

*“Namôhkâc nika-pôni-âcimon”
(I will never quit telling stories)*



*Âcimowina kâ isi âcimotwâw
Mâkwa Sâkahikanihk ohci Kihtheyayak
(Stories as told by the Loon River Cree Elders)
C.Schreyer, editor*

“Namôhkâc nika-pôni-âcimon” (I will never quit telling stories)

Namôhkâc nika-pôni-âcimon = I will never quit telling stories / âcimowina
kâ isi âcimotwâw Mâkwa Sâkahikanihk ohci Kihtheyayak = stories as told by
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DEDICATION:

Ôhi masinahikana emasinahikat'kîkwâw ohci awâsisak Mâkwa Sâkahikanihk ohci.
These books are dedicated to all the children of Loon River Cree First Nation.

“Namôhkâc nika-pôni-âchimon”

*Âcimowina kâ isi âcimotwâw
Mâkwa Sâkahikanihk ohci kihteyayak*

*Theresa Blue, Willie Courtrielle, Florence Houle, Norbert Laboucan,
Edna Letendre, James Letendre, John C. Letendre, John L. Letendre,
Mabel Letendre, Ernest Noskey, Felix Noskey, Frank Noskey, Joe Noskey,
Julie Noskey, Margaret Noskey, William Noskey, Leonard Supernault,
James Ward, Malcolm Ward, and Mary Louise Ward*



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Introduction

Christine Schreyer, editor

During an interview for the Loon River Cree First Nation's Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study, Mary Louise Ward, a community Elder, commented, "namôhkâcnika-pôni-âcimon" (I will never quit telling stories). This quote was, to me, the perfect comment on the spirit of the storybooks I was working to edit and I immediately seized it as the title for the collection of stories from the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study. While Cree is still spoken amongst many families of the Loon River Cree First Nation, community members hold a growing concern that English may one day replace the Cree language for the younger generations (see Schreyer 2008). The idea that the Elders will never quit telling stories and, consequently, never quit speaking their language is an inspiring one in the face of language shift across Canada for many indigenous communities (see Aboriginal Languages Task Force 2005). Many of the Loon River Cree Elders' voices have been woven together to tell the stories in this book, including:

Theresa Blue, Willie Courtrielle, Florence Houle, Norbert Laboucan, Edna Letendre, James Letendre, John C. Letendre, John L. Letendre, Mabel Letendre, Ernest Noskey, Felix Noskey, Frank Noskey, Joe Noskey, Julie Noskey, Margaret Noskey, William Noskey, Leonard Supernault, James Ward, Malcolm Ward, and Mary Louise Ward.

The Elders have many stories to tell about how they used to live and travel through the land, where they used to hunt, how they used to tan moose hide, where they used to find berries and medicines, and so much more. Throughout the book, the stories in each chapter are based around one of eight themes: moose hunting, trapping, berries and medicines, fishing, places people traveled to, housing in the past and present, traditional items people used to make (sleds and snowshoes), and pow-wows. The stories all come from the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study (TLUOS) that the Loon River Cree First Nation conducted between July 1st, 2003 and October 7th, 2004. The

TLUOS began due to concerns the community had that as their Elders' passed their stories about how they used to live on this land would one day no longer exist. The history of the community had only ever been documented by outsiders, such as historians, anthropologists, and consultants, and the TLUOS was a reaction to this historical omission as it is the documenting of the community's history in their own words. For Richard Davis, the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study manager at Loon Lake, it is important to conduct Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Studies because:

For thousands of years First Nation people traveled this land. Our history is written in every river, lake and living part of creation. This knowledge is at risk of remaining silent, never to go beyond our memories of our elders if we do not document it now (Davis, 2003: 2).

The TLUOS team, which consisted of Loon River community members Eva Whitehead, Laverne Letendre, and Kenny Ward, as well as Richard Davis and Barry Hochstein, consultants, conducted interviews with twenty elders and traditional knowledge holders. The interviews were conducted individually, as well as in groups including: trappers, only women, only men, and couples. All of the interviews were done in Cree, as many of the elders are monolingual Cree speakers, and all of the interviewers, being community members, are fluent in the Cree language. Because it was community members interviewing other community members, sometimes their own relatives, a sense of trust developed and the stories that were collected could not have been gathered if this was not the case.

Each of the chapters' titles are also quotes from the Elders' interviews and stories, and the quotes that I have included as the titles of each chapter are those that I thought best summarized the information to be found in

that particular topic. The titles of each chapter are:

1) Peyak - “Kahkiyakîkway nikî kakwe mîcinân ôma môswa kâ nipahiht,”
itwew Kihtheyaya Felix Noskey. (“We used to use everything we can get out of
the moose for food”, Elder Felix Noskey)

2) Nîso - “Eko onôcihcikew, tâpwe onôcihcikew ekî peyakot asci. Mistahiekî ayât
yahkiskâkewin ekwa sôhkemôwin - eko awa Joe Noskey”, itwew
Kihtheyaya Frank Noskey. (“He was a trapper, a real trapper and he was alone
too. He had a lot of motivation and courage – that was Joe Noskey”, Elder
Frank Noskey)

3) Nisto - “Poko kîkway ekî ohpikihk pokwîte, mâka mâna ayisiyinowak kâkî osîhtâtawâw maskihkiwâpoy kâyas, ekî mekitwâw cistemâwa meskoc”, itwew Kihtheyaya Julie Noskey. (“Anything grew just anywhere, but when people made herbal tea long ago they would have to give some tobacco as an offering”, Elder Julie Noskey).

4) Newo - “Kayâs kîmihcetôwak kinosewak Mâkwa Sâkahikanihk nân'taw isîsi ekî esi pîhtokwetwâw”, Kihtheyaya Malcolm Ward itwew. (“Long ago there used to be fish that would come into Loon Lake”, Elder Malcolm Ward).

5) Nîyânan - “Kayâs mâna sâkahikan'sa peyakwan meskanawa ekî itâpatakwâw sisone sîpîhk”, itwew Kihtheyaya James Ward. (“Long ago the little lakes were used just like roads along the river banks”, Elder James Ward).

6) Nikotwâsik - “Kinwes ayisiyiniwak kî ati ayâwak Mâkwa Sîpîhk piyisk kî ati wâskahikanihkîwak”, itwew Kihtheyaya Mary Louise Ward. (“That is when people stayed for a long time at Loon Prairie, and eventually, people made houses”, Elder Mary-Louise Ward).

7) Tepakohp - “Kîkatawasisin kâyas sakâhk, pokîte kaki itohtân tîpiyâhk kwayask kita tahkopitaman kitâpacitâwina. Kakîpapâmitîhtapin”, itwew Kihtheyaya James Letendre. (“It was beautiful in the woods a long time ago, you could go anywhere as long as you tied your belongings right, and you could ride around”, Elder James Letendre).

8) *Ayinânew* - “*Nikiskeyihten mâna ekî wîhkohtoik ôta Mâkwa Sâkahikanihk*”, itwew Kihtheyaya Edna Letendre. (“I know there used to be pow-wows here in Loon Lake”, Elder Edna Letendre).

Much of the history of the Loon River Cree community, including how they made their livelihoods in this territory, is included in these books, as well as events and activities the community continues to participate in today, such as moose-hide tanning. Some stories are thought-provoking, some are funny, and all of them are informative about what life was like, and continues to be like for this community.

PEYAK

“Kahkiyakîkway niki
kakwe mîcinân ôma
môswa kâ nipahiht,”
itwew Kihteyaya
Felix Noskey.



Kihteyayak itwewak, “Nikiskisinân...”

Ernest Noskey itwew, “Nôhtâwiw kîpîk’swâtam. Môswa kâwînot kîspin kâmisot namoya ohci pônihâw. Âskaw ita ohci kâpôni mitiht, mistatim ekî nâtiht ekwa ekota ekî pîkapîsihk. Ekwa asamîna ekota ohci emâci natonawiht.”



Ernest Noskey



Willie Courtrielle

Willie Courtrielle itwew, “Âskow kîhmihcetinânawow peyakwanohk, kîwîcîwâwak âskow omâcîwak, kîmiywâsin. Ayisiyiniwak pânsâwanihkîwak ita asici kîhîwahikîwak.”

Isa (Florence Houle) itwew, “Itîh môswak kâyayâtwâw ekote kâkîhayâhk. Namâwiyak ohci wâskahianihkew. Itîh môswak kâ ayâtwâw itîh kânipahtwâw, ekota kâ wîkihk.”



Florence Houle



Edna Letendre

Edna Letendre itwew ita môswa kânipahiht ekota nikâwiy kaki osîhtât wiyâs, “Ekota kâkî osîhtât akwâwân”.



Norbert Laboucan itwew, “Maskîkohk mâna wiyâs ekî astâhk maskimwatihk eyasôwatâhk ekwa ewâtihkîhk kâpipohk ôma. Ekosi ekî itâpatahk, maskîk ekîhitâpacihtâhk âkwatihcikan.



James ekwa Mary Louise Ward itwewak, “Âskaw wâskahikanis ekî osîhtak itah ta astâhk wiyâs”. Itwewak, “Kâ osîhtâyâhk wâskahikanis, ekî nâtwânamâhk nipisiya ekwa ecâhkastâyâhk. Mâcika peyakwan wâskahikanis, ekota wiyâs, pânsâwâna, pimiya, îwahikanak kâkî nahastâyâhk. Mâcika nikîhâpacihtânân kâpipohk, kîwîhkasinwa.”

James Letendre itwew, “Kîmiywâsin kayâs, namakîkway ohci wîpinikâtîw.”

William Noskey itwew, “Iskwewak kîkâyawâtisiwak. Kahkiyakîway kî kaskihtâwak, kî osihtâwak mîna pahkîkinwa.”





Mary Louise Ward itwew, "Mâwaci nîkân epahkonat môswa. Kîhtwâm kitotinîn pahkîkin ekwa kitosîhtân miskohtoy ita ta tahkopitaman pahkîkin. Ekwa kisihkîpitîn.

“Kâkîsi sihkipitaman, mistik kitastân nân'taw âpihtaw ekota kâwîhkîhcîkosiyân, ekota ekwa kâwîmâcimihkiyan.”



Julie Noskey itwew, “Mihkihkwan isiyihkâ tew oskan. Môs wa oskana ohci kâkî osîhitâhk.
Mihcet ayisiyinow kayâs kaskihtâw ta osîhât.”





“Kâkîsi mihkitamihk ekwa emâtahamihk. Ehoipinamihk ekwa epônîkâtîk sîpâ ohci. Namôhkâc pîsim ohci kîpâsikâtîw. Mitoni mâna kî takahki pâstîw kâ mosci pônîkâtek.



“Kâpastekkimâtahikatew.”



“Ekwa kâkî mîcin ewako wasakay (watow). Kîwîhkasin. Kahkiyaw kîkway kîwîhkasin wiya kahkiyakîkway ekîmîcihk. Pisikiwak kahkiyaw nitiyihten kîmôwâwak.



“Kâkîsimihkitaman pahkîkin kitôminîn pimiy ohci. Kâkîsitôminamihk kîpihkihtînikâtewew sihtapihkwanak ohci.



“Kâkîsipâstek kîswînikatew wiyitihp, môsowiyitihp.

Kîpâsikâtew asamîna, kîhakohtânowo, ekwa kîsinaktew. Kîhtwâm nipîhk akohtânowo. Kîhtwâm kîsînikâtew mitoni mistik ehâpacihtâhk mîtosihk. Kîhtwâm esîn'pitamihk. Mîtosihk etahkopitamihk pîwâpisk. Ekota ekwa eyâocipitamihk epâsamihk.



Margaret Noskey ekwa Mary Louise Ward

“Kîhtwâm kîpikihtînen, pita napatiy, kîhtwâm kweski. Mistahi atoskewin. Mihcet asici kîkwaya tapimicisahamihk.



Mary Louise Ward ekwa Margaret Noskey

Florence Houle itwew, “Nanâtohk kî isi âpacihtânawo pahkîkin”.

John C. Letendre itwew, “Nikâwiy kîhosîhtâw pahkîkin ekwa kîhosîhtâw maskisina.
Nôhtâwiy kîhatâwâkew mâna osîhcikana ekwa nikîhatâwânân mîciw'n.”



James Letendre itwew, "Ast'sa kîhosîhîwak ekwa miskotâkaya asci. Ôma mekwâc âtiht ayisiyinowak kiyâpic pahkîkin'was'sâkîwak."



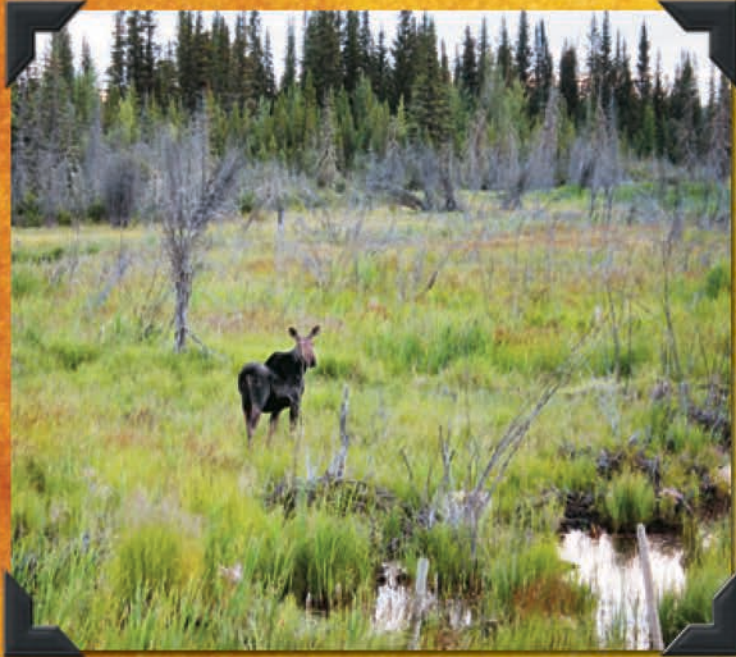
Arthur Noskey



Florence Houle itwew, “Kahkiyaw kîkway kîhosîhcikâ tew pahkîkin ohci, ahpwe poko peminahkwân”:

Kîkway as’ci kîhitâpaci hâw môswa?

Felix Noskey itwew, “Wîhkway mîna kîhâpacihtânawo, ekî asowacikâkîhk. As’ci kîhâpacihtânawo otîhiwîhkway, ewahikanak, pimiy, osôpîw’pimiy. Ocakisîsa mîna ekî sîpîkinamihk ekwa emîcihk.”



Bella Gladue ekwa Lawrence Noskey's awâsisak

Norbert Laboucan itwew, "Kâkikiy poko môsowiyâs ta mîciyâhk otîh. Ekwa môswak misowe ekîhayâtwâw.

Môswa kîkisteyihtâkosiw Mâkwa Sâkahikanihk ohci ayisiniwak.

“I will never quit telling stories”

*Stories as told by
Loon River Cree First Nation Elders*

*“We used to use everything that we can get out of the moose for food”
Elder – Felix Noskey*

The Elders say, “I remember...”

Ernest Noskey says, “My dad used to talk about [moose hunting]. When the moose were fat, they never gave up on it. Sometimes they used to go on horse back from there to where they could track the same one and that is where they set up camp.”

Willie Courtrielle says, “Sometimes there would be a lot of people at one place and they would go along with the hunters and that was a good thing and people would make dry meat or shred meat.”

Florence Houle says, “Wherever a moose was killed that is where people stayed because there was no permanent home. That was before cabins were made, just tents. So wherever moose were killed that is where people went and stayed.”

Edna Letendre says that where the moose was killed, “That is where my mom prepared the meat. That is where my mom made her meat rack.”

Norbert Laboucan says, “We would go to the muskeg with our moose meat and we would put it inside a big bag, and then we would make a big hole in the muskeg and you do know of course that this was in the winter. Then we would put our food there and that was our deep freeze.”

James and Mary Louise Ward say that they sometimes stored meat in a small house.

They say, "It was built as a house and people would break down trees and lay them out on the bottom and they weren't that high and so it was like they were building a house, and that was where they would store their dry meat or any kind of lards and shredded meat, and when winter came along they would go and get those stuff and then they would eat them and the food would always stay fresh."

James Letendre says, "It was a good life a long time ago and people used to live right and they would never waste anything."

William Noskey says, "The women were hard working long time ago. They knew how to do anything, including making hide."

Mary Louise Ward says, "The first thing you do is skin the moose. Then when you are done with that you take the hide, then you make the frame and that is where you stretch out the hide.

"Then after you have finished stretching it out by tying it onto the frame, then you put a stick across the middle and that is where you climb up and start taking off the skin.

"Then after you are done, long ago you used to make a fire under it by lifting it up by leaning it on sticks, so it will dry, but never in the sun. I do not know why but it was good when you made the fire, so it would be just right for it to dry."

Julie Noskey says that the thing called a mikikwan, used to scrap off the skin was made of, "bones, the moose legs, and your father made one. People made that kind back then."

"Then after it is dry then you would scrape of the hair. When I mentioned scraping off the skin, then you would eat it. It used to taste good. Everything tasted good because everything was eaten. The animals too, all were probably eaten.

“Then after you finished scraping the hair off the hide then that is when you put grease. After you have finished that, then you smoke it with spruce boughs, and then you put the hide on top so it will dry.

“When it is dry that is when you put the brain on. Then hang it till it is really dry. Then you dip it in water and twist it as to get the water out. It was never twisted with a long stick but twisted directly in a tree. It was twisted just like this. Then you would pull it back and forth (on a flat metal tied on both ends).

“And then you tan it, after you have tanned it on one side then again you tan the other side. It used to be a lot of work. There were many steps that had to be done.”

Florence Houle says, “Hide was used in all kinds of ways.”

John C. Letendre says, “When my mother made the hide she made moccasins and my father went and sold them to buy food.”

James Letendre says, “They would also make gloves and they would make jackets and there are still some people that actually wear them jackets.”

Florence Houle says, “Anything was made out of hide, even rope was made out of hide.”

What else did they use the moose for?

Felix Noskey says, “The water bag of moose was used – you turn it over, wash it, and use it for a container. The part that covers the heart was also used, and the fat. Part of the guts inside, and the fat is large. They wash these and use them for food.

Norbert Laboucan says, “We always had to have moose meat up here, and they were everywhere.”

Moose were very important to the people of Loon Lake.

NĪSO



Frank Noskey

“Eko onôcihcikew, tâpwe onôcihcikew ekî peyakot asci.
Mistahi ekî ayât yahkiskâkewin ekwa sôhkemôwin –
eko awa Joe Noskey”,
itwew Kihtheyaya Frank Noskey.

Kihteyayak itwewak, “Nikiskisinân...”

Malcolm Ward itwew, “Kâyas nistam paskisikana kâtahtohtemakahkwâw. Ekî kinwâkwâw ekwa kaskitew eyâpatahka matwewek. Ekospe amiskwakecâhkahitwâw isko peykwan paskisikan espapitwâw ekwa ekosi esi tipahaman. Mâcika, mihcet amiskwak, wîya pita epâsohtwâw ekwa ekinwâkwâw pâskisikana.”



Willie Courterielle itwew, “Ayisiyinowak mâna kâkikiy kî ayâwak nistomitanawa. Ayiwâkîkohk ekotowa ayisiyinowak ekî ayâtwâw. As’ci, yapisâskwahkwâw pâskisikana mâka namoya nikîwâpahten. Nôhkom mâna kakî âcimot: mistik epôciyahkinahk ekote, ekwa epîtosihtâkwahk.

“Kîkway ekî wîhtamâkawiyân kayâs. Ekî mihcetwâw amiskwak ekwa ekî nômi namatakotwâw, ekwa kâwi etakosihkwâw. Ekospe ahtay ohci kâ atâwiyân paskisikan, peyakwan sôniyaw. Mâcika nehîyaw mistahi kîhkimotamowâw sôniyâsa. Peyak mahkesîs kihci-mitatomanow etakisot ekospe. Kotak mîna mahkesîs ekî ihtakot ekwa cimawesiw.”



Felix Noskey itwew, “Kiskisiw tân’si kânôcihcekek ekî ispayik. Ayisiyinowak misowe ekî pimohtetwâw isko Apahkwâcîs Sâkahikanihk ekwa anikwacâsa ewanîhikamowâtwâw. Pokwete ekî itohtehk tepeyâhk mîtosak emiyostwâw. Âskaw nîso ahpô nisto Ayamihew kîsikâw, âskaw peyak pîsim, sakâhk kît’sk atimwak, eh? Mâcika mistahi nikîmîcisonân.



Felix Noskey



Felix Noskey

“William kâkike nikîwîcîwâw.
Kîspin kinipân nîsaw âta mistahi
ekônôwik, namoya nân'taw. Ascî
papiyahtik mâna ekî ayâyâhk
sakâhk: peyakwâw, nîsowâw ahpô
nistwâw kînâciwanîhikanânân.
Kâyotihk ekî miywâsik sakâhk.
Anohc ekwa piko kapî pipôn
ekota ta ayâyan.”



Willie Courtrielle kiskisiw, “Peyakwâw emiskamân wanîhikan, ‘moya nikisin tânite mâka kâmiskamân. ‘Moya nikiskisin tân’si mâka ewîcîwakwâw ayisiyinowak ekwa kânâwanehikiyân, pihew ekota apiw niwanîhikanihk!’”



Asci kisksow, "Peyakwâw ôma asâmak
ohci epimohteyân ekwa mistahi kôna
e-apit. Nân'taw nisto ahpô newo misit
ekwa ekî tahkopitakwâw misakamiy
isko otâhk. 'Moya nikiskehten tân'si
ekî isi pimohteyân wîya piko awîyak
tayohtenamoyit iskwahtem ekwa otâhk
isi ekawipayân. Kâyas eko!"

Iskwâyâc kiskisiw, “Ekî âyimahk ekospe kakî nôcihcikek. Nântaw nisto tipskâw, âskaw namoya kîkway enipahtâhk, wîya piskowak ekâ epimohtetwâw. Ekâ itokwe wâhyaw etohtetwâw ôma kâkisik. Mâcika âskaw ekî âyimahk ekwa âskaw ekî miywâsik kâmâcîhk ahpô kânôcihcikehk. Ekî miywâsik mistahi wîyas kâ ayâhk ôma kânîpihk ekwa nîkî miywehtamân ispî ayisiyinowak kâmâci mâcîtwâw. Peyakwâw ôma epeyakoyân amiskwak enitawâpinikiyân ekwa pâskisikan itahkonamân. Môswa niwâpimâw ceki ohci. Nipâskisikan eyasîhkahtek mâcika pekopayow ekwa ninakatâw enanîpawit ekwa nipîkîwân.”



Joe Noskey



James Ward itwew mâna kakînôcihchiket, “Ekî âyimahk mâna ekospe wiya ekîkisik. Âskaw nikotwâsomitanaw ekî kisik ekwa wayawîtimihk enipâhk. Âskaw kekisepâ kôna mistahi eyapit ekwa asci ekesôsiyan ayiwak, mâka kâkoskopayan kôna epahkisihk kikwâkanihk. Poko asci ta pônaman ekwa mihta ekinwâkwâw. Namoya kîkway mâna nipi, piko kôna ta âpacihat kâkâsîhkweyan.”



James Ward

James Wards
trapline cabin



“Atimwak mâna nipâpa ekî âpaciât kasipwehtet. Nameskwa ekospe nîyanân etahtopiponiyahk tawîcîwayâhk mâka âskaw mâna poko. Ekote mâna nipâpa ekî pimohtet ohci meskanâsihk ekwa sâkahikanihk ekî itamokwâw. Ekoni ekî âpatakwâw. Peyakwan meskanawa ekî itamokwâw sisone sîpîhk. Âskaw nîstanaw anikwacâsa ekî nipahât. Mistahi ankiwacâsak ekî ayâtwâw asci wâposwak meskanâsihk ekî wîhcihotwâw.



Apiscimôsis

“Kiyâpic ekota enôcihcikiyân mâna sakahk. Peyakwâw ekospe enihtawikit nitânis. Ekospe nikî tahkonâw mistatim etîhtapiyâhk ekwa sîpîya e-âsowahamâhk wîya amiskwak ekî kipahahkwâw sîpîya. Amiskwak asci itahkonakwâw ekwa nîso emisikitwâw atimwak ewîcîkoyâhkwâw. Apiscimôsis ekospe ninipahâw ekwa kakîyaw nitotinâw ket’sk ekâ otakseya. Ekospe ekî maskaw’sîtwâw mistatimwak ekwa asci itahkonak iskwesis.”

Mary Louise Ward kiskisiw wîsta kâkinôcihciket. Itwew, “Nipâskisikan ekî apisâsik wîya ankiwacâs pâskisikan. Kiyâpihc ehtakonwa. Nîstanaw-nîsosâp kî-isiyihkâteyiwa ekwa kayâs ôma. Eko poko itahkonamân ekwa ekîsipôn’yôtihk ôma Ayamihew-kîsikâw kîkisîpâ. Epâmohteyân ekospe maskîkohk epâmi tâpakweyân ankiwacâsak. Mâmayîsk ekospe mahkîsîsak kâwanîhikamâhtwâw. Ascî ekospe kâkîtâpakwân pîsowak.”

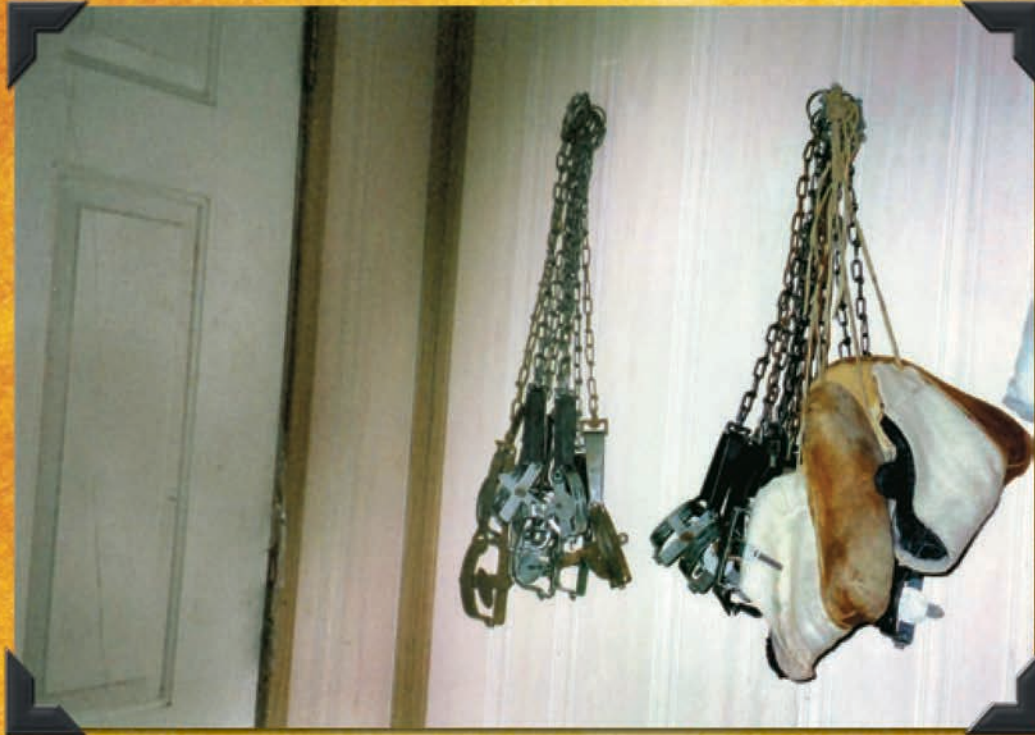


Mary Louise Ward

“Kakîyaw ekotowa ekî wanîhikamowakwâw pîskowak. Peyakwâw nisto pîsowk ekâhtinawkwâw ekwa kahkiyaw ocâwâsim’sa ekota itasôsotwâw. Wapôsak mîna ekî ayâtwâw ikospek ekwa kâyasi meskanâhk epimohteyân maskîkohk. Nântaw peyak misit itâmihk eko meskananaw wîya kayâs ayisiyinowak ekî pimohtetwâw. Kâ sekwahk awîyak takî wâskahikanihkew. Nipâpa wîsta ekî osîhtât ekotowa.”



Ank'wacâs



Ernest Noskey kiskisiw kânôcihciketwâw opâpâwa. Itwew, “Nipâpâ mâna ekî askîwak mayaw kâ’sipwehtet. Amiskopîhk kakî takosiniyâhk, nisto ekî meytit tapakwâna. Peyakwâw ekî tahkonahk pîsôw tapakwâna, ekwa peyak nimiyik. Misiwe mâna meskanâsa ekî kistatamokwâw sakâhk. Ceci sihtihk enohhte astâyân peyak. Tapwe peyak nimiyik. Mâcika ekota nîwîyakotân nitâpakwân.

“Kâwi ekwa enâtakwiyâhk ekwa ekota kâwi epimohteyâhk. Ispîhci eyâpihkonât anikwâsa, ekota ekwa ninâtakwân. Namakîkway paskiskan eyayâyân ket’sk nimaskimwat. Tâpwe ekota kîkway cîpatapiw. Nitîpwân ekwa pîtohtew nipâpâ. Pîsô ninâkwatâw ekospe. Ekî ayâtwâw mâna pîsowak kayâs. Kâwi nikîwânân mâka pita nipônînân.



Pîsô

“Asci anwacâsak, mâcika maskimwathik nitasîwayâw eko pisôw. Tâpakwâneyâpiy ohci ekwa nitahkopitâwak, enânîswahpitakwâw mistikohk. Ekitimâkinawit itokwe, wîya nitahkonamâk pisôwa. Ankiwacâsak ekwa nîya nitahkonâwak. Kâtakohteyâhk ekwa, namoya ekwa pahkonew. Tommy ekota wîsta ayâw mâcika wîya pahkonew. Namoya nikiskeyihten awîna ekî atâwâket ekoni pisôwa ahpô niya.”

Frank Noskey mistahi kiskisiw nôcihchikewin. Itwew, "Oskac nista kânôcihcikeyân. Ekî wîcîwak mâna Norman. Ekospe ekî tâpakwît ank'wâcasa, asci ekî kisik. Nistîs mâna tahki ekî pônahk wîya ekî kawachiyân ekâ mistahi ayiwinsa. Anohc ekwa nanâtohk ihtakonwa ayiwinsa. Kâkikî ekî ayât mâna kitohcikanis itîh kâ-itohtet ekwa e-ayât pewâp'skos tahkopicikans ekwa ispimihk ekî takopitahk nawac tamiyopayik. Mâmayîsk mâna kâkapîsit e osîhtât, pita ekoyiw eyastât. Ceki ekî astât iskotehk ekwa enitohtahk. Ekî miywîhtahk tanitohtahk mâna kasôniskwâtamik (hockey).



“Ekwa kakî nâtakwet ekî wîcîwak mâna wîya anikwacâsak ekâ ewayawetwâw kâkisik. Ekî ahkwacipayitwâw mâna peyakwan lapatâkwa, ekwa owaskasîsiwâwa ekî kâsiniekwâw. Ekî kîwetahât ekwa itihk'swat. Namoya nîya ekosi nitôten. 'Moya nikiskeyihten tânehki kâwîcîwak. Ispî ekwa kâ-ispayik nawac kwayask epimit'sahikiyân, ekota ekwa niwâwîcîwâw nipâpâ.

“Ekî nitawi nôcihâyâhkwâw anikwacâsak ekwa ekasâmiyâhk. Kîkway poko ekiskisiyân peyakwâyi poko asikanak ekwa mistahi ekisik. Nisita ekawaciyân ekwa epâpahkisiniyân wîya ekâ asâmak enakacihakwâw ekospe. Nipâpa epâpasikôpisit ekwa itwew, ‘wapahki kwayask kapostaskisinahitin, mâcika namoya kakawacin.’



Wapôs

“Mâcika ekospe nikapîsinân sîpa sihtik ekwa mâci tâpakwew wâposwa, wîya asci enâpâyâstek ekwa wapôsak ekî mîhçetwâw. Namoya nimôsihâw kâwaniskât, kânâtakwet. Kâkîsi pônahk ekwa ekî tîpwâsit, ‘wan’skâ Mac’. Ekosi ekî isiyihkâsit, itwew, ‘wan’skâ Mac’. Nikîwan’skân mâna, ekwa emîcisoyâhk pita ekwa kî-itwew, ekwa ewî postasikanahitân kwayask.

“Ekîsi pahkonât wâposwa
ekwa kîyapic ekisoyit
wapôsoyâna epostasikanahit.
Etiyhtamân ekwa ta
kawaciyân ayiwâk nista.
Wayawîtimihk isi tiyakwac
ahtay. Ekota ekwa asikanak,
kîhtwâm pahkîkinweskisina.
Kâsipwîhtiyâhk ekwa nisista
ati kîsowâwa. Nântaw
ekospe kâmâci wîcîwak,
ekwa kîpah kâmâci âhkosit
nipâpâ.





“Ekwa nikîwîhtamâk tapeyakoyân ekwa itwew, ‘Sôskwâc peyako, namakîkway misawâc kanipahikon ekote.’ Âsay ekospe wâskahikanis ekote, mâcika nikî miywehten. Nikî nipahâwak anwacâsak âskaw mitâhtomitanaw ahpô kîkâmitâhtomitanaw peyak kîsikâw, âskaw ayiwâkîs, eh? Kakîpâskiswâwak ahpô kakîtâpakwân mîna. Nikî miywehten wiya esôniyâhkiyân ekwa piyisk ninakayâsken. Âskaw nisto Ayamihew’kîsikâw ekote wâskahikansihk epeyakoyân. Ekwa nikî mâci osîhtân wâskahikan’sa. Nipâpâ nikînakatamâk wâskahikanis, ekota ekwa pimîweyiniwak kâtahtohtetwâw. Ekospe ekwa enîpâ-ayamihâhk ekî itohteyân, mistatim eyotâpît toboggana. Kâtahtohteyân wâskahikanisihk, namatakon. Yayahahkwâw ekwa watihkâkan ekota eyastâtwâw. ‘Moya ekota mitoni mâka kâyayahahkwâw. Mâcika namatakon wâskahianis - nipâpa owâskahikanis.

“Mâcika, ekospe, kânîpihk kotak nitosîhtân nân'taw âpihtaw mistik awasta. Niwanîhikân ankwacâsak ekwa niwîkin ekota nisto pipon. Kîyispayô, epohk kî mâci otinâhtikwîwak ekote. Nitohtânân ekote, pôtôma mîtosa ekawi yahkahâtwâw tahkohe wâsahikanisihk. Eko nîya niwâskahikanis, mâcika ninakaten. Kotak nikî osîhtân Paskwaskâw Sâkahikanihk ekwa ekî napaki apakkweyân. Ekota mîna ekî mâci otinâhtikwîtwâw, mâcika namoya nitawâc ninitawâpînikân. Ekospe misawâc ekwa epôni nôcihakwâw anikwacâsak.”



Frank Noskey asci âtotam kâmâci ayâkwâw nôcihchikîskanawa ekospe. Itwew, “Mâmayîs kîhtakohkwâw meskanawa, nîso nôpehikan ekî itakihtek peyak. Pokwete kakî nôcihcikân ekwa mihcet nâpewak ekî ihtâtawâw misowiy. Namoya ohci nôtinitowak. Ekî mihcetwâw misowiy onôcihcikîwak wâwîs kâpipohk. Ekospe asci, ekî tipahakwâw onôcihcikeskanawâwa.

TRAPLINE IDENTIFICATION CARD

CARD N^o 1101

This is to certify, that
 Frank Noskey of Loon Lake
 Alberta, is the registered holder of Trapline No. 1101
 expiring August 31st, 1966.

For: Director Fish and Wildlife Division

Form W.A. 12 (412)

Frank Noskey's trapline identification card

Cert. No. 1496 Dept. Game Laws
 L. D. # 63

THIS CERTIFICATE MUST BE PRESENTED WHEN DISPOSING OF ANY AND OF ALL FURS

FEE \$10.00 ALBERTA Season 1962-63
 CARD NO. 006679 DEPARTMENT OF LANDS AND FORESTS N^o 1496
 NO. OF TRAPLINE CARDS

Certificate of Registration of Trap Line
 (RESIDENT)
 SUBJECT TO THE PROVISIONS OF "THE GAME ACT"

Felix Noskey of Loon Lake via Peace River, Alberta

Is hereby Granted the Sole Right to hunt, trap and kill Fur-bearing
 Animals during the Open Season, and as permitted under existing Game
 Regulations, on Registered Trap Line, No. 1496
 but not elsewhere (FOR DESCRIPTION SEE REVERSE SIDE)

ISSUED OCTOBER 20 1962
 EXPIRES AUGUST 31st 1963

THIS CERTIFICATE IS NOT TRANSFERABLE AND THE TRAPLINE MUST BE OPERATED BY THE PERMITTEE. SUB-LETTING
 OF THE TRAPLINE ON ANY PORTION THEREOF IS ABSOLUTELY PROHIBITED.

Felix Noskey's Certificate

“Ekospe mâna nipâpâ kî nôcihciket Kinosîw Sâkahikanihk, miakamiy isko Mostos Sâkahikanihk. Ayisiyinowak mâna wâhiyaw ekî itohtetwâw. Ekospe mitâtaht nôpehikan ekî itakhitek nôcihcikeskanaw. Mâka ekospe otipahamâkosowak namoya tipahamwak, sôskwâc epâpayiniyikwâw. Mâka nîyanân âpihtaw kosânak ekospe poko etipahamâhk. Kîtahtawe eko mina nakipayo: Tânehki etokwe, eh? Anohc ekwa nîmtanaw nitipahen ninôcihcikeskanaw. Kayâs ohci ekwayikohk etipahamân.”

Mary Louise Ward, peyak iskwew kâkî nôcihciket. Ôma otâcimowin. Nân'taw, "Ayinânnewosâp kâkîmâci nôcihcikiyân. Emamâmitoneyihtamân mâna âskâw, ekwa ekohk ekîmiywehtamân. Ekî masinahikîmîkawiyân mâna nîsta. Atâwikamikohk mâna ekî mîkawiyân piskihc wîya ekâ kîkway ohci e-ayayâyân wanîhikana ahpô tâpakwâna. Ekî atowîyan mâna nîsta piskihc. Kîkisîp mâna ekî sipwîhtiyân ekwa kâtipiskâk kâwi itakohteyân. Sakâhk sôskwâc ekîpimohteyân wîya ekâ kîkway ekospe meskanawa nân'taw. Namoya awiyak tatâpwehtahk tânite ekî papâmohteyân kayâs.



Mary Louise

“Peyakwayak mâna ekote eyisîhkâtek Sôskwaciwewin, ekî kapîsiyâhk ekote nôcihcikîwikamikos ekî ayâk, nîso ekota wâskahikanisa. Ekî mâmawîkihk ekota. Nitiyihten nîso nôpehikan ekospe nôcihcikîskanaw etakihtek, kayâs ôma kâtotamân. Namakîkway masinahikanis mâcika misowe ayisiyinowak ekî wîkitwâw asci enôcihcikîtwâw. Kâtakwâkik mâna emâcîtwâw ekwa âskaw ekote ewâskahikanihkîtwâw. Mâcika ayisiyinowak ekî asi nôcihcikîtwâw. Ekî miywâsik mâna.”



Mary Louise



Mihcet Mâkwa Sâkahikanîw ayisiyinowak ekî nôcihcikîtwâw âta ekwa pîtos, ekwa kiyâpic kihteyayak kiskisiwak tân'si kayâs mâna sakâhk kâkî nôcihcikîhk.

“I will never quit telling stories”

*Stories as told by
Loon River Cree First Nation Elders*

*“He was a trapper, a real trapper and he was alone too.
He had a lot of motivation and courage – that was Joe Noskey.”*

Elder – Frank Noskey

The Elders say, “I remember...”

Malcolm Ward says, “A long time ago when the first guns came out, they were very long and you had to use gun powder to fire them and there was a time when you had to stack your beaver pelts to the same height of the guns and that was when you finished paying for the gun. So, there must have been a lot of beavers because they were first dried and then they would stack them and those guns were very long.”

Willie Courtrielle says, “People would always have a 30-30. Most of the time those were the kind that people would have. Also, the kind of gun that looks small although I have never seen one of them myself. My grandmother used to tell me the way they loaded them was they would put a stick to load the powder because every time the gun went off the sound would be different and I think that they used to call them muzzle loaders.

“There was something that was told to me a long time ago that there were a lot of beavers a long time ago but now they have disappeared, and when you trapped the furs you had to have enough for the length of the gun you were purchasing. So they must have stolen a lot of money from the Indians and the furs would have cost a lot like a Silver Fox was at least one thousand dollars. There was also an animal that was called a Samson Fox, and the fur would be short on the animal.”

Felix Noskey remembers how trapping used to be. He says, “People used to travel all along this way towards Bat Lake, and that was where we used to trap squirrels. We used to go everywhere it didn’t matter where as long as there were big trees, and we used to spend two or three weeks, even a month, in the bush just with dogs so we had lots to eat.

“William always came with me. If you slept two times even if there was a lot of snow it was okay, and you had to stay out there. And we used to take it easy in the deep woods just like when you go set your traps you go check your traps once maybe two times or three and that was it because of the wind it would always be good in the woods and these days if you go and trap you have to wait there all winter.”

Willie Courtrielle remembers, “This one time I found a trap, and I don’t know where I found it and so I started to trap and I had to track something and I set my trap. I don’t know what happened and so I went with some people and I went and checked my trap and there was a Prairie Chicken in it!”

He also remembers, “This one time I had snow shoes and I don’t know where I got them from and the snow was pretty deep back then about three or four feet deep and I would tie those things from front to back and you were suppose to tie them only in the back. I don’t know how I used to be able to go out because I needed help to open the door and I got stuck because I fell over backwards. That was a long time ago!”

Last he remembers, “It was hard back then when we used to go out trapping. We would be gone for about three nights and we wouldn’t even go and kill anything because the animals wouldn’t even run around. They must have thought that they would get cold if they went far. So it was hard to go hunting and trapping a long time ago, but then again it was very good to have lots of meat when summer came along and I used to like it and people would start to go hunting whenever they finished trapping. This one time I went alone to go and check for beavers and I was carrying a gun, but I don’t know where I got it from but then I came across a cow moose and it was standing real close and my gun back fired and I realized that the firing pin had broke off, so I left the moose standing there and I went home.”

James Ward tells about when he used to go trapping. He says, “The people used to have a hard time when they would trap back then because it was so cold. It even got to be sixty below back then and even in the morning and you had to sleep out in the cold and there were times when I woke up and there was snow on top of me but back then when the snow was on top of you there was no way you got cold because it was like an igloo, but then when you woke up there was snow on your face and you had to make your own fire and the fire wood would be very long and there was no water and so you had to wash your face with the snow when you woke up.

“We used dogs and it was my father that would go out trapping. We weren’t old enough to go out yet, but then we used to go with him although we were just children. Well, it was over there on the other side that my father

would walk from and there used to be an old trail that went that way and that was where we would come out from and there were times when he would kill twenty squirrels at a time when we used to travel around over there and the squirrels were everywhere at that time, and there were even rabbits along the trails that would be easy to catch.

“Well, I still trap a lot from there and even when we used to stay in the woods and there was a time when I couldn’t even go and trap because my daughter was born and there was a time when I had carried her on a horse and we had to cross creeks when the beaver would close the rivers and I was even carrying some beavers, and there were two big dogs that would also come with me and when I killed a young deer when I was young the only thing I would take was the guts and the horses were pretty tough back then, and I was also carrying my daughter.”

Mary Louise Ward remembers when she was trapping too. She says, “My gun was only a squirrel gun so it was a small gun. They still have those. They were called a 20-2, and that was a long time ago. That was all that I was carrying and it was a very warm wind on a Sunday morning and I was walking around in the muskeg and I was going around setting my traps for squirrels and that was the time when you could go out and trap for them and that was before the foxes were trapped for and that was also when you would set your snares for lynx.

“I had even trapped for all of those kind of animals and one time I went out and I got three lynx that time and all of the lynx’s litter were caught in that trap. There were even rabbits back then and I had come out on an old road and there were trails in the muskeg that were about a foot down and from the time when the people would move around a long time ago and when the spring had come along that was when someone would make a cabin and even my father had made those kind of cabins.”

Ernest Noskey remembers trapping with his dad too. He says, “My dad, I used to be right behind him right from the very beginning when he used to trap. When we got to a beaver dam he would give me three snares and that was it. Then one time he used to carry snare wire like lynx snare wire. I asked him for some and in the muskeg there used to be animal trails that were very visible. There was one near a spruce tree and I wanted to set a snare there and I asked him for one and he did give me one. So I just tied it there and set up my snare.

“Then we went to check our snares and we were supposed to go by there on our way back and while he was untying his squirrels I went to check on my snare. I ran quickly before he was done, but I did not have a gun, all

I had was my bag. Sure enough there was something sitting there at my snare site. So, I called and he came over and sure enough it was a lynx. There were many lynx long ago. Then we were on our way home, but we made a camp fire first.

"I had squirrels also, so I spilled them out of the bag and put the lynx in my bag and used snare wire to tie two per snare wire and tied them to a stick and that is how I prepared to carry them because I did not want to leave them. Suddenly, he must have had pity on me, and he told me to carry some of his squirrels and he would carry the lynx. I did carry the squirrels and when we got back he would not skin it for me. I did not know how, but Tommy was there and he skinned it. I do not know what I did with that lynx or if it was me who sold it."

Frank Noskey has many memories of trapping. He says, "Initially, when I first started trapping, it was when I used to go with Norman, trapping. That was when he was snaring squirrels, and when it was cold my older brother used to make a fire every so often because I was cold and we did not have too much clothing. Today there are all sorts of warm clothes to wear. He used to always pack a radio wherever he went and he would have this wire that he used for an antenna, and he used to put it up high for better reception. Before he even made camp he would put that up first. Then after camp was setup he would put it closer to the fire and listen to it. He used to like listening to hockey.

"And when he used to go check his snares and I went because the squirrels do not come out in the cold eh? They used to freeze up like potatoes and their nails were very sharp! He used to pack them home and thaw them out and I did not do that much myself. I used to only go with him and I am not sure why I did. Then when it came to the point where I could tag along better, then I went with my father.

"He went trapping for squirrels and we went with snow shoes. Well, what I remember is one pair of socks and I was dressed similar as now. I had one pair of socks with snow shoes and it was very cold. My feet were getting very cold and I kept stumbling due to inexperience with snow shoes. My father would keep pulling me up and he told me, 'tomorrow I will put warm foot-wear on you so you will not get cold.'

"So then we camped under a spruce tree and then he started setting snares in the moonlight because the rabbits were plentiful. I did not hear him when he got up in the morning, when he went to check his snares. So, after he made a fire he would call to me and say, 'get up Mac.' So, I got up and then after we ate he said he was going to put socks on my feet.

"He skinned a rabbit that was still warm and he put the skins on my feet with the fur on the outside. So, I thought for sure that I was going to get even colder with this wet cold rabbit skin on my feet. He put my socks on top of the fur and then the moccasins last. Then we left and not long after that my feet started feeling much better and very warm. It was around that time that I started going with him and after that he started getting sick, my father.

"Then he told me to go by myself and said, 'Just go on your own, nothing is going to harm you or kill you out there.' There was a cabin then anyway, and I enjoyed it after all. I killed squirrels and they were plentiful. 100 a day, 90 a day, and sometimes a little more. You can shoot them or snare them as well. I was happy because I was making good money and I got used to it, and I enjoyed it and sometimes I would stay for 3 weeks. By myself in a cabin, then finally I started making cabins. My father had left me [a cabin], and then the oil companies they came around, when I went over there just before Christmas with a horse pulling a toboggan. When I got there the cabin was gone, they buried it and put a rig there. It was not right on the exact spot where the rig was but it was buried. So the cabin was gone - it was my father's cabin.

"So, that summer I made another cabin further down about a half a mile. I trapped squirrels there and I lived there about 3 winters. Then it came to happen during the winter that they started logging over there. We went over there, and lo and behold, they had pushed a tree right on top of my cabin. That was my cabin, so I had to abandon that cabin too. I made another one across Grassy Lake that had a flat roof. They started logging there too and I did not even go and check that one. By this time I was starting to quit trapping squirrels."

Frank Noskey also tells about when trap-lines came into effect. He says, "Before there as any trap-lines the trapper's licenses were only \$2.00 a piece. A person could trap wherever they wanted to and there used to be a lot of men because they used to see each other all over the place, no one got into fights. There used to be a lot of trappers everywhere especially in winter and the springtime and during the renewal of the licenses.

"That was when my father had trapped up in Fish lake, all the way up to Buffalo Lake and people used to go far to trap. And then licenses went up to \$10.00, but at that time the treaty people got their licenses free because it was paid for, for them. So, they did not bother with it. It just came to them. But for us half-breeds at that time we had to pay for our own. Then all of a sudden that came to a stop too, I wonder why eh? Today I pay \$40.00 for my trap-line. I have been paying that much for a long time."

Mary Louise Ward, was one of the few woman trappers who trapped on her own. Here is what she had to say about trapping. I was "about eighteen [when I started trapping]. I was thinking about that while I was standing over there, how I had enjoyed trapping; I was reminiscing. The store owner used to give me [credit] because I did not have any stuff for trapping, traps and snare wire. My husband used to buy some and I bought myself some also. I would leave in the morning and get back when it was dark. [I walked] in the bush because there were no trails anywhere. No one would believe I've traveled all over everywhere.

"Over here at the place called the sliding area is where we used to camp. There was a trapper's cabin there; there used to be two there. We were all living in the same area at that time, living in the same area at the same time. That was how it was back then; all living in one area. I think it was \$2.00 back then in order for you to trap, a permit, it is long ago that I am talking about. There was no paper only the permit, and it [trapping] was all over and that was why people had lived all in one area on a trap-line. Like over there in the fall when they went moose hunting is where they had went and made houses. So the people all trapped together. It used to be good."

Many Loon River Cree people used to trap, and although times have changed the elders still remember what it was like when they were trapping in the bush.

NISTO



“Poko kîkway ekî ohpikihk pokwîte, mâka mâna
ayisiyinowak kâkî osîhtâtwâw maskihkiwâpoy kâyas, ekî
mekitwâw cistemâwa meskoc”,
itwew Kihteyaya Julie Noskey.



Apist'sâkwewaskôs

Kihteyayak itwewak, "Nikiskisinân..."

Leonard Supernault itwew, "Kâsewahk mâna nôhkom ekî mônahaskwît misowe ekwa kâtakwâkik ekwa eminihkwiît maskihkiwâpoy."

Edna Letendre itwew, "Kâkî otâpâsohk mâna, ekî mâwacihtâyâhk maskihkiwâhtikwa, ta miyomahcihoyan ohci. Kîhkiskiyihtamwâk tânite ta miskahkwâw. Kâkî otâpâsohtwâw mâna ekwa kâwâpahtahkwâw maskihkiyah ekî naketwâw emônahahkwâw ekota. Kîkway tayiskôc apist'sâkwewaskôs ekwa kâsîwepay'sik, amiskowîhkaskwa, wâpanwaskwa, ocepikîs, wacaskomîcisôwin, wâposocîpihk, pokokîkway 'moya nikiskisin kahkiyaw. Mihcet kîkway awâsisak mâna ekî âpacihtâtâw. Kâkî kapesisiyâhk mâna ekwa kîk'sep ekwa nimâma ekî wîcîwâyâhk."



Wâpanwaskwa



Amiskowihkaskwa



Wâposocîpihk



Amiskowihkaskwa

James ekwa Mary Louise Ward wîhtamwak tân'towa maskihkiyah ekwa tânitî tamiskamihk. James kiskisiw wiya, "Mistahisâkwewask ekwa wacaskomîcisôwin, asci apist'sâkwewaskôs ekwa wâpanwaskwa."

Mary Louise itwew, "Âtiht poko maskihkiyah ôte kâkî ayâkwâw. Âtihtwayak namoya ohci ohpikinwa ôte. Âskaw namoya kikî miskîn ôte, poko ohp'miy ta ôhtinamihk. Mâcika asci kotak maskihkowâhtik, napakâsiht kî ihtakon."



Wâpanwaskwa

Mayble Letendre wîsta mâm'skotam maskihkiyah. Itwew, "Kayâs mâna namakîkway ohci ihtakon ostotamow maskihkiy. Mâcika maskihkiwâpoy ekî âpatahk mâna awiyak kâpâkahpinipayit ahpô kôtakomit. Ekî wîhtamâkawiyîn awiyak ta kwecimat enakacihtât maskihkiy, ekwa eko enâtinîhikîhk' eko isiyihkâtek. Eko e itwemakahk awiyak kâmiyisk kîkway, kîsta poko ta miyat kîkway mîskoc. Peyakwan kîkway e atâwîn. Kâkî miyâw cistemâwa ahpô kotak kîkway. Kî wesakanwa mâna maskihkiwâhtikwa, mâka ekî miywâsikwâw."



Maskihkiwâpoy



Wacaskomîcisôwin

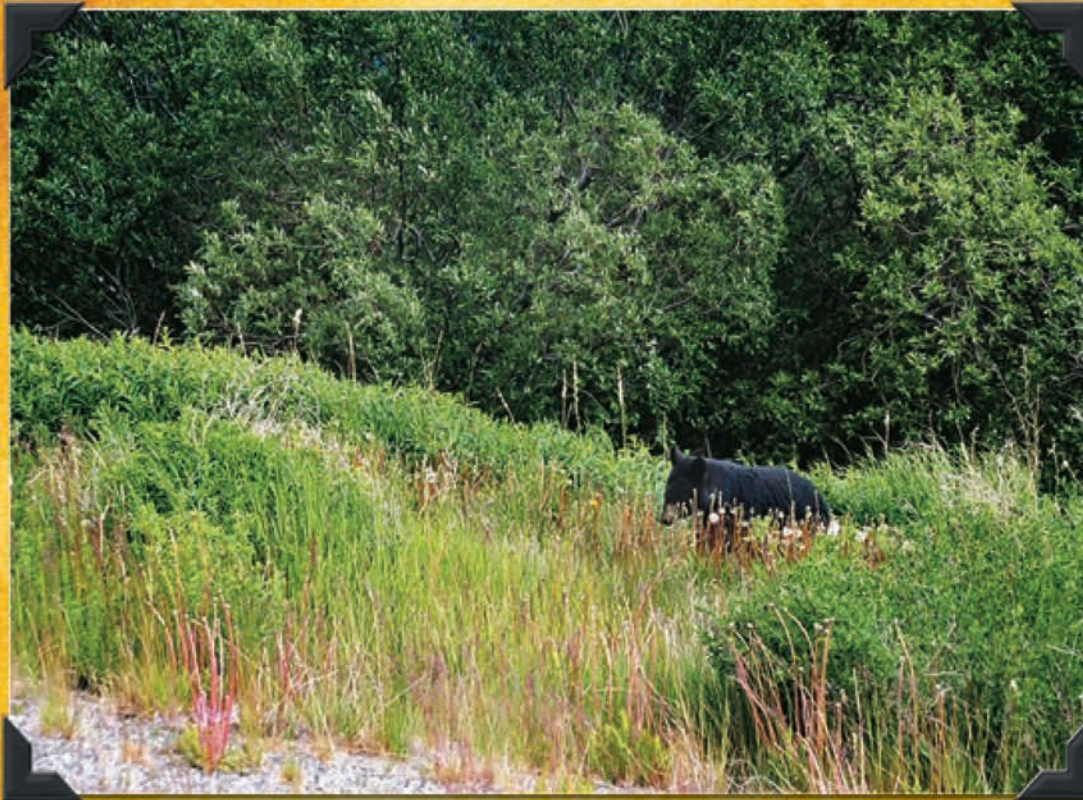


Willie Courtrielle itwew, “Kayâs mâna mihcet petosâyah maskihkiyah kî ayâwa. Ayisiyinowak mâna ekî nâtawîhikotwâw, mâka ekwa ekâ ikwayikohk e âpatahkwâw maskihkiyah eko ohci ekwa kâ âkositwâw.

Willie asci itwew ekâ kîkway maskihkîwiyniwak ekî ihtakotwâw ahpô âhkosîw’kamik.

Itwew, “Kîkway poko ekî ayâk mâna, mistatimwak ekwa wâwiyak wâhyaw ta itohtehk, mâcika poko awiyak ta nâtawehisot.”

William Noskey asci mām'skôtam maskihkiwâhtikwa kâ nâtawehikoyan âkosiyini ohci. Itwew, "Tâp'skôc, namoya sôskwâtc poko awiyak e osehtât maskihkiwâpoy, ekwa namoya asci poko kîkway eyastâhk ekota maskihkiwâpôhk. Tâp'skôc, nehi kâmihwâkwâw mâna kôhpikihkwâw nîpisîhk, ekoni emiywâsikwâw ohci awiyak kâ kisôwaskatet. Epoyakinaman eko, ekwa epekin'saman, ekwa kipakâhtân. Namoya mistahi taminihkweyan. 'Moya nikiskiyihten tân'si esiyihkâtek, mâka maskwak mâna mîcîwak ekoni mistikwa. Emihkwâkwâw, ekwa poketa eyopikihkwâw.



“Kotaka mîna ohpikinwa, amiskawaskwa, sâkahikanihk. Nân'taw omayikohk iskwâwa ekwa âyitaw ekipâkwâw. Ôhi aniskawaskwa eman'saman ôta ekwa ôta. Eko ohci awiyak ekâ kâkî wayawît (sikit). Eko ôma ekota eyastâhk. Ekohci kâpayipâk wiya, peyakwan takwahim'nânâhtik iyisinâkwak, asci wâpikwaniya eyastekwâw.

“Kotak kîkway mîna, mîn'sa emihkonâkwahkwâw ekwa epayipâkwâw asci ewîhpâkwâw. Oskiciy mâna ekî osehtâhk. 'Moya nikiskiyihten, ahpô mîna peyakwan takî itâpatan awiyak ekâ kâkî wayawît, wiya ewîhpâk.



Wacaskomîcisôwina

“Kotak mîna ekî ihtakohk maskihkiwâhtik. Kinîpikaskwa isiyihkâtekwâw ekoni. 'Moya poko awiyak takî mônahahk. Ekî itwehk mâna Felix poko tamônahahk. Ekî wîhtamâht tamônahahk. Eko ohci emiywâsik iskwew ekâ kâkî ocwâsimisit. Ekî minahiht ekoyiw. Ekî itwehk mâna mistahi ta astek, sôskwâc ewaskawemakahk. Mâcika, newo ta astâyan maskihkiwâpôk, emaskawâk ohci awâsis ta nihtâwikit.”

Ayisiyinowak ekî mawisotwâw mâna mîn'sa askîhk ohci. Edna Letendre itwew, “kâkî wâpahtamâhk mâna mîn'sa, nipâpâ ekî nakinât mistatim otâpânâskwa ekwa ekî môsahkinamâhk ekota. Ekî pehikoyâhk pita ekwa kâwi eyati sipwetâpâsoyâhk.”

Margaret Noskey kiskisiw, “kânîphik ekwa mîn'sa kâmâci ohpikihwâw, iskwewak ekwa ekî maw'sotwâw. Eki mihcetwâw mâna ekwa nôhkom kî't'sk ekî nîmâskwet. Awâsisak asc wîstawâw. Âskaw ekî nitawi mîcisoyâhk ekwa ekî paskwâk mâna ekota. Ekî maskotewik ekospe ita mîn'sa kâ opikihwâw. Iyini mina ekwa maskîkomina asci misaskwatôm'na. Eta mewâc kihkwahâskwâna kâ astekwâw, ektoa mâna ekî ohpikihwâw misaskwatôm'na. Poko kîkway mâna ekî mîciyâhk wiya ekî ayimahk.



Misaskwatôm'na

Malcolm Ward itwew, “Ôte mâna Âcakâs Sâkahikan ekî miywâsik ta maw’sohk. Mohcihk e-opikihwâw. Kiyâpic ekote mâna ayisiyinowak e maw’sotwâw iyinimina ekwa misaskwatôm’na ekota e-opikihwâw. Ekote ekî ispiciyâhk âskaw mâna kâ pipohk. Ômistikosiw ekote ekî otasket Kâkinokamâk.”

John L. Letendre itwew, “Ekî mônahaskwetwâw mâna mistahi sakâhk. As’ci ekî maw’sotwâw mâna Maskwa Kâpim’skohtet misaskwatôm’na mâna; Nîwâtimiik ekî ayâkwâw ekwa misiwe Mâkwa Sâkahikanihk.”



Maskwa Kâpim’skohtet



Iyiniimina

Florence Houle itwew ayisiyinowak mâna ekî mihcetwâw kâ maw'sotwâw as'ci mînsa ekî wiyôtahkwâw, "Ôta Nîwâtimihk ôma sâkahikan ekwa Maskotîhk."

Joe Noskey itwew, "Nema meskanaw kâ itamok Kinosîw Sâkahikanihk ekota sîpîhk ekwa Wâkanâkan'skâw askîhk. Âmatinâhk ekote kâ maw'sohk. Mîn'sa ekota ekî ayâkwâw. Môsom'na poketa e-ohpikihtkwâw. Iyiniimina ekota ekî maw'sotwâw mâna ayisiyinowak."



Wesakîm'na



Wesakîm'na

Mable Letendre itwew, “ayisiyinowak mâna kâkî âhçipitwâw, ekî maw'sotwâw môsom'na ekwa wesakîm'na as'ci iyinimina. Ayôskanak mîna, mâcika newo mâmawi.”

Julie Noskey kiskisiw, “Niwâhkômâkan, Johnny Letendre’s otân’sa, Julianne kî isiyihkâsiw, eko mâna ekî wîcîwak emaw’sot. Iyini mina ekwa kâmihwâkwâw as’ci mîn’sa ekî wîsakahkwâw ekoni. Pokîta mâna ekî ayâkwâw. ‘Moya ekwa as’ci môsom’na ekwa okiniyak. Ewîhkit’sitwâw mâna okiniyak ekwa pokîta eyayâtwâw. Kotaka as’ci – kâwastôwîm’na.”



Okiniyak

Mary Louise Ward itwew ayisiyinowak 'moya ohci osihtâwak (mîn'sapoy) 'jam.' Kî kiskisiw mâna, "Ayisiyinowak sôskwâc ekî mîcitwâw mîn'sa. Môsom'na ekwa âskaw kinîpikomina ahpô ijinimina. Mâmaskâc ekâ awiyak enahastât. Ekâ awiyak eyayât kîkwaya ita ta astât. Ekâ kîkway kayâs kipâpiskahikan ekî ayâkwâw."



Waskwayâpoy

Mary Louise Ward ekî wîcîwât mâna ôhkomwa ewaskway âpôhkîtwâw. Itwew Kâwâwîkamâk, “Ekote ekî itohteyâhk kê sekwahk. Nâpewak mâna kê nôcihciketwâw ekospe ekwa nimâmâ ekwa nôhkom e-osîhtâtwâw waskwayâpoy. Ekî wîhkasik mâna eko nôhkom mâna ekî nihtâ osîhtâtwâw waskwayâpoy. Ekî âpacihât atimwa ta nayahcikiyit, ekoni lam’lass pewap’skwa ekî ayâkwâw kipahikana. Ekotowa ekî âpahcitât, kê nayahtahât atimwa. Asôwacikana ekî astekwâw atimonayacikanihk.”

Mihcet kîkwaya Mwâkwa Sâkahikanihk ohci ayisiyinowak ekî mâw’sakonahkwâw askîhk. Maskihkowâhtikwa, mîn’sa ekwa waskwayâpoy, ta osîhtâhk lam’lass.



Waskwayâpoy

“I will never quit telling stories”

*Stories as told by
Loon River Cree First Nation Elders*

*“Anything grew just anywhere, but when people made herbal tea long ago
they would have to give some tobacco as an offering”*

Elder – Julie Noskey

The Elders say, “I remember...”

Leonard Supernault says, “Towards the spring my grandmother used to pick different kinds of herbs and roots everywhere and then towards the fall she would drink these roots and herbs.”

Edna Letendre says, “When we traveled by wagon we used to collect herbs for medicines that make you better. They knew where to get them. While we were traveling by wagon and if they saw herbs along the way that they could use my dad would stop and collect them. Things like...Northern Valerian and a plant that is bell-like when dry, herbal mint, Yarrow, roots, like Rat Root, Wild Sarsaparilla, anything. I can not name all of them. There are a lot of things, the bell-like plants and everything in the muskeg because children used them for medicine. Even when we camped we dug for herbs in the morning. We went with my mom looking for herbs.”

James and Mary Louise Ward also describe types of medicine and where to find them. James remembers the medicines, “Asters and rat root, and Northern Valerian, and Yarrow.”

Mary Louise says, “There are certain places that you could find these medicines and there are places around here that you couldn't even find them, and when there was a time someone needed medicine they got some from another place. So some of these herbs couldn't be found anywhere around here and there was also a herb called Balsam Fir, those were even found here too.”

Mayble Letendre also talks about medicines. She says that a long time ago there was no cough medicine. So, “Rat root medicine was used when someone had pneumonia or when they had a cold that was what they would use. You were told to ask someone who knows what type of medicine was to be used and the term for that was

enâtinîhikîhk. That is, when you were given something that was given to you but you were to give something away because they didn't give it to you for free, so it was like you bought it. You could give them tobacco or whatever you had in exchange for what you were asking for as long as you knew what its use was. The herbs were kind of bitter but they made you feel good."

Willie Courtrielle says, "There were a lot of different kinds of medicine a long time ago and it was used a lot of times and people would get healed but there aren't enough people that use it anymore and that us why they always get sick now."

Willie also says that there were no doctors or hospitals, "the only thing we had was a horse and it would be far to go when there was someone who was very sick, so they only thing a person could do was try and cure himself."

Willie goes on to describe a time when he cured himself. He remembers, "there was a place that me and Norbert Letendre would go to called Sâgihitahigan, where we had built a cabin and we would stay over there during the winter and when we were building the cabin, I suddenly had a sharp pain in my chest and there was no way that anyone could work by himself because the trees were very big, and I didn't want him to work by himself so I just started to boil some stuff by the fire and in just three days I was healed and I started to work again after that."

Margaret Noskey says that when she got sick her grandmother had them drink herbal tea. She says, "And she provided heat for us, where a rock was heated and she used to come and put it where we were sitting in a bowl. We sat there with a cloth over our head and she poured water on it and it provided steam. I used to cry because it was hot. The medicines they got them in the bush and [they grew] everywhere, because they used to dream about the herbs they used to collect."

William Noskey also describes the medicines that helped heal other sicknesses. He says, "For instance, they did not just put anything in the teas, someone had to know something and how it works. Like those that are red in colour and grow on willows, those are good for diarrhea. Peeling it, taking the skin off and cutting the stick into pieces and then boil it. Peel it downward. This is the diarrhea medicine. Drink a small pot of this. I don't know the name of it but bears eat the sticks; they are red and they grow anywhere.

"Those others that grow, like Hemp Nettle, in the lake and they are about this long and are closed on one end and also on the other end. That Hemp Nettle you would cut it here and then again a little lower. It is for someone

who can not urinate. That is what is put in the herbal tea, and it has to be at the lowest point because the water drains downward and not upward. That is why an opening is made so it had a small hole [it looks like chokecherries, and has flowers on it].”

“Another thing is one that has holes in it. The berries are reddish orange and that is the one with a hole in it, it is hollow. It looks similar to a pipe that people made. It was closed on one end and hollow. I do not know, maybe that could be used in the same way if someone could not urinate because it is hollow.”

“Another thing for instance about the herbs, Snake Root is another one and not anyone can dig that up, but Felix is one that they said could. He was told he could dig for it. That is for when a woman could not give birth to a child when she has gone into labour. That is what she is given to drink. They say if you put enough of it, it just keeps moving. So, when you put four into the herbal tea that is power for the child to be born.”

People also used to collect berries from the land. Edna Letendre says, “When we saw berries my dad used to stop [our wagon] and we would pick them, he used to wait for us, and then we would be on our way again.”

Margaret Noskey remembers, “When summer comes and berries start growing the women used to go berry picking. They used to go in on whole group and my grandmother was the only one who carried a gun. Children were there too. Also, the time when we used to go for picnics, we picked berries then. [This area] used to be bare – just prairie, and that is where the berries used to grow. Blue berries, and those in the muskeg that are red, those and saskatoons. Where the grave site is now, that is where they used to grow – saskatoons. We used to eat anything because times were hard then.”

Malcolm Ward says, “There was a place over here at Mink Lake, that was a good place to go and pick berries, and they were found on the ground. And there are still people that pick berries over there and you could find blueberries and saskatoons and it was over where we would move too when we were caught in the winter, and it was Ômistakosow’s Land towards Long Lake.

John L. Letendre says, “They used to pick medicine herbs a lot from the woods and they would also pick berries where that place is called Bear Walk and they would get saskatoon berries from North Bay and they would go picking all over the Loon Lake area.

Florence Houle says that people went berry picking as a group, and that the berries were plentiful “here at the north end of the lake and over at the Prairie.”

Joe Noskey says, "The road that goes towards Fish Lake, that river and the tamarack area by a hill and that is where berries are picked, that is known as Tamarack Area. Berries were often picked there, like moose berries, just anywhere because they grow everywhere. Blueberries are the ones that people used to pick there.

Mabel Letendre says, "When people would move they would pick berries. There were lots of moose berries and cranberries, and blueberries, and raspberries, so there are four kinds of berries."

Julie Noskey remembers, "My older cousin, Johnny Letendre's daughter, her name was Julianne, she used to go picking berries. We used to go with her. [We picked] blue berries, and those red ones that are sour. That is what she used to pick. The berries used to grow anywhere the berries, but not now! We also picked moose berries and rose hips. They taste good the rose hips and they are found in the muskeg; they are red. And there are others - bunch berries."

Mary Louise Ward says that people didn't use to make jam with the berries they picked. She remembers, "No one ever made jam - there was nothing. The people just ate them, more so [moose] berries but sometimes snakeberries, and blue berries. Amazing that no one ever [made jam] long ago nothing. People only picked them and ate them. Maybe this was because there was no where to put the stuff, cans that was the only thing then. There were no jars long ago back then."

Mary Louise Ward also used to go with her grandmother to make syrup. She says that at Round Lake, "That is where we went in spring while they [the men] were trapping, and that is where my mother used to make sap, including my grandmother. It used to taste real good for syrup. Grandmother used to make good syrup. She used a dog because there was no other means of carrying things. Those syrup cans that had covers and they were fairly large or jam because jam cans came in that kind too, in a can. That is what she used when she used to pack the dog. She used to put them in like this because she used to dog pack with pockets.

There are many things that Loon River people used to collect from the plants on the land. These include herbs and roots for medicines, as well as berries to eat and sap to make syrup.

NEWO

“Kayâs kîmihcetôwak kinosewak Mâkwa
Sâkahikanihk nân'taw isîsi ekî esi pîhtokwetwâw”,
Kihteyaya Malcolm Ward itwew.



Mâkwa Sâkahikanihk



Mâkwa Sîpîhk

Kihteyayak itwewak, “Nikiskisinân...”

Joe Noskey itwew, “Ôma sâkahikan, Mâkwa Sâkahikan ekî timîk kayâs. ‘Moya kayâs ohci namoya mistahi mispon. Namoya ekwa timîw ôma sâkahikan, kîhtimîw kîmihcetowak kinosewak ôta ekî pînatimîhakwâw. Ekwa tahto sekwan ekî natayipayihotwâw ekwa ekî kwâskwepicikîk. Wâpaskâw Sîpîhk ekî ohtotetwâw.’”



Wâpaskâw Sîpîhk

John C. Letendre itwew, “Kîhôsewak Wâpaskâw Sîpîhk ekî ohtohtetwâw.

Ekî pînatimîhakwâw wîya, kayâs kâkikiy ekî timîk ekwa ekî pimicôwahk ôma sîpiy. Ekowâk aspin kayâs ekâ îskipek. Tahto nîpin ekîpimicôwahk ôma Mâkwa Sîpiy.”

John C. Letendre kiskisiw as'ci,
“Mihcetoyak isi kîyayâwak kinosewa,
tayiskôc Eyin kînôsewak, nân'taw nisto
tahto pîtos kinosewak ekî ayâtwâw ôta ôma
Mâkwa Sâkahikan. Namoya nikîhtinâhon
tânimatowa itikwe mâka Napak kinosewak
ekwa Namepiyak mâna. Kakiyaw mâna ôta
ekîhayâtwâw ekonik nisto kinosewak.”



Namepiy





Joe Noskey itwew, “Nisto itowa kinosewak ôta kâkîhayât wâw Eyinkînôsew, Napakinosew ekwa Namepiy, namakîkway Atihkamekwak ohch ihtâwak.”

Edna Letendre itwew, “Nikîkwâskwepicikânân ôta. Nôhtâwiy kîpakitahwâw mâna ôta. Kîkwâskwepitew eyapisîsiyit kinosîsisa ekwa Napakinosewa ekwa mâna Eyinkinosewa. Awâsisak mâna ôta kîkwâskwepicikîwak mâka ekwa ekîpahikâtek wâw sîpiya namoya kîsâpohtewak kinosewak. Napakinosewak mâna peyakwan napakihtak ekî isinâkositwâw. Ekotowa mâna nôhtâwiy kâkînipahât.”

Frank Noskey itwew as'ci, "Tânimayikohk ekî napakisitwâw kinosewak peyakwan môhkomân. Osisa Malcolm eyisihkâsoyit ekî pakitahwâyit mâna kapînîpin."

Malcolm Ward mîna kînôcikinosewew kapînîpin, namakîkway ekwa kinosew wiya ohci amiskwak ekipahahkwâw. Itwew, "Namakîway ana ôtîh ehohci ayâtwâw amiskwak. Awîyak ana ôtîh ekîpînîhciwîpinât ekwa peyak ôtîh, kotak nîte, piyisk kîhati mihcetowak, misiwe sakâhk ekwa ayâwak."



Amisk





Felix Noskey itwew, “Ôki amiskwak ekî pîhtokwîcisahohtwâw Kânistohc’sikwâw pâhpeyakôskân. Ekî nitaweyimâtwâw okistikewak ekîwî ohpikihâtwâw, nîso askii eyispayik namoya ohci kiskiyihtamwak tân’si ta itôtawâtwâw eyikohk ekîmihcetiyyit. ‘Moya ohci kiskiyihtamwak tânisi ta isi nipahâtwâw.’”

Joe Noskey itwew, “Itah kâ ayâkwâw oskwatimwa ekota kânicimosihkwâw kinosewak. Peyakwâw nikîpimicimân Paskwaskâw Sâkahikan ekwa ôsih eyasawipitamân oskwatimihk ekota nikîwâpamâwak kinosewa enicimosihkwâw. Ekakwe pâsôhpîtwâw etokwe oskwatim. Emihcetihkwâw oskwatima tahto sîpiya kâpîhtokwîcôwahkwâw ôta Mâkwa Sîpîhk. Ekohci ekâ kâtimîk ôma Mâkwa Sîpiy.”



Kâpaskwatinâk

Mabel Letendre kakwecimâw, “Ôtî kâpapiciyan kî ayâwak cî kinosewa ôma Mâkwa Sâkahikan?”

“Namoya”, itwew epâhpit. “Ekohci mâka kâkînohte kiskiyihtamân tânikhi ôtî kâkîpapiciyâhk. Wiya kâkikiy kinosewa ekî mowâyâhkwâw. Kahkiyawiyak ekî mâci sipwepicit. Kâpaskwatinâk ekwa Kâmiyositwâw kinosewa ôhi nîso sâkahikana itah kâ kîwîkihk.”

John C. Letendre itwew, “Ita kakiyatwaw kisosewa itkota kakiyatwaw ayisinewak wîya kînôsewak namoya tapasewak. Kîspin epakitawayin aphô ekwaskwepichikiyan ekosi kîmichison.”



Willie Courtrielle



John C. Letendre

Willie Courtrielle wîtam tânsi tisi kawaskwepichikiyan. Itwew, “Eki moschi ositak mistik ekwa ekinwak kwakwipichikiw piminakwanis ekwa ekikinipotatwaw emoschi ositak kwaskwepichikanisa.”

Leonard Supernault itwew, “Mihcet kînipahewak kinosewa ayah mîna kîkwâskwepicikîwak Atihkamek Sâkahikanihk ekwa Macâhicôwây’sihk. Kîmihcetowak kinosewa, Ekîhpâm’picihk mîna itîh Macâhicôwây’sihk ekota ekîmihcetwâw kinosewak. Kîwâskwîpicikânawow mîna Kâpaskwatinâk wiya nawac kisowâk ekwa kî ati otihtamwak Chipewyan Sâkahikan as’ci.”



Atihkamek Sâkahikanihk

Malcom Ward itwew, “Nikî kwâskwîpicikânân mâna Kâkinokamâk mayaw kâtinîpihk etokota kinosewa kâmintâhakwâw. Ekota kaki mâci pakitahwâyâhk ekwa kaki mâci kwâskwepicikiyâhk. Wâskahikanis mâna kîhosîhtâwak ekota ekî akotâtwâw kinosewa kâkikiy ekîh sâkaskinîkwâw ekoni wâskahikanisa kâpipohk ekwa ekonik kinosewak nikîmôwânânak.

Namoya ohci misowanâtisiwak wîya ekî âhkwacitwâw ekwa ekî nahahihtwaw isko kîhtwâm takosinihki ekota ekwa tapîmôwihtwâw.”



Norbert Laboucan as'ci wîtam tânsi ekî isi osîhihtwâw namîstikwak. Itwew, "Kâpîsowihtwâw kâkîsikanâcihihtwâw ekî akotihtwâw akwâwânihk tapasotwâw."



John L Letendre kiskisiw, itwew, "Kinosewak epimtâpâtihihtwâw ocâpânâskosihk kâpiponiyik. Ekota poko ekiskisiyân kinosewak eyohtenâyâhkwâw."

James Letendre wîsta kikisiw, itwew, "Nâpew wiya atâwewikamikohk ekî ayât ekî pîsôwât kinosewa ita kâwîkihk, âskaw ekî atâwâkît. 'Moya nikiskisin awiyak kinosewa ta ayâwât. 'Moya ohci mihcetowak ôta kinosewak ôma sâkahikan.'"

Mabel itwew kinosewa ôhtâwiya kâkwâskwepitâyit ekoni kaki ohtâcihotwâw.
Kinosewa kî miywâpacihewak kihteyayak ôta ohci Mâkwa Sâkahikanihk, âta ekwa mekwâc ekâ emihcetitwâw.



Mable Letendre



“I will never quit telling stories”

*Stories as told by
Loon River Cree First Nation Elders*

“Long ago there used to be fish that would come into Loon Lake”

Elder – Malcolm Ward

The Elders say, “I remember...”

Joe Noskey says, this Lake, Loon Lake, “Used to be real deep long ago. Recently, there has not been any [snow]. This river used to be real deep and the fish used to spawn and every spring there was fishing when they came from the Wabasca River.”

John C. Letendre says, “[The fish] used to come from the Wabasca River. Coming upstream because long ago this river used to always flow high. This is the only time that it has not risen for a long time. All the time, all summer, it used to flow, this river.”

John C. Letendre remembers also that, “there use to be quite a few [fish], there used to be Jackfish, and there used to be three kinds that used to be here in Loon Lake. I am not sure what they were, they used to call them flat fish in the Cree language, and also those other kind, suckers they called them. Yeah, those three different kinds used to be here during the summer.”

Joe Noskey says, “There were three types of fish here: Jackfish, Flatfish, and Sucker also, there was never any Whitefish.”

Edna Letendre says, “We used to fish here, my dad used to put a net and he used to kill little fish, Flatfish, Jackfish too. Children used to fish here too, but they (the rivers) are closed over here now and the fish cannot go through. Flatfish looked just like a piece of wooden slab. That is what he (my dad) used to kill.”

Frank Noskey also describes how flat the fish were, he says, "It is almost flat like a blade, and [his uncle Malcolm Noskey] used to fish with a net all summer."

Malcolm Ward, who used to fish all summer, says that, "Now, there are no fish in Loon Lake, and this is because of beaver dams."

He says, "There were no beavers over here a long time ago, and when there were beavers someone came and dropped them off over here and they would put them one by one everywhere in the woods."

Felix Noskey says, that "The beaver... pair by pair they were chased... right there into Three Creeks. The farmers had wanted them they had wanted them in their creeks so the farmers could stock them. A couple of years after they didn't know how to kill enough of them in order to get rid of them."

Joe Noskey says, "When there are [beaver] dams that is where they [the fish] get stuck. This one time I went by canoe from Grassy Lake and I pulled the canoe over a dam and I looked over at the dam and there were fish stuck on it. They were probably trying to jump over. There are a lot of those [beaver dams] on the rivers that flow into the Loon Lake. That is the reason for hardly any water."

Mabel Letendre was asked, "When you moved over here were there any fish here in this lake?"

She joked, "No, that was what I was wondering as to what we came over here for! Because we only ate fish back then, but everybody started to move and so did we, so they left the place where we stayed before. That place was Peerless Lake and Goodfish Lake - those were two lakes [that had a lot of fish]."

John C. Letendre says, "The way it is, a long time ago, the people that moved around during the summer, wherever the fish were that is where they moved because the fish do not run away. As long as you make a net or a fish hook, it was easy to eat that way."

Willie Courtrielle also talks about how to catch fish. He says, "There were no real fishing poles we would just make our own and the fishing line would really be long in order to catch the fish [and they would sharpen the hooks themselves]."

Leonard Supernault says, "They killed a lot of fish back then, and my grandmother used to be very good at fishing and they used to go towards Whitefish and Gift Lake. I don't really remember if there was anything here, but there were a lot in Gift Lake that was where people would move to when they knew that there were fish and most of these big lakes used to have a lot of fish. People used to go to Peerless Lake because it would be closer to go and fish even all the way up to Chipweyan Lakes."

Malcolm Ward says, "We would go fishing at Long Lake whenever it was summer because that was when the fish would be going upstream, and that was when they would start casting their nets, and they would also make some sort of house. It wasn't that tall, and they would make holes on the fish's tails and they would hang them on a stick and their little house was always full of fish and when winter came we would eat those fish. [The fish never got rotten because] they would be frozen, and the fish was already filleted and they would store them in a cache, and that means you put something away and you went back to get it."

Norbert Laboucan also talks about drying fish. He says, "When the fish were brought in they were hung together to dry when they were cleaned."

John L. Letendre remembers other ways people got fish in the winter. He says, "The only place that I can remember that we used to get fish was where some people would pull their fish on sleighs and that is the only place that I can remember that we used to get our fish from."

James Letendre has similar memories. He says, "Sometimes when there was this man, who would have a store over there, he was the one who would carry the fish down to Little Prairie and from there he would give fish away to the people to eat and he would also sell some of the fish. I never really knew anyone to have fish over there, but then again there weren't that many fish here either in this lake."

Mabel says that the fish her father caught was part of what her family would live on.

Fish were important to the ancestors of the Loon River Cree people, even though there are no longer fish in Loon Lake.

NĪYĀNAN

“Kayâs mâna sâkahikan’sa peyakwan
meskanawa ekî itâpatahkwâw sisone sîpîhk”,
itwew Kihtheyaya James Ward.



Kihteyayak itwewak, “Nikiskisinân...”

Felix Noskey itwew, “Kîkî oskiyân namoya kîkway otâpâsow meskanawa. Nistam otâpâsow meskanaw ohci Mâkwa Sâkahikanihk esipwîmok. Nikî ayânân meskanâs esipwîmok ohci Sikos Sâkahigkanihk ekwa sâkâstenohk ohci etamok Maskotew Sâkahikanihk. Nikiskisin ôma meskanaw wiya câsây ekospe awâsisak ehayâwakwâw kâmekwâ âpatahk.”



Sikos



Frank Noskey itwew, “Misowe ôta ekî papâm'tâpâsoyân ôma askîs. Ekospe nitcâwâsim'sak e ahkami ohpikitwâw, mâcika kiskiswak etokwe wîstawâw. Ekoni poko askîw kîkwaya ekî ayâyâhk, mâka kîkway ohci ôma ta kîskiyihtahkwâw ayisiyinowak ekî âpatahk ôma ôta askiy kayâs.”

Ernest Noskey kiskisiw, “Ekî itamok otâpâsow meskanaw ôti eyisîhkâtek Kâpaskwatinâ, William Noskey ekota onôcchikeskanâhk. Paskwaskâw Sâkahikanihk mâna kâkî itohtetwâw ayisiyinowak ekote ekî pim'tâpâsotwâw wâskâ. Ekî siht'skâk mâna ekote mistahi.





Wâp'stân

“Peyak mâna ekota ekî itamok Sihkos Sâkahikanihk otâpâsow meskanaw, mâka nisto mâmawi ekî pimamokwâw ekota. Peyak Maskotew Sâkahikanihk ekî sâpwamok ekwa peyak akâmihk. Eko peyak Wâp'stân Sâkahikanihk ekî itamok. Kotak Sihkos Sâkahikanihk pahki ekî wâsakâmok ekwa ekota John Letendre owâskahikanis.



“Ekî âpatahk eko ekwa nîyanân iskwâyâc ekî âpacihtâyâhk. John Letendre, Joe, ekwa niya ekî tehtapiyâhk ekota. Ekî nitaw atâwâkiyâhk maskisina ekote. Ayisiyinowak mâna ekî atâwâketwâw kayâs maskisina meskoc sôniyas.”

Frank Noseky itwew, “Ceki ôta ekî sipwîmok meskanaw ekwa ekî sâkîwîpayik ita James kâwîkit. Ekota ohci ekî wâsakâmok sâkahikanihk isko Kisipikamâw Sîpiy epîhtokwe cîwahk ôta sâkahikanihk.



Frank Noskey

“Nistam kânakehk ita mistahi esiht’skâk. Ekota kâkikiy ekî nakehk. Kisipikamâw Sîpiy ohci ekî sipwîwmok otâpâsow meskanaw, âti ‘sone sîpîhk. Nîsta ekota nikîpimohtân mâna ekospe kâpapâmahkamikisiyân.



“Kîhtwam nakîwin Sîpâhteskanaw esiyihkâtek. ‘Moya nikiskiyihten kîkway ekota ekî sîpâhtîskanaw’ sah, mâskôc mistatimwak nitiyihten. Ekota ohci kotak sîpiy ekwa ekota kotak sîpîsis ekwa nakîwin. ‘Moya nikiskiyihten tân’si e ayisîhkâtîk ôma sîpîsis. Eko peyak kihcinakîwin kâkikiy Maskotîhk kâkîpimîtohtîhk.”



Joe Noskey itwew, "Sîpâhtîskanâhk ekî nakîhk mâna kîspin e otâkosik esipîwehtehk Mâkwa Sâkahikanihk. Misowe ekota ekî nakîhk mâna. Eko nistam nakîwin ekwa kîhtwâm ekwa Kôskwîwiik. Ekota ayiwâkîkohk ekî kapîsihk kôtôpâsohk.



Joe Noskey



Ôhôw

“Âskaw mâna ekî kapîsihk Ôhôw-amiskopehk wiya ayisiyinowak ekî nicimoyitwâw. Wâkinâkan’sâhk ekota ekwa kîhtwâm maskîkohk kwîski ohci. Kahkiy awîyak ekota ekî nicimoyot ekospe. Kâmâmitonîhtamân mâna tânihki etokwe ekâ âsokan kâkî osehtâhk ekota. Âtiht poko ekî osehtâtwâw âtihtwoyak. Namoya kakî wîmâsken, poko ekota tasâpohtehk. Ekî wîmâmokwâw mâna meskanâsa misowe. Ekî âyimahk mâna wâwîs ôma kâpeyakohk.”



William Noskey



Sîpîsihk

William Noskey kiskisiw, “Ekospe kâsipwehtehk ohci Mâkwa Sâkahikanihk ekota meskanaw ekî itamok Sîpîsihk, ekota kâkîwîkiyâhk. Sâkitawâhk ekî itamok ekota ohci. Ekote ekî otâpâsoyâhk kâkî nitawi atoskiyâhk mâna kânîpihk. Poko takapîsiyân nân'taw nistwâw ahpô newâw kîspin wâwîs kinicimoyon. Namoya ohci wîhcasin. Namoya awiyak pimohtew ôma kâkimowahk.

“Maskotew Sâkahikan ekwa isiyihkâtew ‘Lubicon Lake’. Ekota otâpâsow meskanaw ekî pimamok. Kiyâpic nôhkwan eko meskanâs wiya namakîkway ekota ohpikin. Nayistaw mîtosak ekî sawâpayitwâw.



“Sihkos Sâkahikanihk mâna ayisiyinowak ekî isi tâhtapitwâw, wiya taskam eko. Ekî nicimoyohk mâna Maskotew Sîpîhk. Piyisk ekwa nitosîhtân âsokan mâcika ayisiyinowak ekwa âsowi tâpâsôwak. Mâka eko ôma pison meskanaw kâkî ohtamok Kâpaskwatinâk ekwa Sihkos Sâkahikanihk. Ekonik ayisiyinowak kâkî awatâsotwâw ceki Namekos Sâkahikanihk, mâka nawac Kâpaskwatinâk ohci ekwa ote isi epî itamok.





Matâw'sâhk

“Nema meskanaw kôhtamok Maskotew Sâkahikanihk, eko nîpin meskanaw. Ceci Matâw'sâhk ekwa Kasîwâkamik Sâkahikanihk. Ayisiyinowak mâna ekî otâpâsotwâw ekota kîwîtinohk ite isi eko sâkahikanihk. Ekî isi tâpâsotwâw Maskotew Sâkahikanihk. Nema kê itamân oskac, eko Paskwaskâw Sâkahikanihk ekî pimamok meskanaw, ekwa asci Kâmahkôpiyâk ekwa Kasîwâkamik. Namoya Sihkos Sâkahikanihk ati, mâka ote isi wiya eko nîpin meskanaw. Kî miywâsin mâna kâkî tehtapihk.



“Ekî paskwak mâna ita kê maskosehkîhk wiya oskac sâkahikan ekota ekî ayâk. Ekohci Kâmahkôpiyâk kâkî esiyihkâtek. Makîkway kâwi ekwa sâkahikanowo wiya ekî kipahikâtek eko sîpîsis. Kâwi ekwa epâstipek.”

Frank Noskey itwew, “Sâkahikana ekwa âkayâsîmo wîhcikâtewa, mâka kayâs mâna, nayistaw nehiyaw wîhîwina.”

Felix Noskey itwew, “Kîkway ohci Apahkwâcîs Sâkahikan kê isiyihkâtek wiya ayisiyinowak ekote ekî wâpamâtwâw apahkwâcîsa mistahi. Mihcet pisiskowak ekî ayâtwâw mâka apahkwâcîsa ekî sipweyâmohkâtikotwâw mâna kâtipiskâk. Eko ohci ekosi kê isiyihkâtek. Nehiyaw wîhîwin eko mâka âkayâsîmow wîhîwin eko ‘Bat Lake’.”





Kinosew Sâkahikan

“Mihcet sâkahikana ôho nehiyaw ohci ekî wîhcikâtekwâw. Kimosôminawak ekwa omosômowâwa ekî wîhtahkwâw. Cow Lake ekwa Squirrel Lake, Mostos Sâkahikan ekwa Anikwacâs Sâkahikan ekoni nehiyaw wîhôwina. Kinosîw Sâkahikan atîht ekî isiyihkâtahkwâw ‘Fish Lake’ ekwa ‘Haig Lake’ atîht Mostos Sâkahikan. Eko nehiyaw wîhowin Kinosîw Sâkahikan.

“Ekwa Paskwaskâw Sâkahikan mâna nehiyaw wîhôwin. Maskotew Sâkahikan mwestas ekî isiyihkâtek ‘Lubicon Lake’ wiya ekote isi mâna ekî maskotîwik isko Mostos Sâkahikanisihk. Niya wiya ohci, kiyâpic Maskotew Sâkahikan wiya eko isi wîhcikâte. Mwestas ekî isiyihkâte ‘Lubicon Lake’.”

Frank Noskey kiskisiw, “Kotak sâkahikan isiyihkâte Kôsk’swehk. Niwâhkomâkanân, nipâpâ opâpâsa ekî oskiswewît ekota. Owîhôwin eko Ogîma, eko ohci ekosi ka isiyihkâtek.”

“Moya wâyaw ekota otâpâsow meskanâhk, asci pison otâpânâsk meskanow eko. Kotak ekota sâkahikan. Maskîko Sâkahikan isiyihkâtew, ekwa ayisiyinowak ekota ekî minahastimwîhtwâw, mâna kotâpâsotwâw ekota kâpipohk.



Maskîko



“Kîhtwâm ekota nân'taw nîso mistik awasta, ekota eyastek tôhtôkacâw ekwa emâyâtahk. Kâkikiy ekî nicimoyoyâhk ekota. Tepîwinohk isiyihkâtek wiya mistatimwak ekota kê sâpohtetwâw, poko ta tepwâtatwâw. Ekohci ekosi kê isiyihkâtek.”

Misowe ekî pimohtetwâw ayisiyinowak ôta ôho meskanawa, ekwa kahkîyaw ekî nehîyaw wîhcikâtekwâw. Frank Noskey itwew, “Ayisiyinowak misowe ekî pimahkamikisitwâw ôma ôta askîs. ‘Moya mistahi ekâ ohci wâpahtamwak.’”



Ekî kiskiyihtahkwâw askiy kâkî ohtâcihotwâw ôki Mâkwa Sâkahikan ohci Ayisiyinowak.

“I will never quit telling stories”

*Stories as told by
Loon River Cree First Nation Elders*

“Long ago the little lakes were used just like roads along the river banks.”

Elder – James Ward

The Elders say, “I remember...”

Felix says, “When I was young we didn’t have any wagon roads. The first wagon trail was from Loon River. We had a little wagon trail that leads from around Weasel Lake and came out of the east side of Lubicon Lake. I remember this trail because I was a father already at that time [when we used it.]”

Frank Noskey says, “I went by wagon all around this area here. When [my children] were growing up too, they must remember being on a wagon as well. Those were the main earthly things that we had, but the main reason this needs to be known today is [so people can know about] the area’s that were occupied a long time ago.”

Ernest Noskey remembers that, “There was a wagon trail that led to a camping ground near Swampy Lake, and it was on William Noskey’s trap line. Swampy Lake is where people used to go around when they went by wagon. They used to go by a heavily timbered area there.

“There is one wagon trail that goes by Weasel Lake too, but there were three of them, and they all went towards the same direction. One was at Prairie Lake, and that is where it went by and the one across from there is what they used to follow. That was the one that went to Marten Lake. There is one at Weasel Lake it used to cross by John L’s cabin, and it went partially around the lake.

“They were still in use quite awhile back, and it was us that used to use it last. John L., Joe, and I traveled it on horse back. We use to use it to go and sell footwear that people made because footwear used to be sold for money long ago.”

Frank Noskey says, that, “[Near] here is where a wagon leads off from and goes through the poplar forested area and comes out where James lives. It comes out of there and goes around the lake and [near] the River at the end of this Lake that comes from the other way and flows into this Lake.

“The first stop is where there were huge spruce trees, and that was always the first stop. From the river at the end of this Lake the wagon road used to go along the edge of this river, and I traveled by wagon through there myself, when I was moving around.

“The next stop was a place called the Underpass and I do not know what had passed below there, probably horses, I guess. And from there is another river and another creek and right there is another stop. I do not know what the creek is called but it is a creek anyway. It used to be a main stop over area and there used to be campfires there all the time when you were going to Loon Prairie.”

Joe Noskey says, “The Underpass used to be a camping area sometimes if someone left from Loon Lake late in the evening. All over that is one camping area at the Underpass. That is the first stop, and then [the next is] New Marriage Lake. More often when you left by wagon you’d camp at New Marriage Lake.

“[Sometimes] it happened that you’d have to camp at the owl slough, [and that was because] people got stuck at the Tamarack area, and on the other side is the muskeg because everyone who traveled through there got stuck. When I think about it, I wonder why they did not get together to make a bridge. They used to only make bridges in some areas. There was no way to go around it, but only through it. There were detour trails all over. They used to have a hard time especially when some who traveled alone.”

William Noskey remembers that, “When leaving from Loon Lake here was a road that went to Little Creek, and from where we lived and it went on from there and went towards Peace River. We went there by wagon when we used to go to work in Peace River in the summer.

“You would have to camp over about 3 or 4 times especially if you kept getting stuck because you used to get stuck and it was not easy going. There was no traveling when it was raining.

Prairie Lake was called Prairie lake, which is now known as Lubicon Lake. The wagon trail went by there, and it is visible where the wagon trail went by because hardly anything grows where the trail was, just trees bent that are bent over.

Weasel Lake was a place where people traveled to on horse back, and it was a short cut. People could not make it through because of the rough spot at Prairie River. Finally, I made a bridge, and then people were able to travel through there by wagon, but that was the initial winter trail coming from Peerless traveled through Weasel Lake. Those were the people who hauled freight, and that was near Trout Lake, but more so towards Peerless and it came out this way.

“The road coming from Prairie Lake, was a summer trail that is by the Little Buffalo area and Sweet Water Lake. People used to travel around that Lake by wagon on the North side. They went towards the North traveling by Lubicon Lake on wagon. The one I was talking about earlier that went by Grassy Lake, the wagon trail, and the one called “the Big Body of Water” and Sweet Water that trail did not go by Weasel Lake, it went by on this side because this was the summer trail if you were to go to Weasel Lake. It was good if you were on horse back.

“There used to be a large clearing where hay was harvested, probably because it used to be a lake before, and that was the reason why it was called “the Big Body of Water”, but now it has turned back into a lake because it is blocked off at that creek and is flooded again.”

Frank Noskey says that, “The Lakes have English names now, but we used to refer them in Cree names only.”

Felix Noskey says, “The reason why Bat Lake was called that was because when the people were hunting they saw these bats, and there were a lot of animals there but when it was night time the bats would drive them away and that’s why they called it Bat Lake. They just turned the Cree name into English – Bat Lake.

“A lot of these names for lakes were named by a Cree person, and it must have been our grandfathers’ grandfathers [who named them]. Cow Lake and Squirrel Lake those one used to have an Indian name. Fish Lake some people called it Fish Lake, and some people called it Haig Lake and Mostos Sâkahikan (Cow Lake) was a Cree name for it or Fish Lake.

“And Swampy Lake that was a Cree name too, and Prairie Lake was later called Lubicon Lake because all that way towards Little Buffalo it was all Prairie right around that lake and that’s why it was called Prairie Lake. On my record it’s called Prairie Lake, and that was the name for it and then afterwards it was called Lubicon Lake.”

Frank Noskey remembers, "That there is another Lake called New Marriage Lake, and a relative of ours, my father's uncle, had a new woman there. His name was Ogîma, and that is New Marriage Lake.

"And not far from there on the wagon road, which is a sleigh road as well, is another lake. Muskeg Lake it is called; and people used to water their horses there when they were traveling by wagon through there all winter.

"After that about 2 miles further there is a floating muskeg and it used to be very rough going that floating muskeg terrain. When someone travels through there they used to get stuck pretty well each time. That muskeg terrain was known as tepîwinohk because when horses used to go through there you would have to call at them to encourage them to go through and that is why they call it that."

There are lots of places that people traveled on for trails, and all the places had names in the Cree language. Frank Noskey says, "People roamed all over these areas here, and probably there is not very much that was not covered."

Knowing the land was part of the way of life of the Loon River people.

NIKOTWÂSIK

“Kinwes ayisiyiniwak kî ati ayâwak
Mâkwa Sîpîhk piyisk kî ati wâskahikanihkîwak”,
itwew Kihteyaya Mary Louise Ward.



Kihteyayak itwewak, “nikiskisân...”

Felix Noskey itwew, “Misowe ayisiyiniwak kîpimahkamikisowak. Kâkawkewecimikawiyân mâna tânite nehiyawak ekî pimahkamikistwâw. Misiwîte nititwân mâna, wiya tâpwe misiwe nehiyawak ekî pimahkamikistwâw. Nitiyihten namoya ekâ nân'taw ohci pimahkamikisiw ayisiyiniw.”



Felix Noskey



Frank Noskey

Frank Noskey wîhtam tân'si ta isi pimâcihok sakâhk. Itwew, "Ekî peyakoyân mâna mekwâc e-oskinîkiyân. Âsay nikîkaskihtân ta pimâcihoyân sakâhk, namakîkway nitôhkostîn. Pokîte nikîkapîsin kânîpihk, mîna kâpipohk, mîna kâsekwahk. Namôhkâc nitohci kostâcin namoya nitohci kiskiyihten tân'si ta isi kostâciyân. Anohc namâwiyak oskâyiseniw pimâcihow sakâhk. Eko pimâcihowin sakâhk e ohcipayik. Anohc ekwa kîspin kiheyaya takiskinowahamâket tân'si ta isi pimâtisihk sakâhk ta kaskihtâwak ayisiyiniwak. Mâka namawiyak kiskinowahamâkew, namakîkway kiskiyihcikâtwew tân'si sakâhk ta isi pimâcihok."



Julie Noskey



Julie Noskey itwew, “Nikiskisin nîpiya emâci pahkihtihkwâw ekota mâna kâkî mâcîhk. Pokîta ekî kapîsihk ekwa namoya mistahi akohpa. Mîkowâhpihk ekapîsihk kâpipohk. Kâpipohk ekî tâpakwehk ekwa kânîpihk ekî atoskehk eko pimâcihowin.”

Margaret Noskey itwew, “Kâkikiy sakâhk ekî ayâyâhk nôhkom mâna ekî osihtât ita ta nipâyak mistikwa ekî âpaciâhât, ekwa ekota sîpâ ekî nipâyâhk, latwîl mana ohci ekî akwanipitahk. Wâkinôkanis mâna ekî isiyihkâtîk. Ekî mostohtiyâhk mâna Maskotîhk isko Mâkwa Sâkahikanihk ohci.”



Wâkinôkanis

Willie Courtrielle itwew, "Kayâs kâkî nôcihcikîhk, namakîkway wâskahikan ahpô nôcihcikew wâskahikanis. Wayawîtimihk mâna ekî kapîsih, kwayak kîhkisin. Wayawîtimihk ekî nipâyâhk ekwa kîkisîp ekwayâc ekî pônamihk."



Felix Noskey wâskahikanihkew lean-to.



Felix Noskey wâskahikanihkew lean-to.



Maskôtîk



Pîskôs Letendre and Solian Laboucan

John C. Letendre itwew, “Oskac namakîkway wâskahikanisa, ‘moya nikiskiyihten tâniki ekâ kâkî osîhtâhk wâskahikanisa. Kîtahtawe Pîskos (Norbert Letendre) kîciwîkihtow Solian Laboucan (Julianne), Joseewa kâ âcimostâkot. Atâwew’kamik mâna ekî pim’payihtât kî itwew kîwetinohk ekî ohcipayik ôma wâskahikanihkîwin. Awiyak ekî âcimostâwât Pîskos ekî wâskahikanihket, ekota ohci Pîskos kîmâci wâskahikanihkîw.



Askiya ekwa asikiy ekî âpacihtât wâw takîsônahkwâw ôhi wâskahikanisa. Ekwa asikiy ekî âpacihtât wâw apahkwânihk.

Ekî osîhtât wâw mîna askîw kotawanâpiskwa ekwa okôhtaskwân eyapit ekwa ewako pîhcâyihk wâsahikanisihk. Eko âsiskîw kotawanâpisk ekî âpatisit mâmays kotawanâpisk eyîhtakot. Kîh kîsôwîhkasikîw mâna âta ekâkîkway eyanâskîhk kît'sk sihtâpihkwanak poko.”

Willie Courtriellie pîkiskwâtam asici askîw kotawanâpiskwa pîhcâyihk kâkî apitwâw. Itwew, “Wîhkâc cî kipîhten katawanâpisk kâkî osîhiht asiskiy ohci. Namoya kotawanâpisk nikî ayâwânân mâka nikî osîhânân asiskîw kotawanâpisk âpihtawâyihk wâskahikanihk ekota ekî maskawahcâk wâskahikanisihk. Wâskotînikan asici ekî etâpacihit ewako kotawanâpisk wiya kayâs namakîkway wâskotînikan. Âpihtawâyihk pîwâpiskos kîhastew kotawanâpiskohk ekota mâna kâkî piminawasotwâw.”



Theresa Blue itwew, “Kayâs namakîkway kotawanâpisk ita iskwew tapiminawasot kî't'sk asisikîwkotawanâpisk. Nôhtâwiy kî osîhew asiskîw kotawanâpiskwa. Kiwâhpahten iskotew ita kâpônamihk. Pîwâpisk mâna ekî akotâhk ekota kâ piminawasohk. Ekota mâna nikâwiy kâkî piminawasot ekota askihkwa kâkî akotât. Kâkî bannockohkît mâna pihko kî astew bannockohk wiya iskotehk kâkî bannockohkîhk.”

William Noskey itwew, “Pokîtah mâna ekî wâskahikanihkîtwâw ahpô itîh kawanîhikîtwâw. Ekotîh ekwa ekapîsitwâw.”



Malcolm Ward itwew, “Kotakîkway kâ ati nîpihk sôskwâc misowî ekî ispicihk namoya piyakwanohk ohci ayânawo. Ekî papâmpicihtwâw mâna ayisiyiniwak. Wiyawâw pokîtih wî itohtetwâwi.”



Malcolm Ward's wâskahikanisa

Anohc mihcet ayisiyiniwak wîkowak
Mâkwa Sâkahikanik âtiht kiyâpic
osîhtâwak wâskahikanisa, âtiht
osîhtamowâwak misiwâskahikana.



Eva Whitehead's wâskahikan



“I will never quit telling stories”

*Stories as told by
Loon River Cree First Nation Elders*

*“That is when people stayed for a long time at Loon Prairie,
and eventually, everyone made houses”*

Elder – Mary Louise Ward

The Elders say, “I remember...”

Felix Noskey says, “Well, people traveled all over this country. When people ask how long native people were here and where they traveled, I tell them that I believe they traveled everywhere in this country. I don’t think there is any place native people didn’t travel.”

Frank Noskey tells of learning to live in the bush. He says, “So, I was alone by myself. Sometimes I use to stay for 3 weeks by myself in the bush. That is when I was a teenager. So, I knew how to survive and I was not scared of anything. I camped anywhere during the summer, spring and winter. I was not afraid to be by myself because I was not there for me to be afraid. Nowadays, no young person would be able to survive like that in the bush. That teaching came from the bush. Nowadays, if there were any elders that would teach their young people these things they would know how to survive as well, but if no one shows and teaches them on how to learn to survive in the bush, then they will not know anything about these things...”

Julie Noskey says, “I remember when the leaves start falling and that was when hunting season began. We had hardly any blankets and camping was just anywhere, and winter was spent in a teepee. During the winter we used to trap, in the summer people used to go to work because that was the way of life.”

Margaret Noskey says, “When we were in the bush we used to leave from over there [The Prairie], my grandmother and I, and she used to put sticks over each other and crisscrossed them and we used to sleep under there. She used to cover it up with canvas. They were called Wâkinokanis. We used to walk from over there [the Prairie to Loon Lake].”

Willie Courtrielle says, "Back when you went trapping you never had houses or trappers cabins and this was a long time ago, and you would stack trees outside to make your shelter and boy it was cold! And you had to sleep outside, and when morning came along I would make my fire."

John C. Letendre says, "At first there were no cabins back then, and I do not know why people did not build cabins back then. Then it happened that Piskôs (who was Norbert Laboucan, married to Julianne Letendre) was told by Josie (the storekeeper) this story about the cabins came from up north. The story about a person building a cabin with logs was told to Piskôs, and that is when he started building cabins here and there.

"They used sod for the roofing part and also a mud stove with a chimney sits inside the cabin. This was built in a straight up fashion and it threw good heat because it is an open fireplace. The smoke did not spread because it goes straight up through the chimney. That is what they used for heat before they started getting stoves, but it was good because it was very warm even though there were no floors, just spruce boughs spread on the floor area."

Willie Courtrielle also talks about the mud stove inside of cabins. He says, "Have you ever heard of a stove that was built out of mud? You know we didn't have a heater, but we used to build it in the centre of the log house where the floor was solid enough. We used to use it for light because we never used to have any sources of light back then. They would put a rod in the center and that was where they would cook."

Theresa Blue says, "Back then there was no stoves like this, cooking stoves, they were mud stoves. My father built that mud stove and you could see the fire light and where you put your wood. He would put a metal piece across there and when you cook my mother would hang up her pots on it. And when she made bannock there were ashes on it because that is where you built your fire."

William Noskey says, "They made houses anywhere, where they were trapping, and they would make houses and they would stay over there."

Malcolm Ward says, "Another thing was when the summer came there was never a time when someone would stay long they had always moved to other places where other people were so the people just went and moved anytime they wanted."

Today many people live at Loon Lake, and some still build cabins, but some live in houses.

TEPAKOHP

“Kîkatawasisin kâyas sakâhk, pokîte kakî
itohtân tîpiyâhk kwayask kita tahkopitaman
kitâpacitâwina. Kakîpapâmitîhtapin”,
itwew Kihteyaya James Letendre.



Kihteyayak itwewak, “Nikiskisinân...”

Mary Louise Ward itwew, “Mistahi kîhkîhokâtowak ayisiyinowak kayâs.”

James Letendre itwew, “Kayâs ayisiyinowak kî-otâpahewak atimwa ekosi ekî isi pimohtetwâw. Namoya kinwes kînôcitâwak wîya esôhkepayitwâw atimwak.”



James Letendre



Frank Noskey itwew, “Atimwak mîna nikînyahtahânânak anikwacâsa, akohpa ekosi’si kîkwaya. Mihcet ayisiyinowak ekospe kî’tsk atimwa ekî otâpahât wâw. Wîhtam asici tân’si’si ekî esinâkostwâw atimwak kôtâpahitwâw. Tayiskôc nisto ahpô newo kîspin emiywâsikwâw atimoyâpiya ekwa emiyosit ocâpanâskos sîwiyâkanisak eyapitwâw, kî itakimâw eweyôtisit nâpew. Wiya âtiht ayisiyinowak namoya ohi kîkwaya kî-ayâwak. Kîhmiyâw mîna emiyosiyit iskwewa kîspin eweyôtisit nâpew.”

Frank itwew, “kîh kiskinawâcihtânawo mîna atimoyâpiya âtiht sîwiyâkanisa kîhapacihîwak. Wâyaw ohci mâna sîwiyâkanisak kî pî pîhtâkosowak awiyak kâpîtâpâsot. Ekwa kîspin nâpew namoya iskwewa ayâwew, takahki nâpew kîspin atimwa eyayâwât kîhmiyâw iskwewa.



“Ayisiyinowak ekî kanawâpahtahkwâw kîkway awîyak ehayât ekâ takita kitimâkisiyit otânisiwâwa. Namakîkway niya nitohci ayâwâwak sîwiyâkanisak ekwa namoya nitohci miyikawin niwîkimâkan. Wîya ekînitawiyimit. Ekîkawkîkîwetisahwak mâna mâka ekâ Ekohci kiyâpic kâwîcîhtoyâhk. Ninanâskomâw Manitô ekî miyit iskwewa ta wîcîmak.”



Mary Louise Ward, Maggie Letendre, ekwa William Noskey.

Frank mîna kiskisiw atimwa ehâpacihât. Itwew, “Atimwak misowe kîpimpayiwak misowe mîna niki pimipayinan. Ôta ohci mîna ekî takohteyân itîh Williamish owâskahikanis kâstiyik. Peyak tipahikan mîna nîmitanaw-niyânosâo cipahikanis mîna ekî nôcihtâyân.”

Peyak kapesiwin ekî isiyihkâtek Sôskwacewewnihk Mary Louise Ward itwew, “Kayâs ayisiyinowak kîhayâwak kîwetinohk isi mamayis wâskahikanisa kâyâkwâw.

Ayisiyinowak ekî wâsakâ wîkitwâw ayitaw ekîwîkitwâw ayitaw ekî kiskacâk, nîso napate ekwa newo kwîski. Ekwa kâkîkîhokâtotwâw ekîsôskwacôwîtwâw. Ekohci kâsôskwacôwîhk kâkîsiyihkâtek. Kîwetinohk isi nîyanân kâkîwekiyâhk. Namoya niyanân nisôskwacôwânâ wiyaw nawac ekîskahcâk napate ekwa etahtakwahcâk ita kâkîwîkeyâhk. Kîpîsôskwacôwîwak mâna kâpîkihokîtwâw. Namakîkway ekospe awiyak kakî itisahamowâw pîwâpiskos.”



Theresa Blue

Theresa Blue itwew, “Nîtim Wâkanâkan kîhisiyihkâsiw ekîpîsowât mâna waskwaya ekwa waskway otâpânâskwa ekî osîhât. Nôhtâwiy mâna kâkikiy kîhosîhîw wâskway’tâpânâskwa ekwa asâma as’ci ekî atâwâket mâna. Asâma kâkîhosîhât wâw nikâwiy mâna ekî kîsîhât ekî tâpisawât ekwa ekîapihket. Ekî atâwâkît mâna nôhtâwîy nân’taw mitâtaht ahpô nîyânanosâp nôpehikanak ohci. Ekîkocihâyâhk wâw mâna otâpânâskwak ekî sôskwacôweyâhk. Peyakwâw nikiskisin nôhkom ewîci pôsîmikoyâhk ekwa ekotapisineyâhk. Emihceteyâhk awâsisak, ekocihâyâhk otâpânâsk.”



Theresa itwew as'ci, "Nôhtâwiy mâna ekîhosîhât wâkanâkana. Eko etâpacificit ewâkiniht mistik pita eyakocimiht ekwa ewîkiniht ekwa epâsoht. Ekî akotât mâna nîkinâhk ekwa epônahk ta pâswât. Kâkocimiht ewîhicipayit ta wâkinihit."

Mâkwa Sâkahikaniyweyinowak misowe isi ekî isi papâmahkamikisiwak - kîhotâpâsowak, kîhotâpahastimewak, ekwa kîhkasâmîwak. Ayisiyinowak kînîsôhkamâtowak tânisi ta isi osîhâtwâw wiya ekîmistahîapicîhtwâw pimohtewin mîna kîhokâtowin ekwa ta pimipicîh tâpakwewin ohci.

Wîhkâc cî omisisi kitisipimohtân?

“I will never quit telling stories”

*Stories as told by
Loon River Cree First Nation Elders*

*“It was beautiful in the woods a long time ago, you could go anywhere
as long as you tied your belongings right and you could ride around”*

Elder – James Letendre

The Elders say, “I remember...”

Mary Louise Ward says, “People had a habit of visiting long ago...”

James Letendre says, “They had sleighs and some of the trappers would have dogs and they would take less time to get anywhere and they were good to use.”

Frank Noskey describes the dog sled that he used to have. He says, “I used to have dog packs as well, they use to pack the squirrels and my blankets and things like that, because back then that is what kept people going mostly was dogs, toboggans and dog harness. For example, if a person were to have dogs, 3 dogs or maybe 4, especially with good sets of harness, a nice toboggan with bells that was considered a well-off man, who can do or achieve these material things, because some did not have any dogs at all, but it would have to be a real good man, and he would be given a nice woman if he had 3 or 4 dogs on harness and toboggan and bells to go with it then he was a good man and even blankets for the dogs.”

Frank continues, “The dogs were even dressed up real good. They had these dog blankets made of yarn which go on top of the dog with small bells on both sides of the dog blankets which jingle when the dog moves. You could hear them from a long ways especially when it is cold out. He was a good man to have these dogs, and if he was without a woman he would be given one because he was a good man eh?”

“People used to look at these material things in a particular way so that their daughters would not be poor and would be provided for. I never had any jingle bells and [my wife] was not given to me. It was her who

wanted to be with me. I used to try and push her towards her home. That is why we are still together today and I thank God that he gave me a woman to be with.”

Frank remembers traveling with the dog teams too. He says, “With the dog teams that used to go everywhere, I used dog teams a lot myself, I used to leave from here – right where William’s (Cardinal) cabin is situated, that is where I used to leave from by Dog team. I used to get there in one hour and forty five minutes from here. Him too, my brother-in-law used to travel by dog team from here. One hour forty five minutes, and we used to be there at Owl Slough.”

One place was even called ‘Sliding area.’ Mary Louise Ward explains, “Long ago, not where we were but towards the North, way before when the cabins were still visible, they were around like this, in a circle. Those were where the people lived before. There were ravines on both sides, and they lived on both sides. There were two on the right and four on the left. And when they visited each other they would slide. That is why it was called that. There on the North side of the Creek is where we lived. We did slide because on one side was a larger ravine and on one side it was fairly even, that is where we had lived. When they visited they would come sliding. There was no phone.”

Theresa Blue says, “My brother-in-law ‘Wâkanâkan’ they used to call him a long time ago, he used to bring birch bark. He used to make sleds too. My dad also used to always make sleds; he used to sell them and also snowshoes and my mom would do the completion process such as lacing and weaving. He used to sell those as well, for maybe fifteen or ten dollars. Sleds cost around fifteen dollars too. We used to try out the sleds after it was finished, when we lived across the river. You know when you can slide with it. I remember we used to ride on it, trying out the sled. My late grandmother rode with us, and we flipped over! There were many children there and we were trying it out.

Theresa continues, “My father used to also build what they call wâkanâkana. He used to hang it up in our house and he would make a fire so it would dry. He would take a lot of water and soak the birch, so it would be easier to bend.”

The Loon River people had many different ways to travel in the winter – sleigh, dog sled, sleds, and snow shoe. People helped to make them and they were used a lot so that they could travel and visit one another, as well as for traveling to trap. Have you ever traveled on one of these?

AYINÂNEW

“Nikiskeyihten mâna ekî wîhkohtok ôta

Mâkwa Sâkahikanihk”,

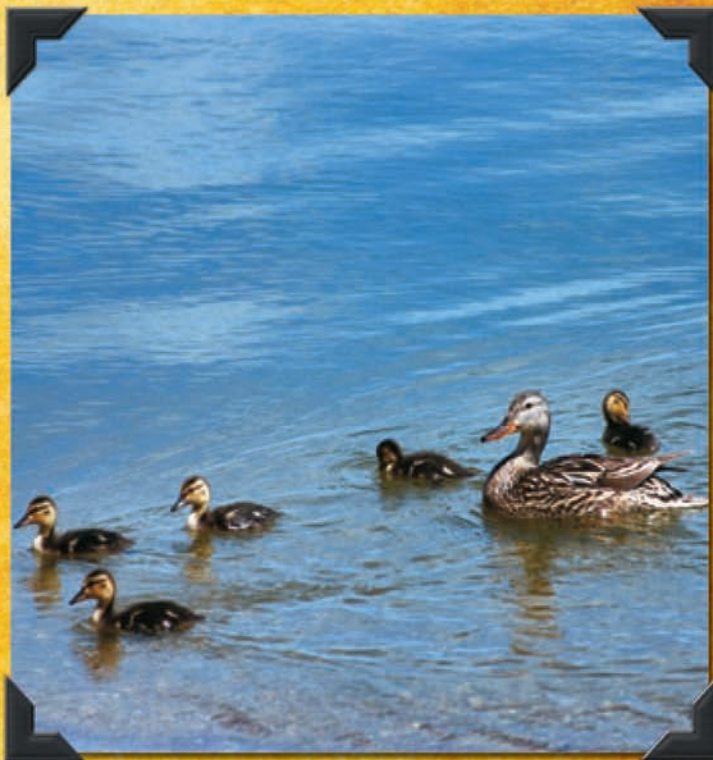
itwew Kihteyaya Edna Letendre.



Edna Letendre

Kihteyayak itwewak, “Nikiskisinân...”

Joe Noskey itwew, “Ôta mâna Pîskos, kâkî kîhcewîkimât Soliana (Julianne Letendre), ekwa ekî wîhkohket kâ takwâkineyik asci kâ sekwaneyik, kâkikî ekospe. James ekwa nîya eyoskinekeyâhk, Asci John C ekwa Ernest, ekî newoyâhk. Ekospe, Pîskos kâwîhkohket kâtakwâkîhk, môsowiyâs ekî miywâsik, ospikayak, pân'sâwân ekwa pimîhkân ekî mîcihk. Ekwa kâsekwahk sîsîpak asci ekî asahkîhk, eh'he nîswâw, kâsekwahk, âsay amiskwak kâpôni wanîhikîk ekwa kâtakwâkîk môswak mayisk kâpôni pimohetwâw.”





Pîskôs (Norbert Letendre)



John C Letendre kiskisiw ekî wîhkohkîhk mâna, “Ôta Mâkwa Sâkahikanihk, wîya Pîskos ekî astât, namoya wîya, mâka ekî mîyikot Peter Letendre. Wîya ekoyôw ekî âsônamâkot opâpâwa. Ekî mîyât kâti kihteyayôwit osâm, wîya ekwa ekî itôtahk. Pîskos ekwa ekî otinahk. Ascî Peter Letendre namoya wîya kayahte ekoyôw. Opâpâwa wîsta ekî mîyikot, peyakwan Pîskos. Peter opâpâwa kâ'kihteyayôwiyit wîsta ekosi ekî isi mîyiht, mâskoc kayâs. Mâcika, kîmiyôw Peter, wîya okosisa. Peter ekwa wîya kâ'kihteyayôwiyit, ekî mîyat Pîskôsa.



John C. Letendre

“Ekwa ikospîk ati ispayôw nikîwîhtamak, omsi itwew, ‘ochichipayôw ekwa totinaman mîgwahp. Kîspin kinitowehten oma mîgwahp, ikosi kakî otinen. Kakî itotîn ekwa. Namoya ekwa nikaskihtan ekwa, kîya kikiskiyihten tânsi tatotamon.’ Tapow wîya ikî nîsokomowak mâna nantow nikotwâosâp îtatoponîan ochi. Niki machi atoskaten wîhkotowin (mîgwahp). Namoya kîkway nikiskinawamak wîya cha’shi nikiskeyihten tânsi tatotaman mitoni ninakachi’tan cha’shi shapo.”

Mary Louise Ward asci kisiksiw wîsta wîhkohtôwina. Itwew, “Kayâs mâna kâkîwîhkohtohk, ekî mâci osîhtâtawâw mîkwâhp wîya ekî misâk mîkwâhp. Ekî kîsk’sohtwâw mîtosâ, mâka ayiwak sihcisak eyâpat’sitwâw. Ôta mâna kâkîwîhkohtohk. Kakîsihihtwâw mistikwak astâwak ekwa ekota apahkwân ekwa ecîpwîkinamihk. Kakiyaw ayisiyiniwak wîyawâw omîkwâhpimwâwa ekî âpatahkwâw ekospe mâna. Kânîpihk namakîkway ekospe pakweyanikamikwa. Kît’sk ekotowa kakîmawasakonamihk mîkwâhpa, ekoni ekwa kâmânokehk ohci.



“Peyakwâw kâkîsihtâtawâw, ekota ekwa iskwewak eyôtinâtawâw sihtâpihkwana, nîsta nikî ôtinâwak sihtâpihkwanak. Ekî ahihtawâw pîhcâyihk ita iskwahtem kâ astîk, ita kotak kîkwaya kâ astîkwâw. Manitowîhkacikana etokwe. Ekanôsimôtawâw iyisihkâtîk. Kîkwaya imam’sîtwâw etokwe, mihcet kîkwaya ekota eyastekwâw pâhpetos isi. Piskowak tâniki kâmanitôhkâtihtawâw, ekonik nîkân epîhtokwatâhk ekwa ekote enakatahkawâw. Oskâpewisak ekota e-apitawâw, kahkeyaw etôtahkwâw ekota takî itôtahkwâw.





“Ekwa kakîsihtâtwâw kîkwaya, ekwa, ekospe mâna, newo iskotewa, pônikana aywesihtak, ekwa iskwewak ekî kwayâtastâtwâw wîyas ekwa kotaka kîkwaya asci. Pahkwesikan mâna asci, mâka ‘moya kotakîkway oci ayâwak. Wîyas ekwa ewahikanak ekwa petosi kîkwaya asci. Ekota ekwa kahkiyaw kîkway eyastâhk ita mistikwaskihkwak kâ apitwâw.



“Peyakaw kâmâcihtâtwâw, ayisiyiniwak aniki kânekânîtwâw ewâsakâhtîtwâw. Onikamowak kânikamotwâw ekota ekwa ewâsakâhtatwâw kîkwaya, nayahikanisa. Peyakwan awâsîhkânisak, âtiht sen’pâna itahkop’sotwâw, ekonik onîkânîwak. Peyakwâw ewâskâhtîtwâw ekwa, ekota ekwa emîcisohk. Mîcimâpoy, ekwa kotaka kîkwaya asci. Sîsîp’mîcimâpoy ekwa kahkiyaw kotaka kîkwaya.

“Peyakwâw eko kâkîsihtâtwâw, ekwa kîseyiniwak ekwa enikamotwâw ekwa ewâsakâhtâtwâw nayahcikanisa pita nîkan. Ekota ekwa kahkiyawiyak enîmihitotwâw. Ekî môcîkahk mâna kâyas, kapîtipisk enîmihitohk.”



Wîhkohtowinihk mâna ekî mawacihitohk, ta nikamohk, ta nîmihitohk ekwa ta mîc'sohk.

“I will never quit telling stories”

*Stories as told by
Loon River Cree First Nation Elders*

“I know there used to be Pow-wows here in Loon Lake”

Elder – Edna Letendre

The Elders say, “I remember...”

Joe Noskey says, “It was here that Pîskôš (Norbert Laboucan, who was married to Julianne Letendre) used to already have Pow-wows in the fall and in the spring, always then. James and I were just young lads, John C. and I and Ernest, there used to always be four of us, during Pow-wows. When Pîskôš is going to hold a Pow-wow in the fall, moose hunting because meat was good – ribs, dry meat, and pemmican was what was eaten. And in the spring it was ducks, duck hunting, and that was what was served. Yes, they were held twice a year, spring when trapping beaver was over, and again in the fall before moose quit walking.”

John C. Letendre remembers that Pow-wows used to be, “Right here in Loon Lake, it was him Pîskôš who held them. It was not his, but it was given to him by Peter Letendre, the one that I mentioned. It was his, but it was passed on to him, Pîskôš, from Peter Letendre, who was his father. It was given to him when the old man was getting too old and he could not do it anymore. So then Pîskôš took over and started doing it himself. Also, Peter Letendre, it was not his Pow-wow either, it was not his either. It was his father’s just the same way it was passed on to Pîskôš. When Peter’s father got to be too old, it was given to him in the same fashion. It must have been a long time ago. So, he got to be too old and couldn’t do it anymore, so he gave it to Peter who was his son. That is how, and when Peter got to be too old, he gave it to Pîskôš and that is when he took over.

“And when the time came he told me when I went to talk to him, so this is what he said to me, ‘the time has come if you want the tee-pee’ (they used to call it tee-pee back then), he said, ‘if you want this tee-pee and you want to continue, then it is yours if you want to do it. You can do it now, I can not do it anymore and you know what to do with it.’ It is true because I used to work for him, helping him out, starting when I was sixteen

years old. I started working with the Pow-wow. And he did not have to show me anything because I knew what had to be done, seeing as how I worked with it many times. I knew how to do it completely throughout.”

Mary Louise Ward also remembers the pow-wows. She says, “Long time ago when there were pow-wows. They started by making the tee-pee because the tee-pee used to be huge. They used to cut down poplar trees but more so spruce and they used them for tee-pee poles. The pow-wow used to be here [at Loon Lake]. Then when they were done with the poles, then they would put the covering on. Only tee-pees were used back then during the summer; there were no tents, just those tee-pees and that is what was collected and used. That is what was put around the frame.

“Once they were done then the women went and got spruce boughs, I used to get spruce boughs too. These were put all around the inside where the door was, evenly with the others things that were there, the things they idolized I guess. Ekanôsimôtwâw, they were called. The things they depended on I guess, that stuff was all there, all kinds of things that were made as idols, like animals, that kind. And once it started, those were the things that were taken in first and it would stay there. That was where the younger men sat and they did all the things that needed to be done.

“Then as they completed bringing the stuff in, then, there used to be four fires made and the meals were being prepared by the women, like meat and all kinds of other stuff. There used to be bannock, but other things there was not much, only meat, pemmican. Everything was spread out where all the drums were.

“Then once it got going the people, who were the leaders, circled around. While the singers sang they took the things around; they used to carry these back packs. Just like dolls, some had ribbons tied on them, those were the leaders. They went around and once that was done, that was when the meal started. Then preparation for the feast was started and the meal was served. Soup and all kinds of other stuff, we used to eat all kinds of stuff, duck soup and things like that.

“Once that was done the old men are the ones that sang and the stuff that they took around, they went first before anyone else. Then after that is when just anyone danced. They used to have a good time; the dancing went all night.”

Pow-wows were a time for everyone to gather for singing, dancing, and eating.

Kinanâskomîtinawâw, to the following people:

The elders of Loon River Cree First Nation, for sharing their stories with the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study team in order that they can be used to help teach their Cree language.

The Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study Team Members – Richard Davis, Eva Whitehead, Lavern Letendre, Kenny Ward, and Barry Hochstein, for working to preserve traditional knowledge, culture and language.

Christine Schreyer, for her work in putting the storybooks together.

Maybe Noskiye and Kenny Ward for all their hard work in translating the English transcriptions of the interviews back into Cree.

Billy-Joe Laboucan, for his work on standardizing the Cree spelling.

Randy Brososky, for his always creative ideas in book design and printing.

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Photo Credits: TLU study, Christine Schreyer, Clint Westman, Sandra Peacock, Jenanne Ferguson, Janelle Baker, and Ryan Klassen.

We hope you enjoy these stories of anohc ekwa ekospîhk. Ekosi.

We hope that these books will be a useful and valuable learning tool for the Loon River Cree people in order to not only practice reading and writing their language, but to also learn about places and resources that are a part of their history and culture. The books provide details on what life used to be like for the people of Loon River Cree First Nation and their ancestors. They combine intricate knowledge with personal often funny stories, making them both informative and entertaining.

Written in the Loon River dialect of the Cree language, we hope that they will be teaching tools for the Clarence Jaycox School in Loon Lake, Alberta, as well as in other Cree speaking communities.

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The stories in this book were collected in 2003 during the Loon River Cree First Nation's Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study. Elders were interviewed in Cree on numerous topics, and their words have been compiled together into eight chapters. The eight chapters in the book are on the following themes: moose hunting, trapping, berries and medicines, fishing, places people traveled to, housing in the past and present, traditional items people used to make (sleds and snowshoes), and pow-wows. The body of the book is written in the Cree language, although English translations appear at the end of each chapter. The book as a whole provides details on what life used to be like for the people of Loon River Cree First Nation and their ancestors, as well as contemporary society. Each chapter combines intricate knowledge of the land with personal, often funny stories, making them both informative and entertaining.