.

Ellen Marshall, Deputy Electoral Officer for the NSNWA

Ellen will be holding community elections in November 2020 for the following communities:

Halifax Off Reserve: November 16, 2020 -

Nominations 6-7 pm, voting 7:30-8:30 pm.

Millbrook: November 17, 2020 - Nominations 6-7 pm, voting 7:30-8:30 pm.



NSNWA past and present presidents! Annie Daisley, current NSNWA president, Lorraine Whitman, past NSNWA president and current NWAC president and Cheryl Maloney, past NSNWA president at the MMIWG Family Gathering.



Photo taken at the MMIWG family gathering in Baddeck.