

Wulustuk Times

Wulustuk - Indigenous name for St John River

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SPECIAL REMEMBRANCE DAY EDITION - 2008



**IRA HAYES, PIMA INDIAN, (4th GI) FLAG RAISING IN IWO JIMA 1945
Buried in Arlington National Cemetery**

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Wulustuk Times:

Each month we try to gather and publish the latest, most current and relevant native information for our readership. Proceeding with this concept, we feel that a well informed person is better able to see, relate with, and assess a situation more accurately when equipped with the right tools. Our policy is to provide you with these right tools.

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IRA HAYES, PIMA INDIAN, US MARINE (1923 - 1955)

Pima Tribe

Born -January 12, 1923 Sacaton, Arizona

Died - January 24, 1955 Bapchule, Arizona

Buried in Arlington National Cemetery

There are probably no more tragic stories than that of Ira Hayes. Born on the Pima Indian Reservation in Sacaton, Arizona, Ira was the son of a poor farming family. His people had struggled for years to make a living in the arid conditions of the Reservation and had little success beyond survival. At one time the Pima were successful farmers but that was before the US Government cut off their water supply and created a situation where they could no longer grow enough crops to eat.

Until the beginning of W.W.II, his life was probably unnoticed by anyone more than a few miles from his birthplace. When America called its men to arms Ira answered this call and joined the US Marine Corps for several reasons: He would be able to leave the Reservation, eat regularly and send money home to his family to help them have a better life. His Tribal Chief told him to be an Honorable Warrior and to bring honor upon his people. Ira never failed to do this. He was a dedicated Marine who was admired by his peers who fought alongside him in three major battles in the Pacific.

February 23, 1945, at age 23, an event occurred that would forever place Ira Hayes in this nation's history books and irrevocably change his life. On a hilltop above a Pacific island, a small group of Marines struggled to raise the American flag to claim victory over the Japanese occupancy. As the flag was being raised, Ira rushed to help his comrades just as the photographer snapped what was to become one of the most famous pictures in history. That picture was the "Flag Raising At Iwo Jima" and it is Ira's hands that are outstretched to give the final thrust that planted this symbol of American victory. Six men were caught in that photograph, three of them died shortly afterwards. The battle of Iwo Jima was a costly one for our troops. Only 5 of Ira's platoon of 45 survived and of his company of 250, only 27 escaped death or injury.

Ira Hayes was stunned when he was told that President Truman wanted him and the other survivors to return to the United State to join the 7th Bond Tour to help raise money for the war efforts. He never considered himself a hero and often said the real heroes were "my good buddies" who died during the battles. What was supposed to be an easy tour of duty turned into the worst ordeal of Ira's military life. He never understood why he was called an American hero and struggled with the adulation that was heaped on him everywhere he went. Over and over he made statements that he was not a hero but reminded everyone of the brave men who had died and deserved this honor.

By the time Ira was released from duty he was hopelessly addicted to alcohol. The Bond Tour had been a battle that had taken more of a toll on him than any he fought in the Pacific. It seemed that this nation found one way to honor its heroes: Buy them a drink! Ira went back to the Reservation to escape the unwanted attention he'd be forced to bear but people did not stop writing and coming to see "the Indian who raised the flag." Ira's only escape from the conflict he felt over being viewed as a hero was the bottle. Over and over he made statements like; "I was sick. I guess I was about to crack up thinking about all my good buddies. They were better men than me and they're not coming back. Much less back to the White House, like me." After a ceremony where he was praised by President Eisenhower once again for being a hero, a reporter asked Ira, "How do you like the pomp & circumstances?" Ira just hung his head and said, "I don't."

For the next few years Ira Hayes was a drifter, drinker and loner. He never married, was often arrested for public drunkenness and was filled with despair over the plight of his people. He had been wined and dined by the rich and powerful, had been immortalized in American history but he was still no more than an Indian on a dried up Reservation now that he'd come home. There was still no water, no crops and no hope for a better life for the Pima or him. All this time he still struggled with his own inability to reconcile himself as being worthy of the fame he'd received for simply being one of the lucky ones who lived through such a horrible war. Ira never saw his military service as any more than just being an "Honorable Warrior."

In 1954, Ira Hayes attended the dedication ceremony in Washington, D. C. for the Iwo Jima Memorial. This monument was a bronze cast replica of the now famous photograph of the flag raising, created by Felix DeWeldon. Within 10 weeks of this celebration Ira Hamilton Hayes would be dead at age 33. After another night of drinking and still lamenting over his fallen "buddies", Ira fell drunk in an irrigation ditch and froze to death, alone and forgotten by a country that had called him a hero. The ditch where he died was the single source of water that was provided for his people by the same government he'd proudly served.

REMEMBRANCE DAY, A NOBLE EVENT FOR TOBIQUE VETERANS

-By p.paul

On the eleventh month, eleventh day, eleventh hour of every year, veterans of the Tobique First Nation along with hundreds of community members convene at the local senetaph to mark this special day and remember the fallen comrades. They are joined by friends, cousins, brothers and sisters who also served in the military ranks dating back to WW-I, and WW-II.

Attending and adding dignity to the ceremony will be a troupe of the RCMP to honour and add color to the ceremonies for this year's memorial event. Wreaths, chants and drumming, poetry and a moment of silence will again be in the offing to express appreciation, sentiment and commemoration for the sacrifice and service rendered by Tobique veterans.

The gathering hosted by the community and MC'ed by Nick Paul is usually an hour-long event which is followed by a potluck dinner in the school gym. However, because of renovation taking place at the school this year, the dinner site will possibly held at the Tobique Entertainment Centre.

Tobique has always had a reputation of providing more than a fair share of manpower and service to the military when international crisis arises in any part of the world. For instance in WWII when the entire Tobique population was less than five hundred persons, a total of 45 young men volunteered for duty in the US and Canadian military.

In that war, five of Tobique's soldiers died in battle during overseas duty. The fallen included Walter Tremblay, Paul Peter Nicholas, Jerome Paul, Sanford Saulis and Vinal Joe Ennis.

Photo below shows Tabaci soldiers at Camp Borden just prior to overseas duty in 1941-42.



Left to Right: Patrick Bear, David Ennis, Jerome Paul, Maynard Bernard, Raymond Nicholas, Pat Laporte (St. Mary's) and Donald Saulis. Taken at Camp Borden, Ont, Spring of 1942

OVERSEAS AND BACK, TABACI VETERAN, DONALD (SPIKE) MOULTON

P. Paul

Our ship, SS Duchess of York, taking us to England in 1942 was the only, and the biggest boat I ever saw. This was my first time getting on such a huge ship in all my 19 years, and I was a little nervous because we understood it would take 2 weeks to get to Liverpool, England. Well they were almost right. We took eleven days and eleven nights to cross the Atlantic.

You know I should have been scared to death by rights, but I never even thought of fear, or had time to get scared because there were so many of us in that tiny ship. I call the ship tiny now because as I discovered later other troop ships were almost double the size of ours. And because the size of our boat we had to stay in close quarters on our journey across.

Another thing, it seemed all the other guys were very young like me, some even younger than myself, around seventeen, we were just too young to think of danger or dying. Really, that is how young crazy teenagers (like us then), would think about life anyway. We went there with the least thought of getting sick, worried or being fearful. We all thought we were invincible. Our boat was not the greatest troop ship in the world by any means and the small size of the ship made it tougher physically to accommodate so many guys in such tight conditions. For

instance, the sleeping quarters for 10 guys in a 12'x14' space was way too small for resting and sleeping comfortably. But there we were, all jammed together in those tiny rooms like sardines in a can, sleeping double-decked on tiny hammocks that swayed side-to-side with the rolling of the waves beneath us.

Another sensation we felt was the sudden zigzagging motions of the ship occurring at every ten to twelve minutes intervals to avoid getting hit by a torpedo.

A pleasant surprise happened a couple of days out when I ran into a guy from my reserve, Jerome Paul, who, as I found out was in the same 1st Division as I was. We chatted a bit and then stayed in close contact the rest of the way. We ended up doing things together like watching Destroyers zipping and zooming around us, in and out of the fleet looking for enemy U-Boats. The Destroyers would just dive and disappear into huge waves and re-surface like porpoises. For us, this was like watching a real-live action movie. Later we ran into other brothers from the reserve and it was like home away from home out there for awhile.

Somehow we made it through to Liverpool, England in one piece. And from there we disembarked and headed to our designated camps in the UK to prepare for battle and war. Many of us were sent to the front lines while other guys stayed behind to serve on supply lines. The war encounter went on for about three years for some of our brothers. Sadly though, five of our Tabaci comrades did not make it back home. God bless them.

When the war ended on May 8, 1945, (VE Day) thousands of Canadian troops stationed all over Europe had to be gathered and brought home. Regretfully, my shipmate buddy Jerome, who went over with me was not among the returnees. He died in action in Normandy, France. In the end, German forces and their allies were totally beaten. They were physically and morally defeated to the last man and their once-proud leaders were forced to sign an unconditional surrender shortly after the cease fire. From then the next humongous task was mobilizing Canadian troops for their return to Canada.

On my way back home in December aboard the SS Monarch of Bermuda, things were a little less hectic and jollier cut all the guys were just so happy and excited to be going home after three to four years away from their families and loved ones. It was a happy trip that lasted only five days instead of eleven days it took going over, plus on top of that the ship was less crowded. We could sail in a straight line and not worry about torpedoes hitting us, and besides, we had now become men during the war and could better hold up and understand our situation.

So after five days on the ocean we landed in Halifax, Nova Scotia, minus most of our heavy gear to quickly board trains heading anywhere and everywhere across Canada.

At each stop the train would let off a bunch of guys and got emptier as we went. Long-haul travel back then was by train and for shorter travel people rode buses. It ended up many of our comrades took trains and connecting busses traveling night and day before they got home in the Maritimes, Quebec, Ontario and western provinces of the country.

Myself, the train let off in Perth, NB. at noon on December 20, 1945, just in time for Christmas.

From Perth, I went by bus and got off on the opposite shore to the reserve in a few minutes. To my surprise the river was not frozen over for some reason and I had get to the other side by canoe. Faced with this predicament I had to start yelling at the top of my lungs for

someone to pick me up from the other shore. Finally, it was the old railroad man Simon Perley who heard my yells and came to get me.

I discovered later that the word of my arrival had gotten around the reserve pretty fast and a lot of the good folks came to the reserve landing at Naswaukik to see me come home. I was one of the first guys to get back from war and that was probably why so many showed up at the landing site.

I recall my homecoming was a very special experience seeing so many community members coming out to greet me, to welcome me, shake my hands, offer food and drink and everything you could imagine.

Even now, in my early eighties, I can still feel the rush and emotions I went through when I think back to that day. And I can also still see the happy and smiling faces of people waiting on the shore, all coming around, gathering, greeting, talking the native language to me, just so excited as I came ashore.

Tabaci population was small at around 400-500 in the 1940s but surprisingly, there were 45 men in uniform during WW-II, and about half of them saw combat overseas.

It is important to mention the fact that Indian soldiers were 100% volunteers because at the time we were regarded as non-citizens in our own country. We were not forced to join, nor were we legally bound or obligated to serve in the military unless we agreed or volunteered. But as it turned out, many of us did go into service because we saw other kids our age going in and we didn't want to appear different.

Besides there was hardly a choice because there was no work on reserves in those days. We had poor housing and food was scarce. In the army we got these things and a little pay to boot.

Another fact I must bring out at this time is, it took until 1963 before Indians were finally able to vote and get Canadian citizenship. Prior to getting these rights government jobs were denied to us, whereupon, after getting the vote, men and women could be called up for military duty in case of an emergency and when called they would have to go.

But to return to my story, I must say that I was never so honoured and proud to be from the Tabaci as I was on the day. When I stepped ashore I felt the warmth, love and a heartfelt welcome from the community folks. I was so deeply honoured for the grand time and reception they organized for me on that day, I shall never forget. Those were great moments in my life.

To me that awesome welcome coming from the community was worth the whole journey overseas, including going through the hard days of war. What a thrill it was to be coming home to family, friends and relatives. Something I shall never forget. I still thank the whole community of Tabaci to this day.

- Spike

TOMMY PRINCE, OJIBWAY INDIAN, CANADIAN HERO

German soldiers on the front line near Anzio, Italy, thought little of the peasant farmer weeding his field near their emplacement. The field had been torn up by shelling, the crops all but gone. The soldiers watched disinterestedly as the farmer slowly worked his way along the field, stopping once to tie his shoelaces. Finally, the farmer stopped his work, shook his fist at the Germans and then the Allies, and returned slowly to the farmhouse.

The seemingly innocuous farmer was actually a highly-trained Canadian soldier, a marksman and an expert at tracking and making his way unseen around the enemy. His name was Thomas George (Tommy) Prince and he'd gained many of his skills growing up on the Brokenhead Ojibway Nation reserve, north of Winnipeg.

For Tommy, like most young men on Canadian reserves, World War II meant the chance for a job and three square meals a day. However, Aboriginals were routinely rejected, for health reasons but also because of their race. Tommy was turned down several times, despite more than meeting the requirements for recruitment. He persisted and was finally accepted on June 3, 1940. He was assigned to the 1st Field Park Company of the Royal Canadian Engineers. He accepted every challenge that came his way and excelled as a soldier.

Tommy Prince is Canada's most-decorated Aboriginal war veteran.

By 1942 Tommy was a Sergeant with the Canadian Parachute Battalion. He was posted to the 1st Canadian Special Service Battalion and was among a select group of Canadian soldiers sent to train with an American unit to form a specialized 1600-man assault team. They became the 1st Special Service Force (1st SSF), known to the enemy as the "Devil's Brigade." The name was adopted by Hollywood as the title of a 1968 portrayal of the elite unit. Tommy was portrayed as "Chief."

The 1st SSF soon saw action. In Italy, Tommy volunteered to run a communications line 1400 m to an abandoned farmhouse less than 200 m from a German artillery emplacement. Tommy set up his observation post in the farmhouse and for three days reported on the activity in the German camp.

On February 8, 1944, shelling severed the wire. Tommy, disguised as a farmer, found and repaired the break in full view of the enemy, while pretending to tie his shoes. His courage resulted in the destruction of four German tanks that had been firing on Allied troops. He was awarded the Military Medal for "exceptional bravery in the field."

Tommy continued to distinguish himself. In the summer of 1944, the 1st SSF entered Southern France. Tommy walked 70 km across rugged, mountainous terrain deep behind German lines near L'Escarene, going 72 hours without food or water, to locate an enemy bivouac area. He reported back to his unit and led the brigade to the encampment, resulting in the capture of over 1000 German soldiers. He earned the Silver Star, an American decoration for gallantry in action, as well as six service medals. Tommy was honorably discharged on June 15, 1945 and went home to Canada.

Tommy returned from fighting Nazi racism to a country that denied him the right to vote in federal elections and refused him the same benefits as other Canadian veterans. The business he'd entrusted to a friend failed in his absence. Facing unemployment and discrimination, Tommy re-enlisted and served with the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry. During two tours of duty in the Korean War he won the Korean, Canadian Volunteer Service and United Nations Service medals. He was wounded in the knee, and was honourably discharged on October 28, 1953.

Tommy Prince is known as Canada's most-decorated Aboriginal war veteran. He was also a brave and remarkable man with an impish sense of humour, a man who beat his own

demons, including alcoholism. Tommy had a strong sense of civic duty and a fierce pride in his people. He said "All my life I had wanted to do something to help my people recover their good name. I wanted to show they were as good as any white man." He dedicated himself to attaining increased educational and economic opportunities for Aboriginal peoples.

Tommy died on November 25, 1977, at the age of 62. Laura Neilson Bonikowsky is the Associate Editor of The Canadian Encyclopedia.

VETERANS AFFAIRS CANADA

This is the Year of the Veteran and this is National Aboriginal Day, so it is today that we pay tribute to all our First Nations, Inuit and Metis Veterans who performed great feats, persevered through great hardships, and the many who perished in great honour.

It is a statement about the character of these Veterans, that despite cultural challenges, historical inequities and economic disparities, these Veterans rose above history to join the battle for a better future for all.

Literally thousands of First Nations, Inuit and Metis people served in the First and Second World Wars, in the Korean War. Their connection to their native soil could not have been greater, but five hundred lay buried on foreign soil in Canadian cemeteries around the world.

We are proud to promote the commemoration and passing on of our nation's history. The sacrifices and achievements of our soldiers cannot be replaced. We will be forever grateful to them. And we encourage Canadians to join with us to thank all our Canadian Veterans.

We cannot know all the stories of courage and valour. They are the secrets locked in time.

But we can point to the legendary bravery of some as a portrait of thousands more. Men like Private Joseph Roussin, a Mohawk from Quebec's Kanesatake Band, who served with the Van Doos during the First World War. Private Roussin was awarded the Military Medal for bravery for carrying out a solo attack against eight enemy soldiers in 1917. His was a solitary achievement, but he was not alone in achieving great honour for his fellow First Nations Veterans.

Tommy Prince, an Ojibwa from Manitoba, served in both the Second World War and the Korean War. He once said, "As soon as I put on my uniform I felt a better man." That uniform could not have been worn by a better man, who was one of Canada's most decorated. During the Second World War, Mr. Prince earned the Military Medal for repairing a severed communications line while spying on the enemy. Mr. Prince was also among the first to arrive in Korea in August of 1950. There he would earn three of his 11 medals.

Joseph Roussin and Tommy Prince were but two of a cast of thousands who cast their people in a new light, whose legend is cast in honour, and whose memory is forever inscribed in our memory.

In the Year of the Veteran, we have asked Canadians to learn the legacy of men and women who lent their hands to shape the world. Canada's Aboriginal Veterans rose to the challenges of history and today it is the challenge of all Canadians to be worthy of their sacrifice. -Thank you.

During the National Aboriginal Day wreath-laying ceremony held in Ottawa on June 21, 2005, the Honourable Albina Guarnieri, Minister of Veterans Affairs is seen here with Veterans Steven J. Simon, Atlantic Director of the National Aboriginal Veterans Association (NAVA) on the left, and Claude Petit, National President of NAVA.

Unveiling of a plaque depicting the first Aboriginal soldier to fall in the First World War.

Minister Guarnieri speaks during the National Aboriginal Day wreath-laying ceremony held in Ottawa on June 21, 2005. On her left, is Korean Veteran Claude Petit, National President of NAVA, and on her right, holding an eagle feather is Korean Veteran Jim Eagle, former member of NAVA, and master of ceremonies for the day.

TORY WIN A CONCERN TO ABORIGINALS

Doug Cuthand Leader-Post

The re-election of a Conservative minority government could have a serious impact on First Nations and aboriginal people. It could affect us through the promise to get tough on youth crime and the economic circumstances facing everyone over the next year or so.

They say you should be careful what you wish for because you may just get it. I'm sure the Conservatives will be thinking this as the economy enters a recession that economists predict will last into 2010. In spite of a strong banking system we will feel the spillover from the United States. You can't avoid it when your largest trading partner is the root of the problem.

Stephen Harper will have to steer the ship of state between the shoals of budget deficits and an economy in recession. In the election campaign, virtually every leader stated that they would not allow a budget deficit during their watch. The problem now is how does the country deal with a shortfall of income against a growing demand for funding for the social safety net?

The next few years will not be good ones for Canada and even worse for disadvantaged groups like First Nations and aboriginal people.

Now we can really kiss the Kelowna Accord goodbye. The Liberals watered it down in their policy document and they were the ones who negotiated the original agreement.

For the past decade we have been living under a funding cap that allows only a two-per-cent increase annually in spite of the fact that prices and the First Nations population have been growing at double the rate. I don't see any end to the rate cap. It's too good a tool for pushing people out of the communities, which always was the long-term plan of the colonial office.

Also our ability to lobby and find a sympathetic ear in Ottawa is harder now with the loss of Tina Keeper from the Churchill riding in northern Manitoba. Currently there are only two First

Nations or Inuit members of Parliament: Rob Clarke from Desnethe-Missinipi-Churchill riding in northern Saskatchewan and Leona Aglukkaq from Nunavut. Both are Conservatives.

The Conservatives' proposed changes to the Youth Criminal Justice Act could also negatively impact our people. When a group is over-represented in the justice system it only stands to reason that "get tough on crime" policies will impact them the most.

In the United States tough crime policies have seriously impacted the minorities such as Hispanics and Afro-Americans. Minorities are over-represented in both the jails and as victims of capital punishment.

The old Reform Party had a strong proportion of its membership that wanted to return to capital punishment. These people are still out there and if they got their way Canada would be headed back to the dark ages.

This happens at a time when crime statistics are dropping. Positive policing that places more officers on the street and in the community coupled with a population that has placed more trust in the police has reduced the crime rate. However, the media continues to report criminal activity, as it should. But the public reacts to the crime stories assuming the worst.

In reality crime is dropping and young aboriginal people are entering the workforce in record numbers. Jailing 14-year-olds is a step backwards at a time when we need to be moving forward.

On the positive side, there is a lot of residual good will from the boarding school apology. It would behoove the government to build on it by adding new funding and reaching out to the Metis Nation and the Assembly of First Nations. In the past the Conservatives have been playing favourites with the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples, a non-representative group of opportunists. Now Harper should show some good will and open lines of communication with the two representative organizations.

For an election that cost \$300 million there is very little change as a result. The message from Canadians should be interpreted that we want to see a minority government work. Harper has a limited mandate but he must tread softly in order to reflect the will of the people.

Will he use a deficit as a financial instrument or will he stick to his guns and not run a deficit in spite of the need? Will he push forward with his tough on crime legislation in spite of the growing body of evidence that it doesn't work? These and other questions will have to be addressed sooner rather than later.

The British North America Act states that "Indians and lands reserved for Indians" fall under the jurisdiction of the federal government, making us the only people in the country who fall under federal jurisdiction. We are the country's miner's canary when it comes to federal policy and legislation.

The Conservative government has the opportunity to work with our leaders for change. The country will be better for it.

TABACI PREPARING FOR ELECTION- NOV. 21, 2008

Victoria Star

Seven Tabaci First Nation residents were nominated to run for chief in a band meeting held on Friday, Oct. 10 at the Tabaci First Nation bingo hall and entertainment complex. The election will be held on Nov. 21.

Incumbent Chief Gerald (Cookie) Bear will be challenged by Dave (Gerard) Perley, Larry Perley, Sterling Perley, Wendall Nicholas, Stewart Paul and Brenda Perley.

Fifty-six band members are offering for the 12 council seats. Candidates include Brenda Perley, Mae Perley, Gillian Moulton, Debbie Perley, Charles Nicholas Diamond, Edward J. Perley, Marie Perley, Larry Perley, Brad Perley, Billi-Joe Milbury (Bear), Paul Pyres, Ken (Scrappy) Perley, Nebun Rose Nicholas Bear, Edith Sappier, Marlene Shumate, Tina Perley-Martin, Theresa Hart Perley, George Francis Jr., Allan Saulis, Wendell Nicholas.

Tim Nicholas, Lisa Dutcher, Kim Perley, Ross Perley, Marty Bear, Lynn Dingee, Rob Hassenchal, Suzanne Sappier, Richard Moulton, Terry St. Jacques-Sappier, Arlene Sappier, Cyril Perley, Red Cougar Dennis (Perley), Laura Sappier, John Lindsay Paul, Jessie Perley, Joanne Sappier, Dave Perley, Pat Paul, Martin Clair, Tammy Schloemer-Savoy, Chad Arnold, Erlin Perley, Dan Ennis, Neil Perley, Christian Perley, Shelly Solomon, John (Hands) Perley, Trevor Francis, Eldon Bernard, Gary Sappier Jr., Leo Francis, Jason Moulton, Edwin Bernard, Francis Max Moulton, and Mary Solomon.

Tabaci First Nation residents last went to the polls on Nov. 17, 2004 to pick a chief from three candidates and 12 councillors from 51 offering for the position.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TRADITIONAL GOVT. AND THE I.N.A.C. IMPOSED GOVT.

Once the nation state of Canada was created by the transplanted Europeans in 1867 they set about the task of forcing their form of election democracy upon our people. The transplanted Europeans convinced themselves that their hybrid form of democratic election was superior to the Indian's form of traditional governance and were determined to impose their form of democracy upon our people by any means necessary that include legislation and lethal force.

On May 1, 1899 a Colonel Sherwood went to Akwesasne Mohawk Territory leading a contingent of troops whose duty it was to disband the Mohawk hereditary chief's governing council and to install an elected form of governing council which Colonel Sherwood accomplished by killing Mohawk Head Chief, Jake Fire, and imprisoning seven hereditary chiefs. Jake Fire was shot dead in cold blood while fighting for Mohawk Indian Traditional Government.

Immediately after this affair Colonel Sherwood took fifteen Mohawk Indians to Cornwall and provided them with alcohol. The Indian Agents told them each to nominate one of the others present. This was how the elective government model under the Indian Act system was implemented at Akwesasne. This is the way Canada introduced our people to the principles of their form of democracy. Which makes this imposed foreign government model only about

140 years old. Whereas our Traditional Longhouse Government has thousands and thousands of generations of longevity.

Our Traditional Longhouse Government consists of family councils, clan councils, community councils and nation councils. The Longhouse Council Government operates on a consensus basis, making it a truly democratic, bottom up process - a true democratic government.

It is the Clan Mothers who normally chose the Chief, or head person, who shall represent and/or speak on behalf of the family, clan, community or nation.

Being familiar only with a monarchy form of governance those transplanted Europeans thought of our Longhouse Traditional Government as being too cumbersome, too lengthy and additionally, women played a key role in our process, so they began to work to change things. Which they eventually managed to do to the detriment and demise of our people and to true democracy.

All My Relations,
Dan Ennis
October 29, 2008

SPECIAL MOMENTS

Some special moments of our time are meant to bring us joy and peace each day

If we not forsake our precious ties with our Devine and relate in kind and duly pray

DEAN'S DEN - "Old Bear"

He stumbled to an old dead-fall
That he had searched and found
And kind of dug and scraped away
Then flopped down on the ground,
You might think that he was fairly fat
And though he'd put on a few pounds
He'd be nothing more than skin and bones

Long before the winter's gone,
One back tooth was aching bad
And his eyes were growing dim
Time and again the works of man
Had got the best of him,
The woods weren't what they used to be
And the berry crop - not great
The days had gone, the season passed
And he hadn't found a mate,

He moved, and felt a stab of pain
Where he'd been shot at, just for fun
It hurt real hard 'most every day
Especially if he had to run,
He turned and softly licked one foot
Two claws missing from the paw
He'd struggled - but he'd freed himself
From that pathetic iron jaw,

Last time I saw him on the ridge
He was growling 'neath his breath
He was maybe contemplating on
The rites of life ... and death,
And I wondered if he'd make it through
And where bears go - when dead
And I wondered 'bout the sort of thoughts
That go through an old bear's head!

D.C. Butterfield

OUR PATH

The path of life we choose in daily pace

Will definitely take us on to our eternal place