



WAB 25 – Indiens devant la residence des Peres Oblates, Desmarais



IRS Inquest

Success & Challenges

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Bigstone Health Commission

Remembering the Children: A Community & Academic Gathering

October 23-25, 2022



Mary Jane & Scotty Willier



Peter Paul Willier

Who am I Where am I from?

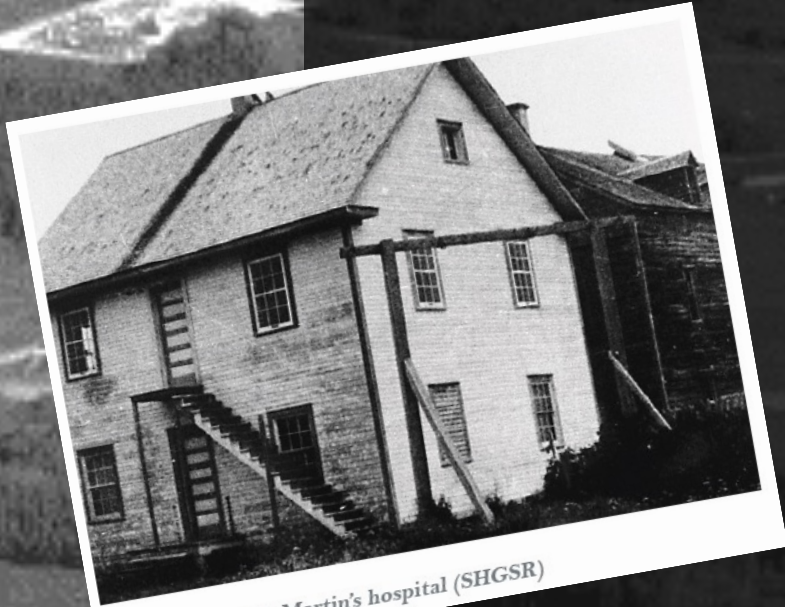


Agenda

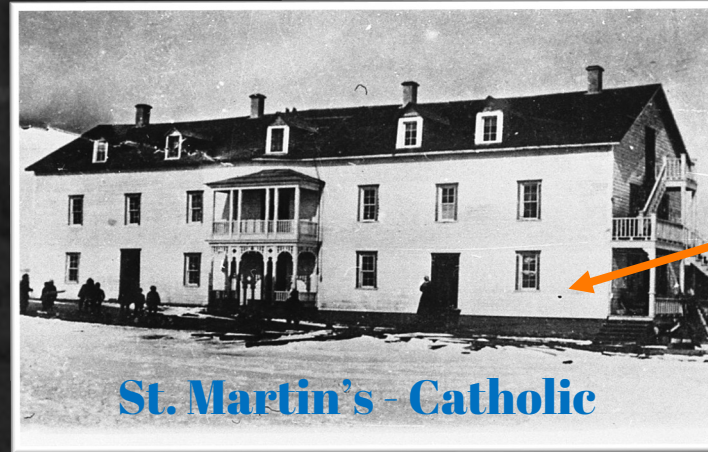
01. Overview - IRS
02. Research Questions
03. Principles
04. Process
05. Success
06. Challenges

01

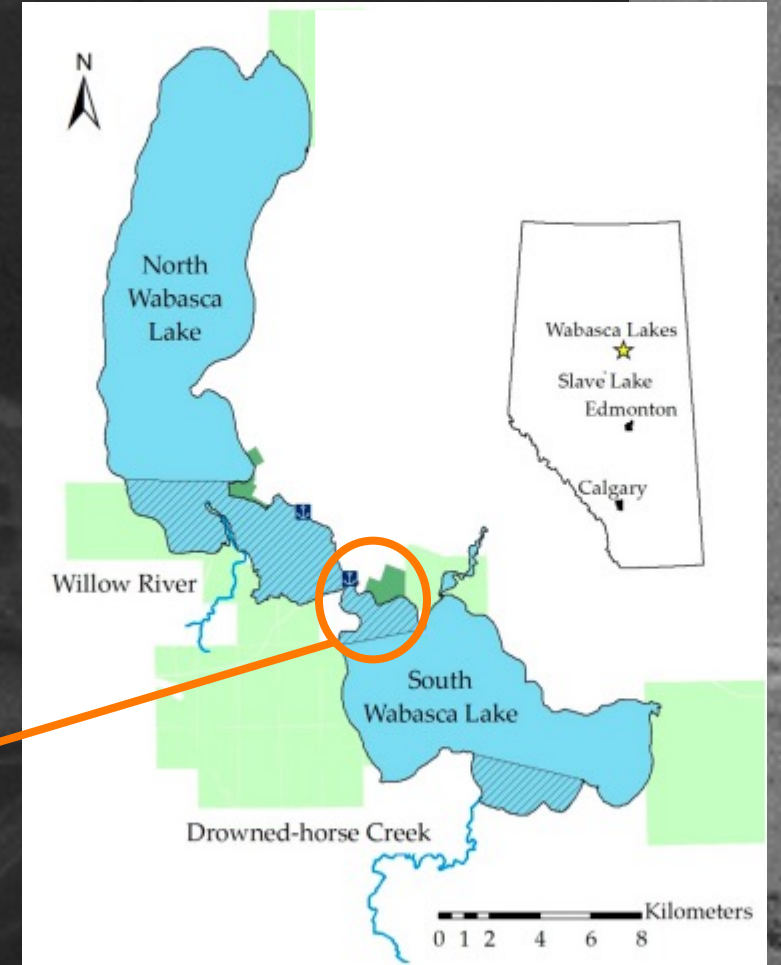
- First mission house - 1897
- Boarding school in operation – 71 years (1902-1973)
- First hospital - 1928
- 18 students passed away (NCTR)



WAB22: First St. Martin's hospital (SHGSR)



St. Martin's - Catholic





- First mission house - 1894
- Boarding school in operation – 64 years (1902-1966)
- 8 students passed away (NCTR)



02 Research Questions



Finding Truth

1. *What is the data/information on children who went to residential school?*
2. *What is the data/information on children who did not return from residential school?*
3. *When children left residential school, where did they go?*

Impact

4. *What impact did the forced removal of children by church and RCMP have on families and community?*
5. *How do survivors of residential school describe their experience?*





03 Research Principles

Responsibility

Respect

Reciprocity



Survivor – St. Martin's

Mike Beaver



Survivor – St. John's

Bert Alook



Survivor – St. Martin's

Vina Young

04

Our Process

A

Archival Research

Searching for and extracting data and information from manuscripts, records, images, diaries, reports.

B

Data Stories

Turning research into easy-to-read and easy-to-understand stories that show importance.

C

Survivor Stories

Survivor testimony to fill in gaps of archival research, rounding out our residential school story

D

Stories from the Land

Archival research and oral testimony guide GPR and canine searches

05

Success

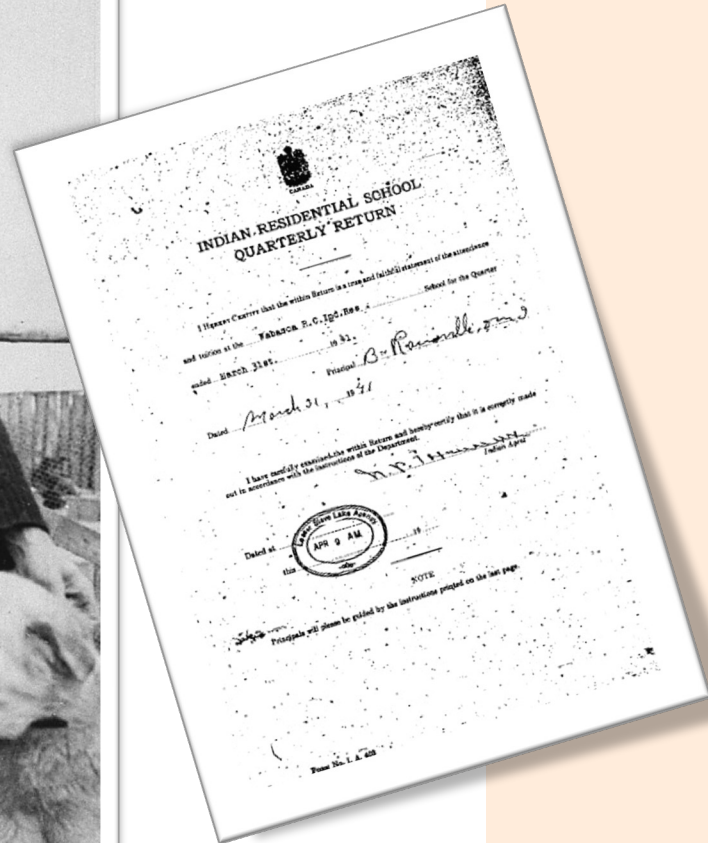
Building Context

Image acquisition



WAB 100: Sisters of Providence **WAB112:** Sister Denis d’Alexandrie, nurse at St. Martin Hospital, and Sister Luc l’Evangeliste
WAB 108: Kitchen at St. Martin’s.

WAB 63 – Pere Bernard Rainville, o.m.i



Building Context

Who administered St. Martin's?

Father Bernard Rainville

- Born January 6, 1909, Quebec
- Ordained May 21, 1933 in Ottawa
- Died December 13, 1957 in High Prairie, AB

Father Rainville left for western Canada in 1934. He lived in Grouard from 1934-1935 where he studied Cree. From there he went to Desmarais for two years, leaving in 1937.

He was made principal of St. Marin's from 1940-1944 and then returned as principal from 1951-1953.

*** Completed 40 Oblate profiles**

Building Context

What was the historical/cultural climate at the time?

- Department of Indian Affairs
- Canada's Residential School System
- **Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate**
- Sisters of Providence
- Anglican Missionaries
- Indian Hospitals
- Eugenics in Canada
- Missing Children & Burial Information
- Our Truth: Survivor Testimony & Shared History from Community



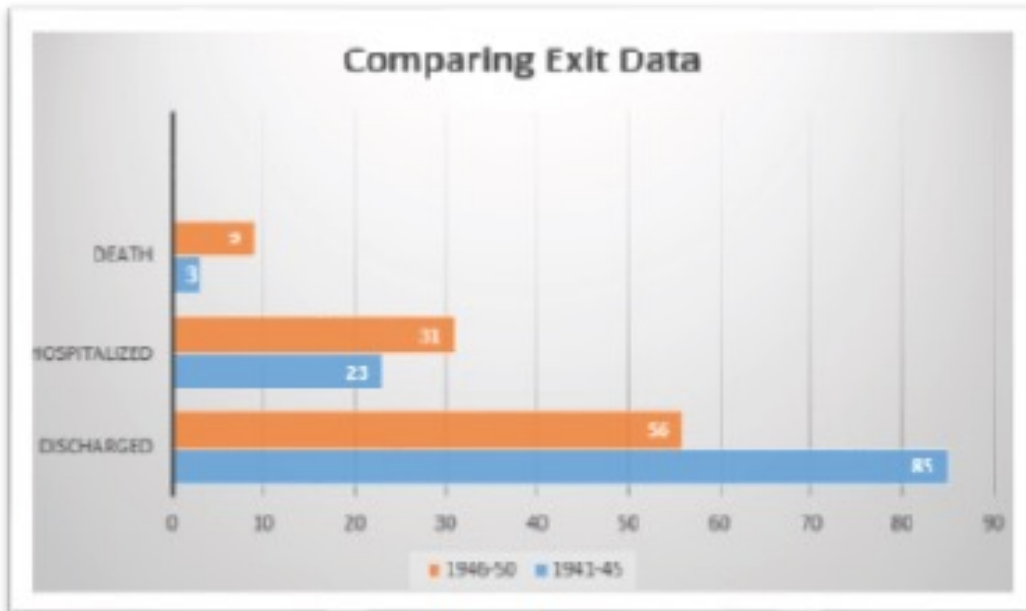
- *Negotiated conflict between government & Indigenous people*
- *Commission representatives – Treaty No. 8*
- *Henri Giroux Obedience – Missionary in Charge of Colonization, 1911*

Building Context

Who didn't come home?



	Discharged	Transferred	Removal	Hospital	Death
1941-45	85	2	2	23	3
1946-50	56	0	0	31	9



21%
From 1941-45 to 1946-50, hospitalizations increased by 9%

6%
From 1941-45 to 1946-50, student deaths rose by 4.5%

Between 1946 and 1950, 38% of the children were discharged from residential school, 21% of the children were hospitalized, and 6% of the children died.

Six students disappeared off record between 1941 and 1950.



Building Context

Who didn't come home?

Student Deaths

When a pupil dies in school:

1. Principal informs the Indian Agent.
2. Indian Agent convenes a Board of Inquiry (Principal, Indian Agent, Medical Officer)
3. The Board shall assemble within 48 hours and complete a Memorandum of Death report.
4. Parents will be given notice of the inquiry, but the inquiry shall not be delayed more than 72 hours.
5. If the Indian Agent cannot attend, an RMCP member or Justice of the Peace will represent him.
6. The inquiry does not take the place of an inquest.

(RG 10, Volume 6380)

File 768-23, part 1	Wabasca Roman Catholic Residential School - Death of Pupils. 1944.
File 769-1, part 1	Whitefish Lake Residential School - General Administration. 1906 - 1951.
File 769-5, part 1	Whitefish Lake Residential School - Building Maintenance - Supplies - Accounts. 1922 - 1936.
File 769-5, part 2	Whitefish Lake Residential School - Building Maintenance - Supplies - Accounts. 1937 - 1943.
File 769-5, part 3	Whitefish Lake Residential School - Building Maintenance - Supplies - Accounts. 1943 - 1949.
File 769-5, part 4	Whitefish Lake Residential School - General Administration. 1950.
File 769-9, part 1	Whitefish Lake Residential School - School Land. 1939.
File 769-10, part 1	Whitefish Lake Residential School - Admissions & Discharges. 1900 - 1909.

Searching Desmarais

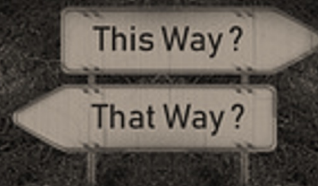


WAB #88 – The Cave



Dr. Keisha pulls a 400 MHz across a burial ground near Edmonton.

06 Challenges



-
- *Capacity*
 - *Access*
 - *Traumatization through Engagement*

Lesson Learned

Build Relationships



01

Community

- First Nation
- Municipal
- Church

04

Translator Services

- Justice
Departments

02

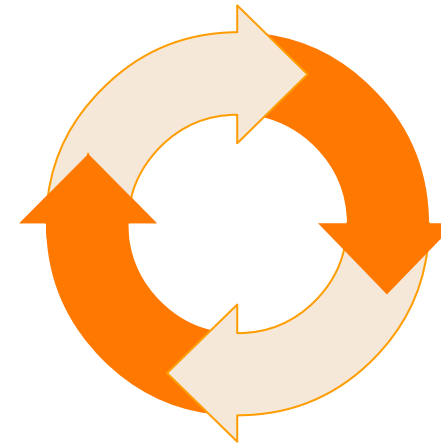
University of Alberta

- Institute of Prairie
& Indigenous
Archeology

03

Archive Holdings

- Provincial
- Local



Lesson Learned – Care of Self



“Walking with Medicine”



Thank you!