

WORKING WITH WATER GOULAIS MISSION MEMORIES

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Abstract / Résumé

“Working with Water” presents the memorable life experiences of eight Goulais Mission residents as told in conversational interview. Their stories, both joyful and tragic, provide a refreshing portrait of what it was like to live by the Lake where kinship, land, and life on the water formed the backbone of the community. It is the dynamic experience of listening which this paper tries to share. The conclusion covers some lively forces in storytelling and acknowledges the importance of first hand accounts as the best way to hear the voices of cultural authenticity.

“Le Travail avec L'eau” présente les expériences inoubliables de huit habitants de la Mission Goulais telles qu'elles ont été racontées lors de conversations. Leurs récits, tant heureux, que tragiques, nous offrent un portrait rafraîchissant de la vie près du lac où la parenté, la terre et la vie sur le lac formaient le pilier de la communauté. C'est la dynamique de l'écoute que cet article tente de faire partager. La conclusions présente quelques qualités qui donnent de la vie à la narration et souligne l'importance de l'écoute de première main comme le meilleur moyen de saisir les voix authentiques de la culture.

Earlier Times

An undated entry in the missionary journal of Hannah Foulkes Chance states that the nearest community of Gtigaun Ziibi or Garden River, was "150 miles from any mission to the east" and more than "500 miles distant from a mission to the northwest." The entry continues.

[We] embarked in the "Missionary" for a tour along the north shore of Lake Superior. We reached the Sault, made some purchases at the stores there of needful articles, and then passed through the canal in tow of a friendly steamer. On the eastern side of "Gros Cap" at the entrance of Lake Superior, we pitched our tents for the night. We were soon surrounded and violently attacked by hosts of vicious and bloodthirsty mosquitoes.... On the following morning we continued our voyage and reached an Indian encampment, where we held Divine service.... The next day we reached another encampment and had religious services, and much conversation (Chance 1899:7, 8).

It is quite likely these two encampments were in Goulais Bay and Batchawana Bay.¹ The writer gives no mention of the Goulais Mission church erected by Catholic Bishop Baraga in 1862 where the Ojibwa band was concentrated, but does mention the 'friendly steamer' in the Sault canal. Since construction of the American canal began in 1853, it suggests this particular trip past Goulais occurred between the two events.

Geographically and geologically, Goulais and Batchawana are closely linked. The district of Algoma, which encompasses the two, is at the seam of two continental plates which accounts for diverse land forms. The north shore is unique in bordering the largest freshwater lake in the world, having the highest hills in Ontario plus the rainiest and wettest area in the province. Former beaches seen from the road at a 400 foot elevation are evidenced by old sand and gravel deposits. It is in the flat areas like Goulais and Batchawana that people tended to live (Sault Star staff 1975). Where the Goulais Mission is nestled into the northwest corner of Goulais Bay, there is perfect protection from Superior storms. Freighters still take shelter there and the bay appears like a city of lights when several of them are at anchor. The Batchawana community congregated at the Batchawana River mouth in proximity to the Hudson Bay Trading Post.

In a description of canoeing 125 miles from Gros Cap to Michipicoten River...

The most conspicuous promontories in the interval are

Marmoaze (Memince of the voyagers) 41 miles from St. Mary's River, and Gargantua, 93 miles from St. Mary's River. These are the outer points of great curvatures which contain subordinate bays of considerable size. Just within the most southern of these, the Goulais or Gulé Bay of the voyager, we passed the night of June 11. Early next morning we crossed the mouth of the bay and made for the lesser Maple Islands leaving behind us the great island of this name, sometimes called "Parisians" loaded with timber.... We next came to the Batchewine Bay, deep and long – with a flat island called Green Island on its north side and lofty hills overhanging it, but the interior on the south and west is low and woody (Bigsby 1850: 189,190).

Diary notes record that while camped in Goulais Bay, Alexander Henry's Indian companions dispatched with an axe a solitary Native who came visiting in a time of famine.²

Fishing was the *raison d'être* of the Goulais community just as fishing was the reason for large Ojibwe seasonal gatherings at the Sault rapids. Being a skilled negotiator, Chief Shingwaukose of the Garden River band diligently sought protection for Native commercial interests in all fields, including mining, fishing and timber rights. In 1834, when Samuel Ashman established an illegal American fishery at Goulais Bay, Shingwaukose was quick to protest. He gave a "warning to quit" under the authority of the Lieutenant governor and when it was ignored he received help from both Hudson Bay factor and agent who confronted the Americans at their encampment, seized and distributed the fish to the local Indians and destroyed the rest (Chute 1998:60).

Political meddling on the part of those unsympathetic to Native rights was responsible for creating tension among the otherwise cooperating Michipicoten, Batchawana, Goulais and Garden River communities. In 1819, the British Indian Department gave the eight year old Nebenaigoojing the chieftainship at the Sault rapids as a way of gaining a diffuse allegiance to the Crown (Chute 1998:64). The young man subsequently spent many years on the Garden River reserve learning from and accompanying Shingwaukose on diplomatic errands. In 1835, Indian Agent Thomas Anderson divested Nebenaigoojing and declared Shingwaukose head Chief. Shingwaukose drew a map showing his jurisdiction from Thessalon to Goulais Bay (Chute 1998: 65). In 1852, the government arbitrarily named Nebenaigoojing Chief of both Batchawana and Goulais communities without consulting residents who considered their communities politically independent entities. John Keating used the resulting conflict to increase boundary disputes and eventually

manipulate those boundaries to reduce reserve size (Chute 1998: 154, 155). In 1853, Keating upset relations among residents of Michipicoten, Batchawana Bay and Goulais Bay by giving favours of mineral rights to those who helped him explore. The Pennefather treaty of 1859 removed the Batchawana band land base, inducing residents to move to Garden River.³ Those who stayed in Batchawana were later threatened with an eviction notice when the Scott Misner Shipping Company tried to remove them as "squatters on their own land" (Groff 1974). Struggling against the competing non-Native commercial interests in their territory and maintaining their separate community identities accounts for the fact that present day Batchewana First Nation is made up of three separate reserves. Goulais Bay and Obadjiwan (the reserve at Batchawana) are respectively half and one third the size of Rankin reserve. Rankin is close to the Sault economic base and Goulais Bay and Obadjiwan residents remain tied to ancestral home and/or traditional economy.

To reach the Goulais Bay reserve, one first leaves the highway heading west in search of downtown Goulais River. You know you are downtown when you read a large sign in front of a small convenience store located on the north shore of the main branch of Goulais River. There's also a gas pump. Heading west, you pass old oxbows of the river filled with reeds and quiet pools of water. The road to the Mission branches off to the north so that you never do regain sight of the meandering main branch.

Your next sight of water is expansive. You see the long line of the bay and the curvature of shoreline still ahead towards the Mission point. Cottages line the shore on your left and to your right, thick stands of maple line gentle slopes. The sign indicating entrance to reserve land, is just a hop skip and a jump from Mike and Sarah Neveau's fish and chip stand. Mary Allen is next door and close to the terminus is Angela Neveau's present camp and Greg Agawa's home. At Our Lady of Sorrows Church there is an historic plaque describing the visits of Bishop Baraga in the 1860s, chronicling his missionary efforts and his linguistic achievement in producing a still used Ojibwe dictionary and grammar. There's a short continuation of the road down to the government dock and Matt Robinson's house. Next to the Church is an open pavilion and beside that, the remains of the old school house. Back of these two buildings, church and school, all overgrown with trees, are the former home sites of Mary Beaver's parents and grandparents. Down an old car track through the woods towards the water is the site of Angela Neveau's childhood home as well as Mary Allen's. Some background about community ancestors comes from eighty-four year old Marguerite Cress, sister of Albert Cress who married Ida Neveau.

"I remember Louis Neveau. He made snowshoes and he never charged for them. He made snowshoes for a lot of people and the work was superb on them. The work was perfect. That sort of thing is lost. We have snowshoes somewhere that he made for my son when he was little. Ida's mother used to make birch bark things decorated with the beads. Oh! She did beautiful work. Ida didn't do too much of that because her mother died when she was quite young, so it wasn't passed on to her. She kept her language of course, and spoke with her father Louis Neveau."

Marguerite says that George Agawa was teaching Ojibwe to the children. Father Mayhew encouraged Ojibwa instruction by giving Ida Neveau a hymn book with Ojibwe text so she could instruct through song. She did so even during the summers spent on the Lizard Islands. She played the church organ at the mission.

The Agawa family and the Neveau family are two that Marguerite remembers. It is time to meet some of these former and present residents. Their recollections touch on what they have in common, what they have accomplished for themselves, and what they care about most.⁴

Angela Neveau

Angela Neveau, Batchewana First Nation's first female chief, served from 1996 to 1998. News of her election described her as a 60 year old student at Sault College and a mother of seven. "I started...at Sault College in the 1990s. It was a two year program (Native Community Worker Program) but I finished in three years because my husband took sick during my studies.

"I grew up at Goulais Bay Mission. We were non-status. There were more white people there. We couldn't be on welfare. We were poor and if we got work housekeeping or babysitting for fifty cents an hour, we took it. I was non-status 'cause my mom was enfranchised. I was the first born. She left me with my great grandmother when I was three months old. I didn't know my mom. She went to Sault Michigan and had other children, so I have other brothers and sisters. I was glad that I was raised by my grandmother. She taught me to speak Ojibwa as my first language. When I was five years old my aunt taught me English. I was raised on the reserve and went to the Mission school. During the winter, we moved to town. My grandmother rented a little room in Sault until grade six.

"My grandmother taught me always to be kind and caring. It might be the smallest thing, like offering someone a drink of water. For that person, it might must be a wonderful thing right then, just a glass of water. When we had company, we always gave our best to the guest in

order to make them feel special. She was religious but not fanatic. She gave me enough values to prepare for raising my own children. I raised my children to share and care. My grandmother would say 'If someone knocks at your door and asks to come in, it might be the Lord.'

"At age seven I went to Holy Angels in Sault Ste. Marie. My grandmother did domestic work to support us during the winter. I worked hard at an early age just to survive. After going to school in the Sault and at the Mission, I lived with foster parents in Columbia, Ohio where I attended grade eight, nine and part of ten."

Angela, who presently lives in Sault Ste. Marie, shows affection for her birthplace at Goulais. On one occasion, she pointed to the location of a former log cabin. "This is where I was born in 1936." Three spectacular pine trees still stand sentinel by that cabin site. They tower over the landscape and look out on the expanse of Lake Superior shoreline stretching from Goulais Bay to Gros Cap in Sault Ste. Marie.

"Look at those trees!" Angela gestured in admiration. "And over here we had a root house for potatoes and vegetables" as she pointed to the slope of the wooded hill leading down to the Bay. "We had horses...and there was a natural spring. My father-in-law and his father were boat builders, carpenters and musicians. My granddaughter picked up the recorder and played right away. The parents of my husband's grandfather came from Madeline Island."

Politics was a long time interest for Angela. "I remember Eisenhower's election. I remember being so interested in politics then...I wanted to help out my people...I wrote Ottawa in the late 50s. The old Chief didn't want [electric] power. But I did. The government said 'We've approved power. You already have it.'"

Election time celebrations were gala affairs at Goulais. "At Alex Robinson's house, they held dances for the Liberal Party. George E. Nixon was M.P. for Algoma for 21 years. We did square dancing, polkas, reels, and the shotice. We worked hard, but we had fun in those days. We had a whole week of New Year's celebration. It would start at the McCoy's the first night. Then it would be at Joe John's another night. People would bake apple and raisin pies and molasses cake."

The day Angela was elected Chief was very special. It was her son Shane's birthday and she had to take a computer test. Both son and daughter were scrutineers. When the votes were counted showing Angela as winner, Shane congratulated his mother with the words, "that's the greatest birthday present ever!"

As have many bands, Batchawana struggled with the issue of off-reserve voting rights. In explaining 'ordinarily resident' in the Indian Act, she had this to say.

"The Indians didn't have permanent residence. In the summer they lived near lakes and rivers and travelled by the waterways. They also held pow wows, meetings and gathered medicine and food for the following winter's supplies. They moved to the bush in winter for hunting, fishing and warmth. The Euro-Canadian definition of 'ordinarily resident' is not applicable to the Native life style." She firmly stated her belief that everyone should have a right to vote regardless of where they reside. Today she has seen that political right affirmed. Now she is on the reserve voting commission which requires creating a voting method within the short time frame of six months.

In an interview specifically concerning leadership, Angela shared the following thoughts.

Intuition.

"Being intuitive is using your "sixth sense." It is important to follow your own gut feelings."

Patience.

"You can't rush people. Patience is one of the greatest virtues."

Listening.

"This is another virtue. It is part of our culture and very necessary. As Chief, you're like a captain. You can't leave your ship. You've got to know how to communicate until there is some sort of agreement. It relates to being a good listener."

Control.

"Controlling is not a part of our culture; following your beliefs is. Practice your values. Taking leadership of your own life is important. [Other] people need the opportunity to take leadership of their own lives."

Supporting oneself.

"You have resources such as your mentor. You have books to read and skills like crafts, woodworking, or music. Your spirituality is one way of supporting yourself. You have to know how to humour yourself or you could get really depressed. My grandmother would say 'Go somewhere different. Get away'."

Expressing oneself clearly.

"You can express your ideas with words, pictures or symbols, even body language. When you are speaking from the heart you are more approachable. It relates to being yourself. If you be yourself and communicate with others, your example can inspire. Being able to inspire others involves

self confidence. This helps you lead. Never pretend to be someone else. No matter who you talk to, the Prime Minister or your neighbour, just be yourself. It will make you go a long way.... Nobody likes a phoney. First impressions are very powerful. Accept people as they are.”

Taking risks.

“Being ‘gutsy’ helps.... We come into this world in pain and we leave this world in pain. There are no guarantees in life. You have to make your own enjoyment. Practice your beliefs.”

Life experience.

“Be aware of what’s going on in the world, in Asia, South America, or Africa. Everything effects all of society. There’s a ripple effect. How can you guide your people if you don’t know about the world? Being worldly means knowing and respecting different cultures. It’s important to see the big picture. Having insight comes with experience.”

Success.

“Your personality has a lot to do with success. Being a reader helps. Never stop learning. Knowledge is power.”

Angela has worked hard to fulfil her dreams. Raising seven children, returning to school at age 60, serving as Chief, graduating from the Native Language Instructors Program at Lakehead and presently teaching in elementary schools in the Sault has proven that dreams come true with perseverance and hard work.

Mary Beaver

A warm and gentle smile easily flashes across Mary’s face. She makes you feel special. At age 69, she teaches Ojibwa both at the Indian Friendship Center and at the Northern Treatment Center. She is a board member of Niijkiwehwag, a non profit organization of Friends of Lake Superior Provincial Park, a retired teacher from both White Pines Secondary and Holy Angels Elementary schools, a mother of three, grandmother of five, great grandmother of two, and the one pride and joy of Angus and Angeline Kakapshe. Mary tells her stories with a sense of wonder.

“In the summer our transportation was by boat, in the winter, it was by dog team. My Dad always had a lot of dogs. There were other times when we went across the ice from Goulais Mission to Batchawana, but one time stands out. We had a sleigh and eight dogs, four dogs pulling us and four extras. About half way around, just on the other side of Maple Island, we stopped for lunch. My dad built a fire on the ice and made tea. My mother had packed a lunch. It was a beautiful day, a day like this, and you could see for miles. The dogs had a rest while we ate.

Then my dad changed the dogs in the harness. He would run with the other four on the side and every once in a while he would ride. My mom and I were on the sleigh.

“But Jigs [Angeline] talks about the time when my mom and dad came across the ice when I was just a baby. It must have been quite a ways because from our house to Batchawana Island is 6 miles across. I’m sure it would be another 5 miles from the island to Goulais Mission and there used to be a portage so we wouldn’t have to go around the point [McCoy’s Point] I don’t know if I was in a basket or in a tub, but they had me wrapped in blankets. They came to Jigs’ mother’s house. Her name was Louise and she often asked my parents to come and stay. Jigs remembers my dad bringing in the tub or basket. He opened the blankets and there I was. She always tells that story.

“At New Years, we went visiting to wish people Happy New Year. They always had a lunch for you or whatever. Anyway, these people lived way back in the bush. It was near Graham’s Marsh and the people were named Mr. and Mrs. Towab. It was hilly and I remember coming home down these hills in the moonlight. It was beautiful. I can still remember. Just the three of us.

“Mrs. Towab was blind. She was the nicest lady. I can still see her. She always wore long dresses with a bib apron gathered at the waist, and white as snow. She did her own work and her husband helped her make tea for us. She always had cake, so he must have guided her in what to put in it. The things that happened to me then seem unreal today – just unreal!

“My mom made all my clothes. She got zippers and material to make my snow suits. I always had boots. There were lots of rabbits at that time and they used to skin them and save the fur. The fur side went next to your stockings when you put on your boots. Your feet never got cold. I tell people that today and they say ‘Oh you’re crazy!’ Maybe I’m crazy, but they kept my feet warm and I never had cold feet.

“In the spring of the year they made ice for the ice houses. Joe Collins had his on the beach. My grandfather had one. We’d jump on the sleigh and ride it down to the lake where they were cutting ice chunks. My uncles had bicycles. You know what we did for swings? There were net driers that looked like giant windmills for drying cotton fishing nets. We’d swing on those.

“When my dad went to work, my mom often went with him. Because my grandparents lived right next to the school, I stayed with them until I was ten. One day, Percy and I were coming home along the hedge between school and church. We always played in and out of the hedge bushes. Well, we found a hole in the ground and I was curious so I put

my hand down and reached way in. When I pulled my hand out, it was full of hazelnuts. It was a squirrel's winter store house. I sent Percy home to get a pail. We filled it up and took it home. Percy told his mom, that's my grandmother, what we had done. 'You did what!' she exclaimed. 'You take this pail and put all those nuts right back exactly as you found them.' Percy and I did what we were told and came back looking glum. My grandmother said, 'I don't want us to starve this winter. When you steal from the squirrels, that's what happens to you! As long as you live, don't EVER do that again!'

"After age ten, I went to the little school near the Batchawana dock. After grade eight, my mom said, 'you're going to school in the Sault.' I said, 'I'm not ready!'" Mary was keenly aware that having had no history, geography, and very little science or grammar at Batchawana would put her at a disadvantage. She didn't want to go and 'be lost.' "I thank my lucky stars I had good teachers at Holy Angels." But she remembers one teacher who called her 'Hey you from Kapuskasing'. "She'd use a big pointer, banging it for attention and shouting 'where is the verb in this sentence, where is the VERB!'" That was Mary's introduction to city schooling. The next year, her teacher was principal Sister Donalda, a lovely lady Mary describes as 'very caring'. Going to Holy Angels meant repeating grade seven and eight, but Mary went on to Sault Tech for grade nine and ten. A physical education teacher there made life difficult by frequently using Mary as an example whenever she was making a point on how NOT to do something. A subsequent teacher whom she greatly admires is Randy Valentine who teaches at Lakehead University. Although she graduated there in 1991, she went back later just to go to his class. "He was a wonderful teacher. He knew so many dialects."

Mary met her husband, Roy Beaver, when she boarded and worked in Cambridge, Ontario. She, her friend Norma and others used to go to the arena to watch the games and there would be Roy at the concession stand, Roy running the ice machine, and Roy always managing to find a seat next to Mary when he could. "I'm not sure what he liked most, my long legs or my thin waist. I weighed about 111 pounds. I said to Norma, 'Don't you leave me alone with him.' He would drive me crazy. But I got used to him. We went together 3 years. He always spoke his mind and he always had stories to tell. That's what I miss. We got married in 1951 and my mom, dad, aunt and uncle came. We lived in southern Ontario five years. Danny was four, Bruce was two, and Terri was three months, when we moved up to Batchawana. That winter we lived with my mom and dad and in June we moved into our own house."

Four years work experience at the Pancake Bay Trading Post gave Mary the basis for some advice to students she later taught in the Sault.

"That's what I'd tell my students. I don't care how old you get to be in your lifetime. There will always be someone telling you what to do. You may not want to do it. You may not do it, but you'll be told. I'd say, 'That's life! That's just the way it is.

"Another thing. My Mom used to always say to me, and this was the best advice she gave for growing up. When someone would hurt my feelings, she'd say, 'Oh my dear, the day is gonna come when you won't even care what people say. You'll just let it go right over your head.' And that day has come and I think it's just wonderful. I never forgot that. It was so true. Now it doesn't matter what they say or do. I'll say whatever I want and it ends there. They can carry on the way they want."

Being a teacher at Holy Angels and White Pines meant being with students who experienced a lot of stress at an early age. "There was one little girl who came all made up with lipstick and rouge. She was seven or eight, and I asked her, 'What did you do to your face this morning?' 'Oh, I just put all this stuff on.' 'I'm sorry, you're going to have to go to the washroom and take it all off.' 'But why?' 'Because I don't want to have to look at your face that way.' And she said, 'Well [another teacher] never said anything.' I said 'Only because she didn't see you this morning.' I had her first thing. And I said, 'Go, just go now and take it all off.' So she did and she came back and I said, 'Now you're beautiful' and her eyes got really bright. I said, 'You don't really need that stuff you know.'"

After the Pancake Bay job, Mary said to Roy, "'I feel ready for something different.' I saw an ad in the paper. The Indian Friendship Center was hiring six people. Anyway I ended up getting the bookkeeper position...and the reception. I'd get my work done early and that's how I started working in the schools. Carolyn [Harrington] was co-ordinator. I said, 'Guys, you have to give me something to do. I can't sit here all afternoon and do nothing.' She said, 'Well why don't you come to the schools with us.' I said 'Well what would I do?'" She said, 'You could help us with presentations of North American Indian culture.' Well, when she knew I spoke the language, we started right away. The boss said that wasn't in my job description but we just did it anyway. Then Carolyn persuaded me to attend Lakehead University where I could get certification for teaching Ojibwe. This was about 1985. It worked out fine."

Today, Mary expresses pride in the accomplishments of all of her grandchildren. Two of them, Jillian and Lucas, assist at their respective dance schools, appear in local performances, and hope to teach professionally. For Mary, after years of loudly cheering her dad and sons at many a baseball game, it's quite a change to be silently enjoying a beautiful ballet performance and admiring the intricate footwork in a tap dance routine.

William Neveau

Bill is 81 now, and gives a helping and gracious hand to his neighbour in the apartment complex on Bay Street where he currently resides. During his working years on the Great Lakes, when he would come home to Goulais for short periods, he would often learn that his current girlfriend had married, moved away or was having a baby. Today with neighbours, he can enjoy a sense of family, lighten the burdens of old age and share past memories.

"All of Goulais Bay was just fishing. My dad was a fisherman 'til he got too old. All those Neveaus, the five sons, were fishermen. And their sons too. There were five brothers: Louis, John, Alex, Mike and Joseph. My father was Joseph Neveau. My father was married twice and my mother married three times. My mom was Elizabeth Driver from Garden River.

"If you wanted to come out, you had to go by boat. Residents who had their own boats would leave them tied up [at Stoney Point] when they went to town and they'd be there when they got back. Today there are cabins every 300 feet, but then, there was no one around.

"People came to the procession by boat.⁵ It was a two or three day deal. In those days, the priests came maybe twice a month. You had to row across the bay to pick them up at the end of the existing road. That was from Stoney Point to the Mission, about four miles. When someone wanted to come across, they made a big smudge to signal that they needed a ride. For Procession Day, people came from Gros Cap and Batchawana. They'd have the procession one day and maybe stay to visit a couple of days. That's the part I used to like, a lot of strange girls.

"In the 30s, during the depression, my dad was sick and there was only me, and my sister. There was no Canada pension or disability then. But we got a little bit when they started on the road. One man in a family had to work in order to get relief. I was seventeen, and they put me to work so my mother could get welfare. My dad was still alive, and when the paycheck came, it was in his name because I was too young to be on the government payroll. You had to be eighteen. That was hard times. So I worked there 'til my dad died and then I went on my own name. Everything was by hand, pick and shovel and axe. Treaty Indians weren't hired until the road went across reserve land. There were some farmers there too. They were white people. One had a team of horses. They were pulling up the stumps. They had a dump truck. You brought your own lunch to work and sometimes you walked four miles, two miles to work and two back.

"There were no logging laws and Phillip Nolan from Garden River

came and started cutting pulp. He would take the wood out of the bush in the winter time. In the spring, St. Mary's Pulp and Paper Company would send a tug to Goulais Bay to take the logs to the Sault."

Where the government dock is now "there was a big general store." The owner, "his name was Joe 'Greek'. My Dad used to sell him fish. He bought everything: fish, pulp, and hooked mats from Indian women. He gave the boys nets and he bought fish from them. You didn't need a license or anything. Everybody was equal in those days. Now, it's 'my land, my fish.' Joe 'Greek' owned two teams of horses. Alex Robinson was a driver. He'd take a big sleigh full of fish in the wintertime to the Sault and come back with a big sleigh full of food and supplies like hay and oats in big bags. Joe 'Greek' hired people. He had a big gas pump. The gas was in barrels. There weren't too many motor boats in those days. Mostly people had dogs, dog teams for hauling wood, and horses. There were cows and pigs too. Everybody had a gun. I don't know where the bullets came from, but there was no game warden. When somebody killed a moose they drug it down, skinned it, and hung it up T-pee style. They cut it up and everybody had a piece. In my day, they used that skin for lacing snow shoes. Moose hide and deer hide. In order to get the hair off, they'd cut out some of the ice in the wintertime and put water in there. They put the hide in there with the hair down and they'd leave it there 'til it froze. Then they'd just pick it right up and all the hair would come right out. Then they'd scrape it a bit too. Then cut it into strips.

"We were all one community a long time ago. At Christmas, if there were some kids without enough clothes, the neighbours gave. One time when we were working around the bay, we lived in a tent in the winter time. There were two families. There were Agawas too. And you know what they had for Christmas? That's when they had no turkeys. That was during the depression, that was when my Dad was sick. We had the rabbits for Christmas. Two or three rabbits in stew."

Bill's life on the water began after the road building around Goulais. "I started with a company at Michipicoten Island working for Ivan Pervis fishing. It was a big outfit. They had four tugs. I worked there six years. That's when I left home. I was only nineteen." His wages on the boat supported his mom and sister. He would see Goulais Bay less and less often after that. On the tug, he describes himself as a wheelsman.

"Our Captain Nicholson used me as a mate. Going across the lake, five or six hours, he'd go to bed for three or four, so I was in the wheelhouse by myself. He had to be on board in the river, but out on the lake he can go to sleep. He had an automatic pilot. Going across the lake, maybe five to ten hours, you'd set your course and set your pilot. If

it starts to get a bit rough, maybe the pilot starts to go off course. It would ring. Then you'd straighten it up. You can't leave it alone. I'd even change course if he told me when to. Then I can splice rope, splice cable. Fifteen-eighteen years- that's a long time."

Bill's responsibilities as first mate included watching the draft during loading so the hoist operator knew when to move back, keeping the ship level with each pile of cargo added. Also Bill would shorten or lengthen the tow line depending on weather and location. He knew how to keep cable at an appropriate length to lessen the chances of it snapping. One barge they towed was 600 feet long. Responsibilities were numerous. "Company insurance is high, it's dangerous because steel is being lifted over your head.... There'd be a hell of a mix up if someone breaks an arm or a leg or some steel falls on your head.

"The captain wanted to pay me for what I was doing, the work of a first mate. That's why [he] wanted me to go to school [at Collingwood] so I would get a ticket." Bill estimated the education at Goulais mission to be equivalent to about grade four or six. Collingwood did not recognize experience in lieu of grade ten so Bill's application was not accepted. "The company told the captain that the only way they could help in the wage department was if he gave me straight pay for more hours." From then on the captain would enter twelve hours in the log book for each 8 hour shift that Bill worked. "That's how they helped me."

Bill's pancake story comes from working the tugs for A.B. McLean, hauling sand and gravel, often between Gros Cap and The Sault.

"Did I tell you about the pancakes? Once in a while the owner would come for a ride with us. So, we were going down the lake. The old man, you call the captain the 'old man' even if he's younger than you are, came to the wheelhouse in the morning and said to me 'Go and have your breakfast!' We had pancakes-pancakes big as a plate [indicating a ten inch circle with his hands]. So when I got done eating and went back upstairs with my coffee, A.B. asks, 'What's the cook got for breakfast?' 'Pancakes'. 'Oh, I like pancakes' he says and away he went. He came back after. 'Why didn't you tell me,' he says. Tell you what? 'Soon as I walked into the galley, the cook asked 'Whatdayu want?' 'I want pancakes' 'You want pancakes?' 'I said 'THREE'. I had to eat them this big, the size of your plate and that's big! I didn't want to insult the poor cook'. He said 'Why didn't you tell me? At home my wife makes them this big, you know [indicating about three or four inches in diameter] and that's why I said 'three'. Well he didn't ask me how big they were, he just asked me if they had pancakes. I told the captain that after.

"One time I had Christmas dinner half way across Lake Michigan. I was on the boat from the Sault to Chicago. It was drizzling rain. Nice

and calm. I sailed for 36 years. It was one of those laker boats. Canada Steamship Lines. We hauled slab steel from Algoma Steel to the Rouge Plant in Detroit for Ford." He remembers the Bluewater Bridge. "There's a big reserve there. That's where Dudley George was killed on that reserve."

William's biggest trip kept him on the water eighteen days. This is an occasion when he shared meat in a big way.

"It was late in the fall. It was a salt water, ocean boat. They came from overseas. When they came through the locks here, I don't know, but I guess the engineer made a mistake. After he was in the locks, someone maybe rang the wrong bell. They backed up and he jammed his rudder cross wise.⁶ The time was getting late.... And this boat, they say we're going to tow it down as far as a ship yard where he could straighten his rudder out. There was nothing wrong with his power but he couldn't steer. And that rudder stalk is big. The blades are ten or twelve feet long and fifteen feet high. They needed a special torch. So we had to pull him straight. We got down as far as Detroit, just helping him. There wasn't time to stop. We had no time. You had to get past Montreal before a certain date. To enter the St. Lawrence Seaway we had to get a river pilot. That's the rule. The steamboat company was paying for everything.

"In Montreal, we had a hard time finding a place for our tug. Even the harbour master was helping us. They knew what was going on. There were lots of places at the docks but you had to have a watchman. We couldn't leave it any place at a solid dock because the tide comes up three feet. If your tug freezes and the tide comes up, she'd fill up with water and sink right there. But there was another tug outfit that had a floating dock. He knew our company. He offered to take our tug for us. And he got all our stuff from the boat. There were great big fridges of meat and stuff like that. Everybody was carrying meat all over the place and the workers we gave it to wanted to get out of there. We didn't want to take anything home. We just dropped everything. We wanted to get home. There was no power [for storing] on the boat. We were glad to get out of there. We came back [to the Sault] by train. The St. Lawrence Seaway was closed already. We had Christmas in Toronto on our way back. Next spring, they flew us back to Montreal to go and get our boat. We had to buy supplies for the trip home."

That was the biggest trip of his life. William remembers hauling sand and gravel for the piers of the Sault International Bridge and the anchor piers of the Mackinaw Bridge. When asked if he misses his life on the water, he says, "I miss the money."

"We lost our house in Goulais. It burnt right to the ground. I lived

with Buddy Cress' parents. I used to come home three months of the year in the winter time. Sometimes we worked out on the lake 'til way after Christmas." About his location on Bay Street today he says, "I'm back in my little home town." He used to live across the street at the New American Hotel. A. B. McLean was right next door to his apartment building.

"I'm 81 years old. I never worked in the bush. I never got married. So that's the story of my life."

Mary Allen

Mary was born January 20, 1934. She speaks her mind with vigour. Her message is direct and comes with the authority of an older sibling who has taken the responsibilities of family at a very early age. She was the third oldest child out of eighteen children. She has 56 grandchildren and 26 great grandchildren. Energetic and outspoken, she warmly welcomes discussion with friend and stranger alike.

Her grandmother died in childbirth. "My mom was two years old when she lost her mom." About her own premature birth, Mary tells this. "My mom was at Gates Camp. She felt awful stomach pains. They were really bearing down. The old lady came and everyone was surprised by my appearance." Mary says she was so still nobody was certain she lived. "Somebody wash that baby up!" Mary imitates in a commanding voice. "My grandpa on my mother's side was holding me. I was all wrapped up and put in a shoe box.

"They were taking me to get baptized. My mother had Eugene by the hand, my dad was carrying Bertha and Auntie Agnes was carrying me. They got off the boat and were walking down towards the church when my Aunt tripped. My dad was so mad. It was only Agnes who got hurt. Her elbows were all raw skin.

"In my Dad's time, people used to help one another. Nobody knew anything about treaty. White people came in and they just let them build. Everybody had a place. After a while, they moved away. It was overgrown with bush.

"Before we became treaty, the ones that lost their rights, like us, we didn't know about these things and we never fought. Now that we just got reinstated in the winter, we're bickering and fighting. Now everyone wants a piece of that pie. My dad didn't believe in treaty, with the white man's way, and that's the way I was brought up. Now when I go to a meeting, it makes me feel so embarrassed that they're always fighting. That's what's killing the Indian people-jealousy.

"When my dad lived up here he barely got twenty dollars for us kids.

And my mom got nine dollars from the band because she was treaty. My dad had to get up in the morning when it was still dark when they made all these roads through here. He had to work an extra two hours for my mom so she could receive the nine dollars. The Indian agent or relief officer didn't give you good stuff. They gave you seeds so you had to plant what you wanted. The Conservatives were in then.

"I remember living in Batchawana. I didn't know what money was. We traded everything. When we had potatoes, we traded for fish. If someone had something to trade and was looking for moose meat or something they might come to our house.

"When you tell kids today they laugh at you. They don't know what we went through. One time my dad gave me enough pennies to buy a loaf of bread. It was ten cents for a loaf. I was waiting for the store to open and went to swing on a swing. I put some of the pennies in my mouth 'cause I had no place to put them. While I was swinging, I accidentally swallowed some pennies. My dad was really mad that I lost that money. That same time, a friend and her sister were with me. She had twenty-five cents and was supposed to get a loaf of bread. She got the bread, but her sister was kicking up a fuss wanting some ice cream. Ice cream was five cents. She gave in and bought the ice cream. She got a lickin' when she got home 'cause her change was five cents short."

Mary moved from church property at Goulais to a spot close to the church in Batchawana.

"My Aunt Nancy lived next door to the church and she worked for the priest cleaning the church, making the fires, and making the hosts for mass. I remember going with my aunt. My cousin Dorothy and I would sit on the steps when she was cleaning. My aunt says I was the one who taught Dorothy to speak Ojibwe. Dorothy and I, we'd go pray for the dead because that was the best thing. I remember praying for every grave. It took about two hours. I'd wonder about who was buried there. If we didn't know the name, then we prayed extra.

"My mother used to go visit her [Nancy] at night. My mother told me this story. She heard my aunt screaming and she hurried over. The houses were about 50 feet apart. The cat was sitting on the inside window sill when an owl must have seen it and crashed through the window. The owl still had hold of the cat when my aunt took a broom to pound the owl.

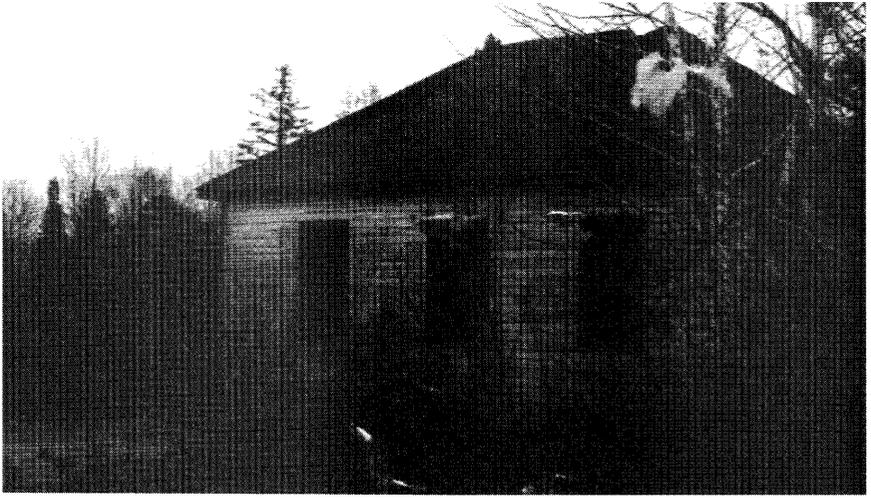
"When we moved to Batchawana, my dad had some stuff to bring from Goulais so he and my Uncle Tommie went by sleigh. Dorothy, my sister Bertha and I decided to go and meet them. We started out. I don't know how far we had gone when we smelled something, skunk or smoke. Well all this time our house was burning down. My mother was hanging



Left to right: John Neveau, Louis Neveau, Alex Neveau, Mike Neveau, Joe Neveau, Mary Dekos and Margaret Neveau



Our Lady of Sorrows Roman Catholic Church. The memorial sign alongside dates the church to 1862 and the efforts of Bishop Baraga. His hand hewn cross is still carried in the annual procession each year.



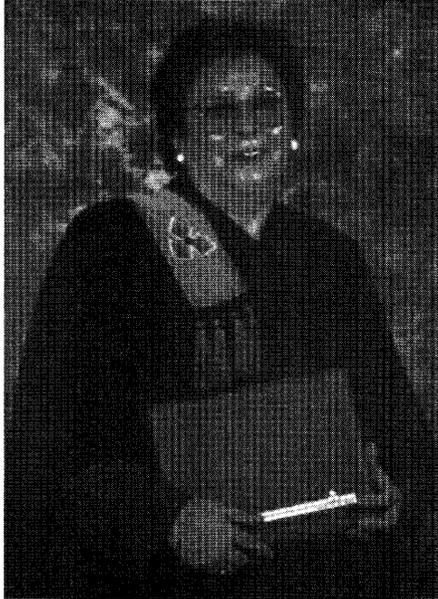
The original schoolhouse on church property. The Goulais Mission Day School.



Left to right: Bernadette, Greg, Joanna, and George Agawa (Courtesy of The Sault Star)



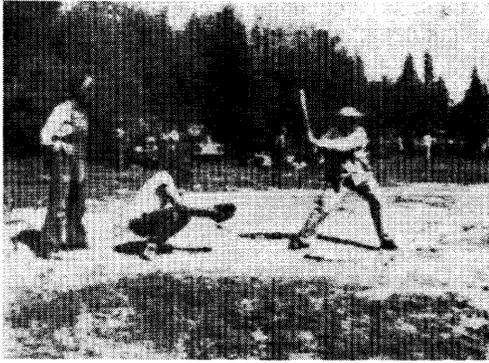
Procession Day - These are some of the hundreds from the Sault, Goulais, Batchawana and elsewhere who took part in historic Procession Day at Goulais Bay Sunday. The procession marched around the great Goulais hill to the church in the annual rite begun by Bishop Baraga in 1863. In this picture on the left is John of "J.J." Neveau, half brother of William Neveau. He carried this cross for forty years. On the right side is Joe John who was caretaker of the church his entire life. The second adult near the lead but in the background is possibly Albert Cress, or "Abby". (Courtesy of The Sault Star)



Angela Neveau on graduating from Sault College in the Native Community Worker Program. 1996.



The late Bishop Papin of the Sault Ste. Marie Diocese makes a special visit to parishioners of the Goulais Bay Mission.



Play Ball! Father Mayhew up to bat at Goulais Fun Day.



Left to right: Mary Beaver, Mervin McCoy, Helen Gingras at McCoy's Point



Mary Beaver with her grandparents, Mary (McCoy) and Alex Neveau.



Leslie Hodges - third from left. Angus Kakapshe - second from right.



Back row left to right: Mary Jane Neveau, Evelyn Daigle ("cookie"), Angeline Neveau. Center: Rita Agawa. Bottom row: Percy Neveau, John Gringras.



Mary with her Dad's boat "Mary" at Memainse Harbour.



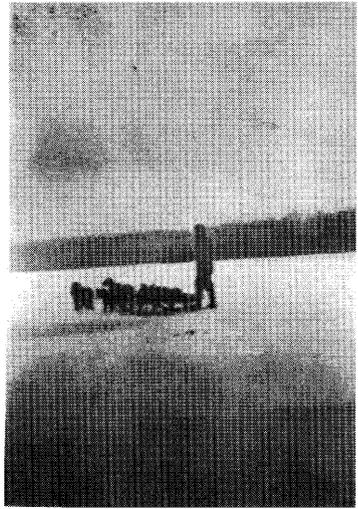
Left to right: Isabelle Neveau, Ida Cress with "Buddy", Mary Jane Neveau.



Working the highway in the 60's. Far left: Gabe Gingras, third from left: Ely Jordan, center seated: Peter or John Jordon.



Angus Kakapshe



Kakapshe dog team at work.



Back row left to right: Angeline Kakapshe, Isabelle Neveau, Mary Jane Neveau. Front: Mary Kakapshe and Percy.



Angus Kakapshe



Neveau group left to right: Mary Jane, Isabelle, William (Bill) and Neil.

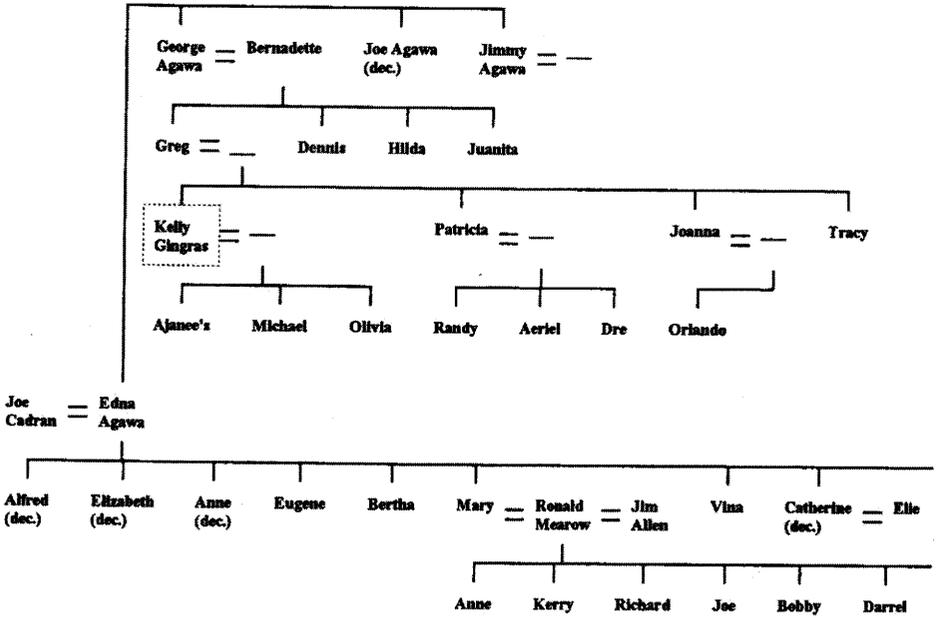


Participants in the annual Corpus Christi Procession.

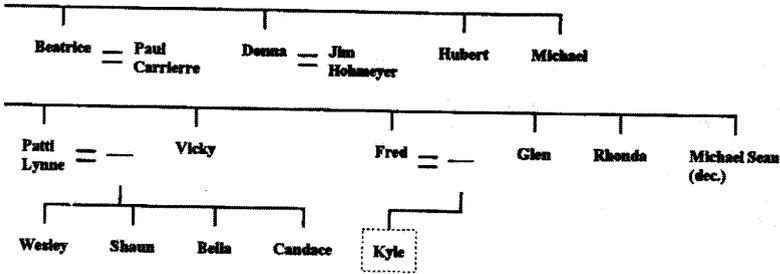


Left to right: Howard McKay, Mary Beaver, (Uncle) Wilfred Neveau.

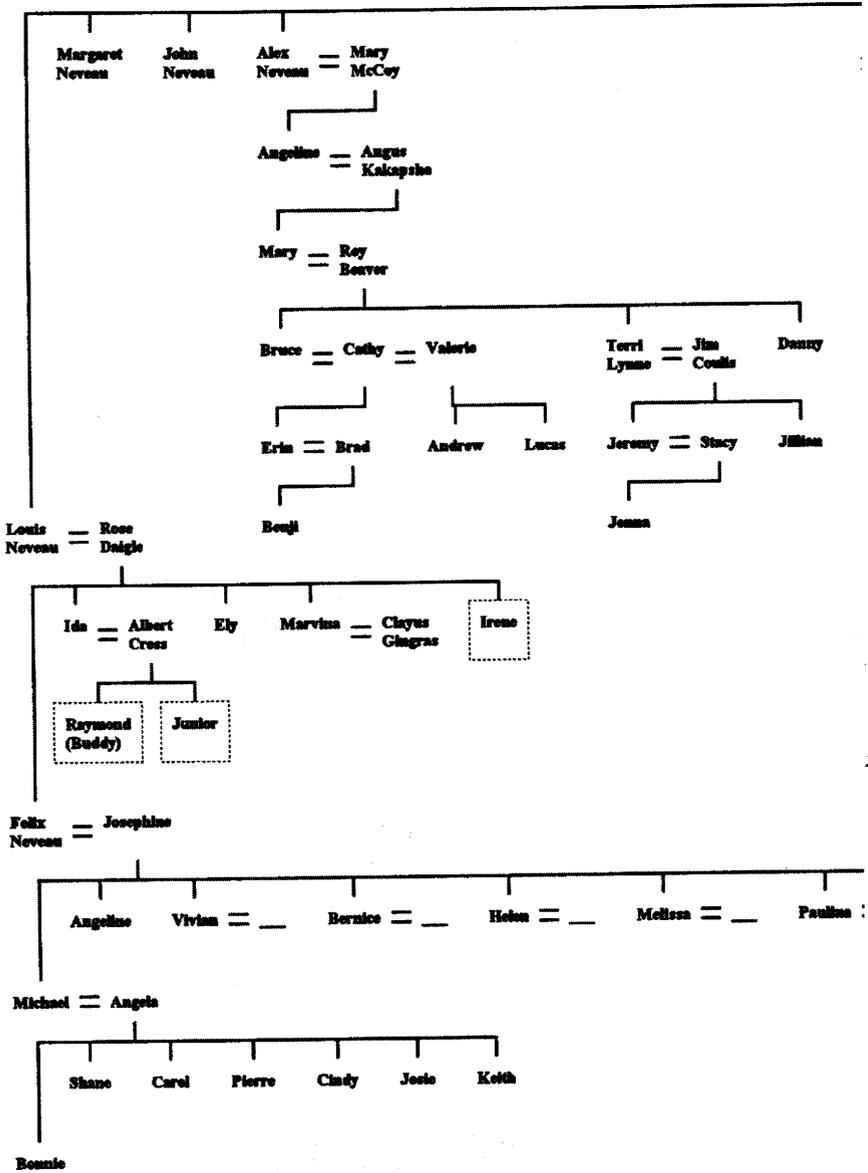
Agawa Family

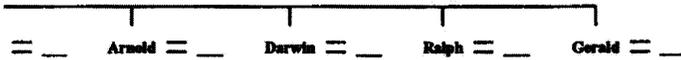
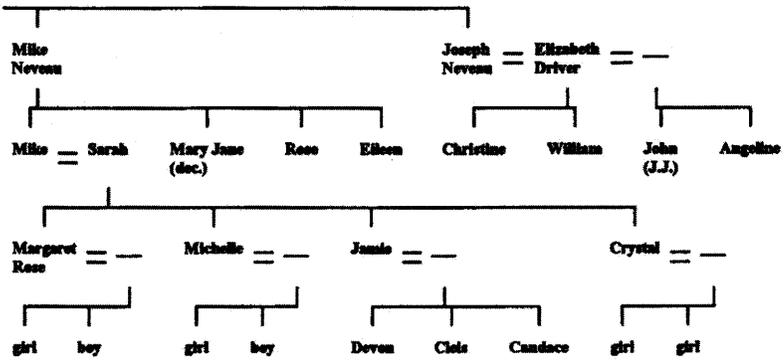


Offspring not consistently arranged according to age.
 Data limited to information offered at time of interview.
 Adopted individual shown within dashed lines.

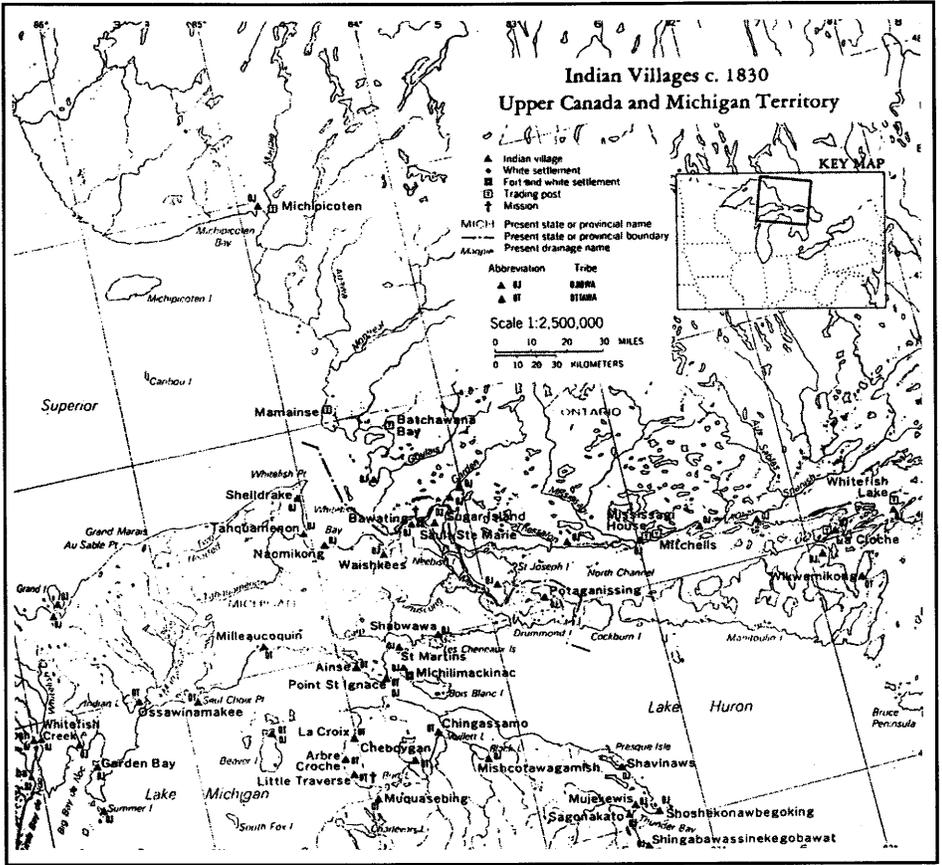


Neveau Family



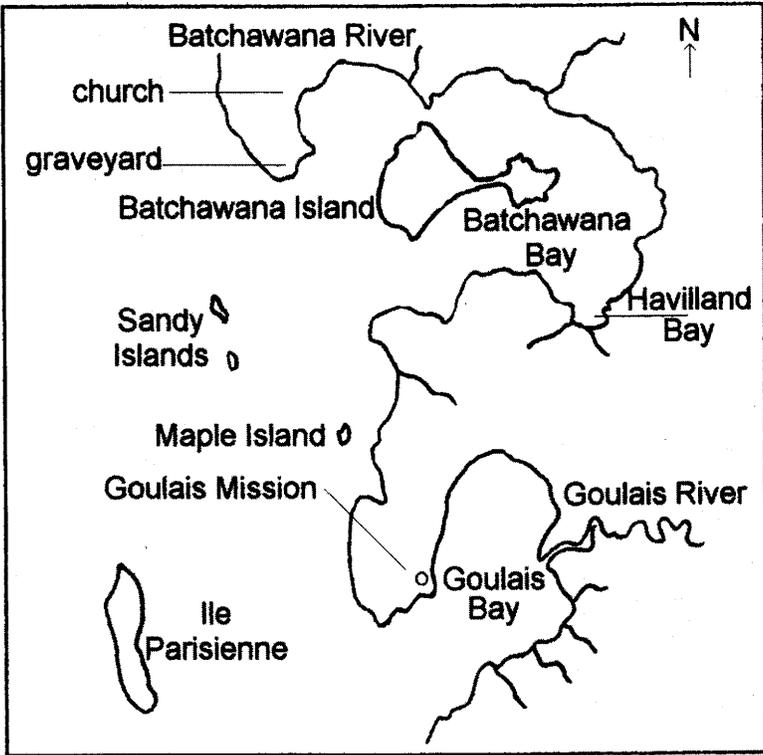


Map 1



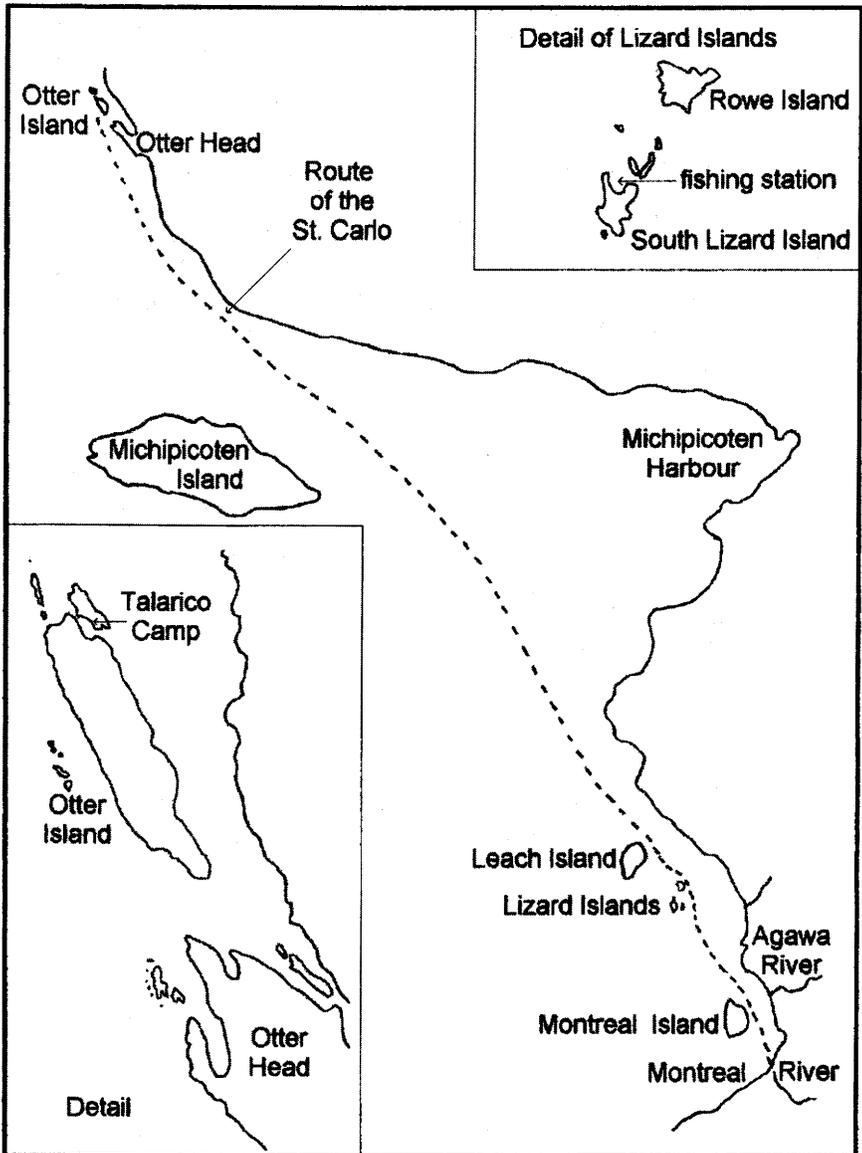
From Atlas of Great Lakes Indian History

Map 2



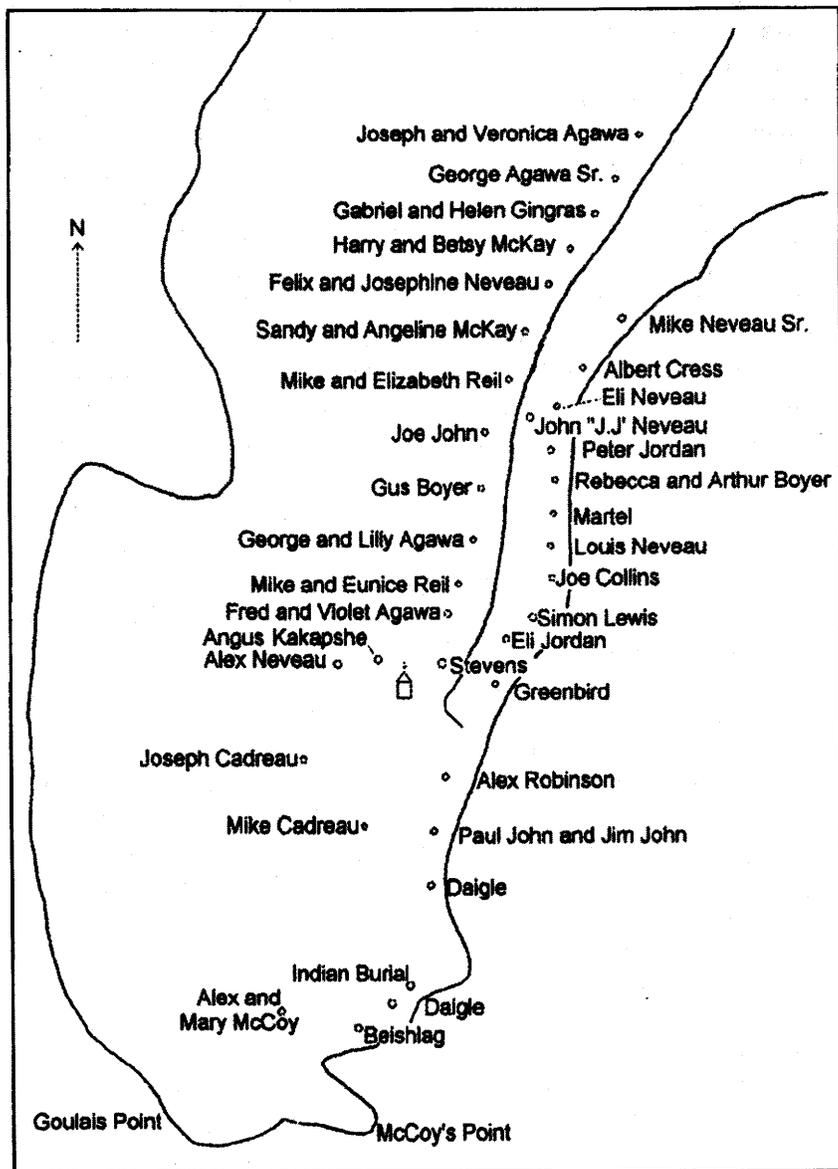
Goulais Bay and Batchawana Bay area. Adapted from map in *Superior-Under the Shadow of the Gods*

Map 3



Route of the St. Carlo

Map 4



Residents of Goulais Mission circa 1946 provided by Angela Neveau

clothes out. Vina, who always took off her shoes no matter how you tied them, escaped without her shoes. My dad smelled the smoke. He said they were just on their way back. It took them 45 minutes and they ran the whole way. All that was left were ashes on the ground. So we stayed at my aunt's that time and then we moved to Shoe-fly's second place in the bush. Waaboos they call them. We knew them as Shoe-fly's then.

"Anyway, my dad started cutting logs and building a house. The logs came from where we lived and were raised next door to my Aunt Towab. It was a two room shack and it didn't kill us. I remember big holes in the roof. We used to whitewash it all the time. My dad picked all the driftwood and old boards from the lakeshore. We were quite happy. We lived there. We had a big potato garden and that was my job. We did it all by hand with hoe and shovel. I had to get all the potato bugs. I had a little stick with a can and I'd knock them in there and put them in the big can with coal oil in it. My dad would put a match in there. My dad wouldn't let us in case we hurt ourselves.

"I remember one summer when it never rained and we had to haul water to keep the garden wet. I hauled water all my life through the snow banks. That's why my arms are three inches longer. In the summer, I used to cut wood all day in the bush. I had a buck saw. In the winter, my dad was trapping and would leave for ten to fifteen days. In the meantime I had to make sure we had wood left in the bush. When we were running low, I'd take the sleigh after school. My brothers are younger. In fact I took care of them, and my dad treated me like a boy and that was it. I'd haul water, bring in wood, split it for a box stove and a cook stove, made kindling and filled a garbage can with water. That was my job every day, seven days a week. I didn't mind it. We had snow shoes. I had to make sure to set snares in the evening when I came home from school and then in the morning make sure to check them before birds got my rabbits. My dad taught me to shoot using a target for practice. He always said 'don't shoot anything that you aren't going to eat.'

"I remember my dad making a bench out of a piece of board where we ate the first time. Then he made a table. We'd go in the bush with him and pick moss off the trees. That was to chink the log cabin. Then he'd cut cedar, split it four ways and fix up the inside walls so they were smooth. Right in the back here, there's a cabin made like that.

"When we moved, my brother took sick. He went into convulsions, and I remember my dad woke me up saying my brother was dying. We all got up and gave him a kiss. When he died, I remember having a wake for three days and three nights. Somebody brought the organ and played. When I asked a neighbour 'I wonder when my little brother was buried?' My neighbour said 'Oh, I remember. We were playing. We were sliding

down when they went to bury him.'

"Maybe after two weeks or a month my sister Beatrice was born. That was February 14, 1940. After Beatrice, my mother was pretty sick one time. She had four or five miscarriages. My dad said, 'your mother is going to die.' He took some tobacco and left to find Mooz Ojibwe [Moses Agawa] for some Indian medicine. The old man came back with my dad and sat in the bedroom. We all were sent outside. He sat there, smoked his pipe, looked at my mother and finally said to my dad. 'I don't know. She's pretty bad. But I'll make this medicine for her and all you need is two cups. I'll go make it now and when I get back, you give her the first cup. If that doesn't help, give her another cup. If that doesn't help, I might as well tell you now, she'll be dead. But if that makes her better, she'll never have that problem again. She can have all the children she wants.' So he went home and came back. My mother drank the first cup. My father gave her the other cup two hours later. My mom got better and had no more miscarriages, no more hemorrhaging. Then she had my brother, Hubert, and I was sent to get Tomsakwe [Tommie Agawa's wife]. By the time I came back my brother was born. My father delivered him. Then my mother had Michael, Donna, Anne, Elizabeth and Albert. Albert died when he was two months old, September 9th, 1950."

Mary's second marriage to Jim Allen took place in 1985. "That was eleven years before he died. We stayed together 21 years and he was good to my kids. That's why they call him Dad all the time. He passed away on March 7th, 1996, and Kyle, my son Fred's adopted boy, drowned on March 17th. He was only fifteen. My son was on the search and rescue. He said he applied CPR all the way to the hospital. Kyle lived for a little while at the hospital.

During that time, Mary knew that Kyle's mother, Barbara, was without support of friends or family. She and daughter Patti Lynn took the initiative to see that Barbara did not stay alone. Patti Lynn stayed with her until Kyle died. Kyle had previously given his grandmother Mary some butterflies. "I always think of him when I see them," she says.

"The year before that, my son Kerry committed suicide March the 3rd." When asked if the church has been a source of strength for her, Mary replied. "Well, this is where it comes to believing in the Lord. It's always been. Even with all the little brothers and sisters I lost. Helping my mother. 'Tell them my life,' she says. 'Yeah,' I said. 'Lots of tragedies.' 'It's like having a baby,' my mother always told me. She says, 'always remember, I don't care what pain your going through, whatever hardship. You know that things are going to be over in a little while. And you'll never even know the pain you had' and how true that is."

About the difficulties of raising children, "my mom would say. 'You

know, Mary', she says, 'you never have a hard time when your kids are small. You know where they are when you put them to bed. It might be work. The hard time begins when they're out on the street knowing somebody might come knocking on your door and say your kid got killed or something.' How true that is!" Mary's memory flashes to a fateful day. While walking along a Detroit city street, her son heard his name called. He looked up and was struck by a bullet to the forehead. "They never caught the guy who did it. It's O.K. I forgive him" says Mary.

"Those were the happiest days of my life when my kids were all small, before they ever went out. We lived over there in the gall darn old shack. We never had electricity until Rhonda was born. I washed on the board, you know. And thinking about it, it was no hard time. We were too busy. You're so busy you didn't even know. And you're working for your kids. With all the love, it doesn't even bother you."

With twelve children of her own, teaching them to stand up for their rights was a clear cut issue. "My son lived next door to a boy who used to fight him on the bus. I said, 'if he fights you, beat the son of a gun', but I'll tell you one thing. Once you beat him up, I don't want you arguing, fighting, or instigating,' I was there and the bus driver even watched and I was there and so was my husband. 'Let them fight,' I said. And they fought and you know, my son won. That was it. After that, they were fine. No more problems."

Mary relays the attitudes she learned from Jim. "When I met Jim, he told me 'it's up to a man to make sure a woman doesn't have children. I travel all over the world and I couldn't afford to have a child.' Now I tell my grandsons, that it's up to them, no matter if a girl says she can't get pregnant. It's their responsibility."

There is an annex belonging to the Batchewana Band in the Goulais Community. Here, Mary soon expects to be holding an Ojibwe language class. She'll teach two days a week, once at the annex and once at the Batchewana Band Office in the Sault. At the annex, "we're having the children's Christmas party on the 18th and we're making our turkey dinner on the 19th. That's where we serve our supper but I usually cook it here though. We were trying to get an extension on it, build it a little bit bigger so we could cook there. There's no kitchen sink there."

On Sundays, Mary, daughter Patti Lynn, and grand daughter Candace frequently assist in serving Mass at Our Lady of Sorrows Church. On the first Sunday of the millennium, Mary wore bright red. It suits her strong temperament and the warmth of her cherry smile.

Greg Agawa (Oquaio)

For many years, Greg Agawa has concentrated on sharpening his survival skills. Early and long lasting memories have encouraged his firm stance in seeking Native solutions to Native problems. At age 58, he recounts something that happened when "I was six years old and that old house back there, is where we lived. It was around this time of year, just before Christmas, and my father had shot a moose back up here on the reserve. When you shoot a moose, he doesn't stay. He'll run away from you and then you drop him. He shot that moose and he ran about 300 feet off the reserve. That was for our winter meat. So I don't know what happened between them, but the game warden got wind of it and before Christmas they [the game warden and the police], showed up on the road there and put my dad in handcuffs and took him to jail. I was upstairs in my house and I was crying. Then I made a vow that day. "I'll get you back. You're going to be sorry."

"I went to Spanish. So did my Dad. I was only there about two years and ran away. They caught me. They never caught me the second time. I used to wonder why my dad had so much hate in him. I couldn't figure out what was happening until I got older.

"When I left Spanish, I stayed with my brother, Dennis, in Sault Ste. Marie. I wasn't old enough to work, but he could. Then I moved back here and worked with my father fishing. There used to be lots of fishing going on. There was Abbey Cress, Louis Neveau, Matt Robinson. Old Joe Collins, he had a fishing outfit too. There was Gus Boyer. Angus Kakapshe, he was a nice guy. I learned from him. Long time ago, they didn't care who or where you came from, if you needed a place to stay, they'd say, 'there's a place-use it.' That's all. It wasn't complicated like now.

"After I came back to Goulais, my brother went to Oregon and Ohio. He got married down there and he's been down there most of his life. He hasn't been up here much. We keep in contact all the time. My brother-in-law, Marcel Bergeron, was a mechanic. He worked for Great Lakes Power and asked me if I wanted a job. So I went up to where he was working at Mile 155 on the A.C.R. [Algoma Central Railway].

"We rounded up the logs and tied them into the bays. The first time I went up there, we had a floating shack and we got to this place where we were tying up and there were anglers – two or more of them. They were coming out around a corner. The seas were up to two or three feet. Their boat was all packed up and I asked them 'where are you going' and they said 'we're going down to catch the train.' I said 'are you crazy? There's a big sea out there, you can't go like that!' and they said 'Oh we

know what we're doing, where we're going.' Well it was lucky they didn't drown. Their boat was recovered. They lost most of their stuff. We had to go rescue them. I said, 'you can't have spent much time on the water, the way you're doing it.' That was my first experience at Mile 155. It was kind of funny. Well, it wasn't funny at the time. They invited us down to their place in Michigan but I forgot where that was."

After Mile 155, "I worked around town. I was in the roofing business for fifteen years. I lived in Oregon two years, Los Angeles for a year and also in Ohio.

"When I was younger, I wanted to travel. I wanted to see some of the country. Me and a couple other guys took off. We were green in the big city. They don't do things the same way over there. When you see those big guns that they carry in Los Angeles! They stopped and surrounded us. Once they saw our Ontario licence plates, there was no sense asking for identification. They just said, 'You guys are in the big city now. Don't go around in these certain areas because those guys [gangsters] don't ask questions like we do. They'll kill you. They shoot and ask questions after. We have to do things like this.' So we got a feel for the city. We kind of laughed about it after. But when it happened, we didn't know what to do really." When asked how he felt about cities today, he replied. "When you're a survivor, you're a survivor, no matter where.

"When I was young, we were poor. I learned to hunt so I could eat. Today, even Native people will go out and shoot five or six moose and I say 'why?' You only need one moose to share, not five or six, just because you're Native. It doesn't make sense. If you had to do it to survive you learn. It's not something you waste." He describes trying to help non-Native moose hunters who are unskilled. "It's not simple but you learn by doing."

A humorous story involving tourists and canoeing experience took place at Gaver Lake, seventy miles up the Algoma Central Railway. "My friend said he needed more help with guiding some tourists. I said 'sure!' I'd never been in a canoe in my life. I asked to go out in the canoe once before taking the strangers. It all worked out. The tourists said, 'Gee it's really nice to be with experienced paddlers. These guys really know what they're doing!'

"At Sault College, a teacher was doing a unit on survival in the bush. Her lessons were a bit off" he chuckles. "I challenged her and she said, 'I guess you know what you're talking about. Can you explain it?' I said, 'No, but I just know.'" He recognizes the strong emphasis on book learning and on being right in non-Native educational systems. When he remained quiet in another classroom situation he says, "The teacher almost went nuts. He would go way around my desk when walking the

classroom. He felt threatened by my silence.”

His advice to young people is “go to school. Get a good education to deal with the problems that we have with the non-Native. Kids should be taught truthfully. Right now they’re taught that you’re right and we’re wrong.” He wants to see “articles in the paper about our treaty, our territory and the way things would be run. If we took our land back, it would all be reserve land. The land would never belong to Canadians.”

Greg has run his own fishing business for twenty years. At Sault College, he enrolled in a Native Business Course. When it was cancelled, he followed through and took the two year standard Business Course.

While Greg works for the day when Native fishing rights in the Great Lakes are paramount, he survives the unwanted attentions of law enforcers by making a game of it.

“It is fun but stressful to work with MNR. I’ve been followed and photographed hundreds of times by the Ministry. I’d go by a place when I knew they were following me, escaping by pretending to sell the fish at one place and actually selling it somewhere else. The game warden has told me they have thousands of pictures of me. I asked them why they needed so much proof, especially when I openly and knowingly break their fishing laws.” He remembers the time when a ‘swat team’ surrounded his car while he was en route to Sault Ste. Marie. “They were worried I was carrying a rifle.

“We have hired a researcher from the University. He has collected information, a lot from French records, on who fished, where they fished, and how they were fishing. We’re getting prepared. We’re using our own fishing system in the band.

“Some of the problems we have with the government, we also have with band government. We have to holler, scream and make a big fuss. We have to fight hard for everything.” His vision for the future is one where “Goulais would be built up. Batchawana would be built up. We could have maple syrup here. We’ve kept that maple bush. And fishing, a gas station, a convenience store. We put the voting commission in place last week. Angela’s on that.” With new voters representing the smaller reserve areas, he hopes that resulting changes in band funding allocations will benefit Goulais and Batchawana.

When asked whether he was going to be in politics the rest of his life, he chuckles. “Oh, you never know. This next election is going to be totally different because everybody’s going to vote.”

Mike Neveau

"Fishing is in my blood," says Mike whose life has followed the ups and downs of fishing Lake Superior for more than fifty years. He was born in 1934 at Gros Cap and moved to Goulais Bay when he was twelve. "When I was fourteen I was up around the North Shore, into Michipicoten Harbor, Otterhead, Otter Cove, around Canadian Point, and White River. Me, Greg Agawa, Buddy Cress, and Abbie [Cress] all worked the North Shore together at times. I worked with Angus Kakapshe at the Lizards. We fished with gill nets using thirty foot boats.

"Carmine Talarico owned a fishing licence and he bought fish. He had a fishing outfit at Otterhead. There were big wharfs there. Talarico boats were all motorized, good boats, some sixty to seventy feet long. There's two islands there and the harbor's in between. That's where we stayed, on the inner island. And you had all those breathers outside to break the water.⁷ They breathe the water and as they get smaller, the sea would get smaller and smaller. It was a very good harbor. Our ships and our boats and everything were in there. In the winter time, we flew into Otterhead from Wawa. We cut the ice in big blocks, put it in big sheds and covered it with sawdust for the summer. There would be seven or eight tons in there, maybe more. Then in summer, when we'd come in with the fish off the lake, we'd chip this ice into small flakes. We had a big chipper machine going. Then we'd layer the ice in the bottom of the boxes, put the fish in there, and put ice on top. Bill Neveau ran the freight boat. It was called the *St. Carlo*. The boxes of fish went on Bill's boat to Montreal River. Then they'd go by truck to the Sault. This boat travelled pretty fast, about twelve or fifteen miles an hour. That's about ninety miles across there, I think. It was one day down and one day back. Montreal River was the end of the end of the road there.

"Talarico had bunk houses for all the men and a big cookery. All were Native people including the cooks. Most of the people were from Gros Cap, Goulais and Batchawana. They had a big family, maybe twenty people up there working all summer. We worked for big wages too. One hundred and four dollars a month room and board. That was 1946. One hundred and four dollars was big money. I remember working all summer and coming back with a bunch of money and we'd buy stuff."

Not everyone fished for Talarico, but other catches were also shipped from Montreal River to the Sault in Talarico trucks. The names Cress, Kakapshe, Bjornaa and Robinson represent some of those who stayed independent and Talarico supplied them with ice and purchased their catch.

"Then there were a lot of small fisherman like Angus Kakapshe, and

Abbie Cress in the Lizards. [Lizard Islands]. The *St. Carlo* would come down there and stop at Lizards and they'd load their fish on there too. And then they'd bring the mail back, stop at the Lizards, drop the mail and keep on going. You could hear the *St. Carlo* from a long way off. The engine made a high whining sound. In poor weather, it might pass us by on the outside of Leach Island. Then we'd put all our fish in small boats and go ourselves to Montreal River Harbor.

"At one time, there were about seven families on the Lizard Islands, families from here and Batchawana. We had the priest come up there. Me, Buddy Cress and a couple boys out of Batchawana, we were just young, eh, so we built a place for a pool room. We built the pool room all out of logs, just driftwood. Everything was picked along the shore 'cause there's seven islands in the Lizard Islands and you could pick all kinds of different stuff there. For the roof, we crossed to the mainland and ordered some rough lumber. Abby Cress had a three table hall here in Goulais Bay. So he took one of the pool tables from here and brought it up there for the summer. We'd use the pool table for mass. The priest used it for an altar. Then he'd take all the garments off and play pool. So, we had mass and after mass, we'd play pool.

"They'd all be together there, the Cresses the Neveaus, the Gringras, Angus Kakapshe, the Bjornaas and the Robinsons. And across from there would be the Agawa Rocks. There were fishermen there too. The Roussains lived on the Agawa Rocks. They all communicated with each other. If you'd run short of something, you'd go across to the mainland 'cause they had chickens there and other things.⁸

"The lamprey eel came in 1957. And I think the bigger fisheries were fishing too heavy. Man was the biggest lamprey. Taking too much. Everybody was competing against the lake. In order to kill the lamprey, the Ministry poisoned the rivers. The Native people I know who did that work are all dead now. They died early from massive heart attacks.

"Between 1957 and 1965, I worked at the Coniston refinery for International Nickel, I worked in the mines and didn't like it. I worked for contractors with Algoma Steel. In '65, I came back and fished with my uncle. He had a quota."

The Batchewana Indian Band was issued a licence for commercial fishing from 1950 through 1983 (Hoffman 1985). The Agawa case in 1985 affirmed Native treaty fishing rights, so the provincial licencing and quota system can no longer be applied. Five years ago, Mike was reinstated, meaning he fishes under those rights.

"We had a big meeting with them [MNR] one time. The ministry said to us 'we want you Native people to get off this part of the lake, this part of the lake and that part of the lake.' So, we said, 'O.K. We'll get off the

lake if you take the rest of the people off too. We're not going alone. We want the rest of the people to get off too. You take the anglers off, take the big fisherman with the license'. When a tug can come up here from the lower lakes and fish, inside of three months they can fill their quota and they've got a big quota. They fill that and they're gone and we gotta stay here and we're fishing small. We only take out three or four hundred pounds a day and they kill twenty to twenty-five hundred pounds a day. The ministry was trying to tell us to stay off the water all together so they could let the other big fishermen fish. 'Sure we'll get off, but you take those other guys off too.' I always say Native fishing should come first. First people here should be first served.

"In '57, when the fishing went down, well, us guys left to go find different work. We came back home and there was a pulp mill working here. So we started cutting pulp, working in the bush. First, we worked for Northern Paper. They took the logs from the bush in the winter, brought them to the shoreline, and loaded them onto the big boats with a jack ladder.⁹ Bill Neveau worked here with small tugs to wrap all this wood in. He changed life, but still worked with water because we knew lots about that.

"Did you ever hear anything about the *Norco*? It belonged to Al Capone. When he got rid of it, somebody got it and was going with wood. [Before], they smuggled whiskey and everything in that boat. Northern Paper filled it with wood and shipped to Green Bay.

"The logging here lasted maybe three or four years.... We finished here and we went up to Michipicoten Harbor. They had an ore dock there and a pulp dock. The railroad cars [of wood] came from Timmins. And that went down to Green Bay [in] boats four or five hundred feet long. They were lake freighters. At one time, you'd see fifteen of those boats right here going down steady, but now you only see two. That's because these two boats carry enough to fill fifteen of the little ones. Everything got bigger, bigger and bigger. Today, there are 1000 foot boats, so they don't use very many."

Mike feels the same way about logging as he does about fishing. It should be 'first here, first served.' "It goes the same way. But we don't bother with the logging. They [MNR] control that. But Garden River has a little trickle in with the Ministry with the logging. At one time, you got your permit, paid your stumpage and got your logs cut. But now it doesn't work that way. You need big machinery. Last year, American trucks came here and they just clear cut this back here in the bush. Took everything. You can see right through. Inside two months, there's big fields up there. Why should they just take and go? I think our band should have stepped in but I think it was deeded land. The Ministry didn't have nothing to do

with it. It was an American firm. It was very close to reserve land. Those trucks were coming in here like crazy. They took everything, little baby trees!"

On the subject of inaccurate data being used for resource policy decisions, Mike says, "It's the same thing in fisheries. They do it [surveys] maybe every twenty years. The Ministry. They use fishing nets that were used twenty years ago" in order to get current data. "They're so far behind. They say 'there are no fish there.' The local people know where the fish are. The Ministry came here one time with a map. 'Where are the fish?' they asked. 'Could you mark them on the map?' So we marked where you can fish. So they used my markings and they found fish. The next year they were going out with this data. They went out looking for fish. They didn't come back for us. They fished their own way. So they said 'there's no fish there.'" As an example, he explains, "Maybe they fished in 150 feet of water when they should have been fishing in eighty feet of water. See, right now the fish are going back into deep water. I know all this because I did it for a living. And I know which way the fish are moving. They don't know. Well, I thought I was doing something good telling them [how] to find the fish. You try to agree with them, eh? But sometimes it turns against you. You do yourself a lot of harm by trying to help sometimes. That's life. Always been like that though.

"The Native people are always good hearted. They give anything. We just give, give, give. I'm still that way. Like this Goulais Bay Mission. At one time my dad was a carpenter. His brother was a carpenter. Robinsons were carpenters. All along the shore here they built boats and all these work sheds were never padlocked. Never. You could go down to the shore there if you wanted to use something. Just ask for it. The old man would say, 'it's hanging right there. Just bring it back.' That's the way we lived. Same way with the cattle, we raised our own cattle, our own horses. Everything was there. Everything was there. For everybody. The whole area was free for everybody."

Mike talks of the comparative expense of living the traditional life today. "You gotta have a car, you gotta have it. Car, snow machine, fishing equipment. Gas! I betcha I went through four thousand dollars worth of gas this summer. About sixty dollars a day. That's counting the boat and the trucking. It's gone up so high.

"We sell fish to local people in Sault Ste. Marie. We find our customers ourselves. People call in. They know what we're doing. They call in to us all the time. We bring the fish up right to the door. For a while we were prevented from selling to stores, but we regained that right when the court upheld treaty fishing rights in the Agawa case fifteen years ago. I've been back home fishing now for twenty years."

Mike and his wife Sarah enjoy finishing their new house which they moved into two years ago. It is right next door to their fishing related business, Chi-We-Kwe-Don. That translates to 'Big Bay' and it's your friendly fish and chip stand which Sarah says has been visited by people from as far away as the Netherlands. The guest list of customers is a pleasure for them to maintain.

Raymond Cress

Raymond "Buddy" Cress was born in 1933. He's been in charge of ringing the Mission Church bell for over twenty years. Especially for a person like himself who loves a good joke and teases a lot, March, 2000 has been a sombre month at the Mission. Three members of the community, Gabe Agawa, Gordon Robinson and Harold McKay, were all buried within weeks of each other. Buddy contributes to the upkeep of the graveyard and showed where his brother 'Junior' is buried next to their mother, Ida Cress. Ida and Albert Cress were the adoptive parents of both Buddy and Junior.

Junior's real name was Felix. "He didn't even turn sixteen when he died. It was three or four days before his birthday when he died in a motorcycle accident. Two motorcycles. He was in a coma for five and a half days. We had another [family member]. My mother was a guardian for Ida Rankin. It was Ida Rankin that died. We were small then, maybe 10 or 12 years old."

As in William Neveau's experience, all of his schooling was from the Goulais Mission Day School. "That's my education", says Buddy cheerily. "The teacher's name was Susan A. Fex. That's what I can remember anyway."

The more memorable part of twelve years were the times spent in the Lizard Islands. "I was there with my dad Albert, Felix, Clayus Gingras, Howard McKay, Mikey Neveau, Michael Gabriel Neveau, (That's 'Sweet's' husband- 'Sweet' is Angela Neveau), Ralph Neveau and Joe Neveau. We used to go from Montreal River Harbor to the Lizards. We had a fishing station there at Lizards. The boats we used were *Ida Lou* and the *Angler*. We had another little boat named *Bud*. My Dad called it after me. We were up there pretty near 10-15 years. We even had a little church up at Lizards. Father Mayhew was the name of our missionary out there. Once in a while he'd come up. He was riding with us in the *Bud* one time. Albert, Bud and Mike, all three of us were together. 'It's the first boat, he says, where I stood up and got a drink of water and never had to bend down.'

"We had another priest who come up there. The reason how I

remember...when he come up there for awhile, and we had fish left over from supper, eh. So my mother says 'well, I'll throw that out' and he says, 'oh no, don't throw that out! Put it somewhere where it's cool and I'll have it for breakfast,' he says. He really liked fish. Peter Robinson used to be up there too. He passed away. And G. A. Jones [and] Archie Robinson....We lived up there for ten or twelve years. We had an ice house up there...everything. When it got foggy, we used to have a cow bell and ring it, and then we'd know where to go. Like when it's foggy, you can't see. Cut the motor and everything off and you can hear a cow bell. Well that's where we gotta go, eh? We had a lot of fun up there. That was many moons ago."

When fall came all the families on the Lizards would come back down to the Goulais area to spend the winter. "And we'd leave in the spring. Talarico bought the fish and so did Eddie Mitchell. If Talarico came to Montreal and we weren't there they'd wait. They brought groceries. Memainse had supplies for construction. Buck saw, axe, and hand saw were used to carpenter the Lizard buildings. "We had a little bunk house...it was eight by eight." It was pretty hard to turn around inside but from what Buddy says, they managed. You had to in order to get back out! "That's where we slept, me, my dad, my mother, my brother, ourselves. When we built it, it was like this. [Shapes a tiny box with his hands] Mike Neveau lived there too." Back in Goulais, Mike and his parents used to live in a log house right next to where Buddy lives today.

After the lamprey eels hurt the fishing, "I sailed...on the Great Lakes for Algoma Central." Those days ended after seven years when his mom requested his return to Goulais.

"We lived over there for a while up the hill by the annex, there was a house up there. It burnt up and we come down here. This [the house he's in now, also] used to be up there. This was a pool hall. So when we burnt out, the other house we had, this was mine to start with, it was up there a little bit, so I gave it back to my dad and my dad moved it here. So the year my mother passed away they gave me this place." It is right on the water's edge with full view of the Bay. There he lives, often in the company of his three sons, Jeffrey, Albert, and Raymond Jr.

How Raymond acquired the name 'Buddy' came early in his life. "What I remember was, we used to go to Joe John's up there with my grandfather, Louis Neveau. I was small. And they'd talk Indian up there. Then when we'd get back to his place, he'd explain everything they were talking about. That's how I learned to talk. Sandy McKay was there. J. J. Neveau, Joe John. (old Joe John). They finally asked him 'Who's that guy you've got with you? And old Louis would say, 'That's my little buddy.' That's where I got the name."

Matthew Robinson

This June 26, 2000, Matt and Anna Robinson will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary. "Fifty years," says Anna incredulously. "It doesn't seem that long. We were just talking about that. We were born and raised here. My Dad was married kind o' like his Dad. They married Indian ladies." "My Dad was also American...from Grand Marais," interjects Matt. Anna, who sensed a wide economic gulf between the Robinson's and her own McKay family says in a whisper of disbelief. "They were so rich down here! How I ever met him I don't know!" They both chuckle as if in secret understanding. It's obvious that Anna is a very special lady. "I just told her that this morning," says Matt.

The house in which they live is where Matt was born on April 3, 1922. Anna is a barometer of their feelings about home. Of their six children, she explains, "See, when they all finished school there was no work here in town. They all moved down there." 'There' refers to a number of cities including Newmarket, Barrie, Phoenix, and Oshawa. There were times when Goulais did not feel like home without the children. Says Matt, "I can remember the days when we just hated this place. Especially her. The legion wanted to build me a place in the Sault. We ran around with an ache inside. But now we're used to it. We're happy. I could see the potential in it. Owning your own home, no taxes to pay, eleven acres of land. So, what more could you ask for. Fish out here [pointing to the nearby shoreline]. In fact when we leave, we're kind 'o sad. We're going to the big city and we're kind 'o sad. Now [Anna] cries when we have to leave here."

It was heartache for Matt's father when Matt was drafted into the Army. Not only was he saying goodbye to a favourite son, he was parting with his navigator in the family fishing business. Matt explains. "I left him on a limb because he couldn't drive a car, he was getting up in age and he couldn't see where the buoys were and when you're 15 miles out in the lake, you know you've gotta take a compass course, like so many minutes operating time with your motor. You've got to figure that all out. Your nets are out there in Lake Superior and you gotta find them and he was really lost.

"I never saw my Dad cry. We had a little hard times here and there but I never saw him cry. But, my older brother Ed, he's passed away too, they both took me down to the Sault and they were both standing at the railroad station and I could see tears in my Dad's eyes. That's the first time in my life, one of the saddest times. Imagine his favourite son going away. I know what I'd feel like now if one of my sons had to go away in the army. There'd be tears in my eyes too.

"Edward did a pretty good job [with the fishing] but he couldn't do the sales part of it too well. See, I was a business man, more aggressive. He was just giving the fish away. The fish buyers were taking advantage. When I was operating, we sold to Walter Futon Fish Company of Chicago. We'd take our fish across the river, ice 'em heavy, and take to the depot in Sault Michigan. You know...there was no bridge then see. All that extra work. Time was the important thing. There was times when Chicago prices were down and we'd sell locally. As long as they stayed within the price range, up near the top. That's what I watched all the time. I remember.... In Chicago, they were paying almost a dollar a pound where sometimes here it was only 50 cents a pound. And there was a St. Ignace Fish Company who used to do us a lot of good 'cause he'd pick up the fish right here and still give us the Chicago price. In fact we switched to him. He gave us a good price, maybe we'd lose a few cents, but he'd pick them up right here at the dock. He'd pay cash and that was it. It was so much better. He tried to compete with the Chicago market." When Matt talks of the Robinson family and who went fishing, he says, "Oh, a slew of us. There was eight of us in the family: Alex, Mary, Edward, Sonny [Alex Junior], himself, Charlotte, Marie, and Dorothy.

Matt was drafted at age eighteen. Training took place in Toronto, then Ipperwash, Simcoe, Halifax and Sydney. He became a Lance Sargent. Once overseas, "Oh, God I had a hard time with English in London. You know, the cockney accent." Matt parodies and spits out a great imitation of 'you blinkin', blimey, bloke.' "And then you get to Scotland and have trouble there. The Scots are really hard to understand, the real Scots. You get onto it fast. I even picked up German. It doesn't take me long to pick up a language.

"I laughed at this one guy. We were in France and we wanted to get some eggs. I went with him.... He goes up to this lady. She says 'Bonjour'. He says, 'Bonjour madam. Avez-vous des [euf]?' He didn't says des [eu]. 'No understand, no capri.' So he goes into the motion. He goes like this." Matt squats down, clucks, flaps his elbows and draws out an imaginary egg from behind. "Oh, merci. She runs into the house and brings out a roll of toilet paper. So I went over there and I said, 'Avez-vous des oeufs? [eu] I was just reading it off a book, you know. My buddy was Italian from Montreal and I though he could speak French.

"We were in the trench one day. It goes along with this being in the front lines. You have to have humour of some kind. And this guy jumped in my trench. They were shelling us. We were in German lines. They were bombing us. He jumped in my trench. Maybe his wasn't deep enough. We had a good size trench. And then he said 'You know what? A guy could get killed around here.'

"And then another time. The same thing. The trench business. Our shells goes off behind us. Boom, Boom. And they brought reinforcements up. This is what happens when you first get recruits up there and they don't have that baptism of fire. All of a sudden...our ak ak guns fire periodically into the German lines and it comes from behind. They are harassing fire into the German lines. So he jumps in my trench and he says. And I was writing a letter, like at home, and I had a bottle of ink...and darn it all if he didn't spill all the ink on my letter that I was writing and he said, 'We're all going to get killed. This is the end of us!' I said, 'for God's sake, what's the matter with you,' I said. 'That's our own guns firing.' 'No, no, no, no. We're all gonna get killed!' See, there's a guy who went wacky. Shell shock. This is what you can experience, and he was a strong looking boy and everything."

Matt shows the scars on his wrist and arm. "See how close I came to losing my arm? See that slash? That's shrapnel. We were going fast enough with a T-16 carrier and it exploded. There's a so many seconds fuse on there, so when you hit that teller mine, it exploded behind us. And I could see the carrier up in the air. It's a twenty ton carrier, I believe. [The mine] had blown it right up into the air. How strong that blast was. It blew us out of the carrier. We were lying on the ground. I could see it up there and that's all I remember.

"I went away in 1942...I came back across the ocean after doing eleven and a half months of front line. I celebrated my twenty-first birthday somewhere in France."

In Goulais, Matt endured the nightmares that follow combat. "I couldn't sleep good for a whole year. I was upstairs and I'd scream and holler and there was a barn here" he says, pointing towards the shore, "a fish place. I finally had to move down there because I was keeping everybody awake. Even they could hear me hollering from here. And I was never that scared in the army." Matt differentiates between that kind of terror and normal fear. "Sure you're gonna be scared. You're not superman or anything like that."

Dr. Gimby, a WWI veteran from Sault Ste. Marie helped Matt through this year. He explained that a detoxifying process was occurring. The inoculations which the Army gave to soldiers had to work their way out of the system. "I lost weight somethin' terrible. . . all those injections. My arm must o' looked like a cribbage board." He describes that when shots were given, it was explained that they were meant to protect one from catching cold when lying on the frozen ground. He thinks now the main purpose of many shots were to calm the nerves in the face of death. That was Dr. Gimby's explanation. Afterwards, the realization of what those inoculation did became clear. "You think about it. I must have

been crazy, you know, to laugh at that poor guy with his arms and legs off. You don't actually laugh. The attitude Matt settles on is, 'Oh, that's another dead soldier.' "And you never figure that you're gonna die yourself. It's always the next guy. What bothers me is my grandsons. I hope they don't have to go through what I went through. I'm glad that I went through it—that I survived, but at the same time I wouldn't want any of my close friends or my children to go through that. Like my boys." About the buddies he lost, Matt says, "Oh, that's terrible. That's what hits you hard. Yeah, you say to yourself, 'how come I made it through and they didn't?' And you really feel sorry for their families, their mothers and dads. Losing a son.

"When I worked at the steel mills, there's a fellow, Motluk, got caught in the roll. He went right into the rolls. His leg went right in and then it tore off. This is where my army training must 'uv helped because I went there...that man needed help. I held him to my shoulder like this to try to comfort him and I hollered for help and the guys ran the other way. Finally, the general foreman came down and he was shaking like a leaf. I was so surprised. That poor boy, I was trying to help him. He was still living but he died on the way in ambulance to hospital. He didn't make it. Half of his insides was in the rolls. I don't know how he was still living. He said something about his mother and dad. I don't know what it was. I couldn't understand him. It was terrible.

"I got laid off in the Algoma Steel. They were almost going broke I guess. So I went to the Ministry. Lands and Forests. You know what I did there? I built towers! Which I had never done before. They are one hundred foot towers where [a ranger]...observes the surrounding area for forest fires. I even worked on them myself. I was a spare while the guy went on holidays. I was happy I didn't have to stay on that job all the time. It gets to be very boring, especially if there's no fires around you know. Well, every half hour you talk to another fire tower man and see how they're doing. There was about five towers in our area."

That area included Searchmont and Ogidaki. "Ogidaki. 'Up the hill' in Ojibwe," Matt explains. "I still speak it fluently. Where I go a lot of times, I visit Garden River people, the older people, the Pines. They talk good Indian. I talked to someone in Barrie but the language is so different. But you can understand."

Matt has a fun way of getting back at the American bragidosio. "This American guy, you know the Americans b.s. a lot. They've always got the best highways, which is right and the best cars. So one American came here. The guy gave me a great big lake trout, a ten pounder, and I was cleaning it. And he said, 'Oh, what BIG fish you have here!' I said, 'That's only the little ones. You should see the big ones. We have to tow

them in by boat. We can't put them in the boat. We tow them in.' 'You're not fishing for whale are you?' But you see, I knew they were Americans. I knew they'd been here every year. He'd brag so much. 'And that's only the little ones.' ...My God!" exclaims Matt in delight.

"I didn't tell you this one. I was also a ladies shoe salesman in Niles, Michigan...Robley Shoes for men and Naturalizers for ladies. So where did they put me? In the ladies department. And the women were wearing such short dresses. And one thing I found out. The woman, she'll never wear the proper size. She'll always try to squeeze into a size smaller," Matt laughs and Anna interjects another 'leg pulling' story. "One time, too, the way he answers so quickly, we used to take out these American fisherman and after about 20 or 30 years, they'd come back to see Matt, O.K.? But the Native boys asked him if he could haul a whole bunch of logs there. And so a guy is standing there and he says, 'What BIG TREES you got.' Matt very quickly says, 'And that's only the limbs.' I laughed so much." Matt laughs along with Anna and repeats, 'And that's only the limbs.' About laughter, Matt says, "That's what a person has to do. When things go bad, don't go down with them with sadness. Cheer up. That's the way, always!"

Matt prepared himself for employment opportunities. "Yeah, a lot of that I self-educated myself. I scaled logs using the metric system. Metric is easier than the inches to scale logs. I used to just walk right past when I used to work for the Ministry and I'd say, 'There's a cord of wood right there.' And they'd kind o' look at me. So when you do things over and over and over again. And you look at the logs and they're all sound. You look on each side- see if there are any rotten and take a deduction if there's a rot on the end. But the reason we did that. This was up in the bush, see, with snowshoes and everything and you couldn't be puttin' a tape on there on that big pile of logs. When the spring came, when the logs came down to the landing place...then we scaled them 'right down to the inch'. They check scale. When you get good at that, you're right on. Maybe your scaling could be a little bit low or could be a few percentage high. I learnt that from the old timers too. The older boys at the Ministry." Matt imitates an instructor's tone of voice. 'Don't try to crawl around under that pile there. You'll never get the footage on that log by doin' that. Just give it a rough estimate.' "First, I was looking to see if there was any crooks or knots in there. So I took a scalers course and I got right down to the bang. Yeah, government scaler. Also land survey. They sent us to Petawawa for the scalers course. Sometimes they had it in Sudbury, but I went to Petawawa. And they actually had the logs right on the ramps there. You'd take classroom first, and then you do the practical. Even now I turn down jobs. I feel lucky that I am able to work.

"Same thing with driving a car. Safety is the most important thing, and I'm not the slowest driver on the highway." Matt laughs a little and quotes Anna. 'I thought you said you're a careful driver. You just passed that guy there and you didn't signal'. "I used to teach the new recruits at the Ministry, how to drive, what to do, just like an examiner. Take them out and make sure they observe the rules, not depend on the rear view mirror cause there could be a blind spot.

"There are too many jobs to [be done]. Look at the jobs I had to do. Make traps for beavers. The beavers flood the crops. They had to figure out how to get that beaver out of there. I was used to using powder. I used to go there and blow up the dams. Three days later the beavers would have the dam built back up again. So, we had a big meeting and I said the only way we can do this is [the way] Indians [did] before they could afford copper snare wire. [They] built this little cage with a little door on it. There's a string, not ordinary string, it was just bark.... They put salt in it.... We just used salted line. Soon as the beaver gets in there he's goin' to start chewin' at that line. Soon as the line breaks, the door closes behind him and then you've got him trapped. So that's the way you stop beaver from destroying valuable crops. So you take that beaver and go take him somewhere way away and let him go."

Matt and Anna's six children are active. Brenda retired from a career with Royal Bank, Janet is a pharmacist, Kenny works at Algoma Steel, Betty is an airline stewardess for Pacific Airlines and John works for Toronto Transit. Danny, whom Anna describes as very talented and a straight A student, is still looking for a creative outlet for his energy.

"We didn't go to Phoenix to see Betty and her family this year because of the Canadian dollar being so low," says Matt. Although he's been careful with money, he thinks he's seen a change in himself. Today, he finds pleasure giving a treat to a grandchild.

Both he and Anna are active in the church that Baraga built "along with my grandfather James Wabananung. That's Morning Star in English. That's the time he was born, just as the Morning Star was popping up." Matt points out his back window and explains. "He lived right back there. The house is still there. It's still in pretty good shape." About the church construction, he adds, "I believe Neveaus were involved and could have been Apakwash. [Today] Anna does the cleaning. About two years ago, Mike [Neveau] did a lot of repairs. He put in the front steps, I believe. I put in the back steps." Contributing to church operations means that Matt uses his carpentry skills. This past winter, as Buddy Cress explained, Gabe Agawa, Gordon Robinson and Harold McKay all were buried in the span of a couple weeks. For Matt, that meant making three rough boxes including one for his own nephew Gordon, who was in his forties. Taking

responsibility in a community means in Matt's words, "You can't back down and you do the best you can."

"I'm in charge of the gospel readers. I do some readings myself. Sometimes I take the Deacon's place. One time, him and I, we used to tear around down town, you know, and then his wife talked him into coming to church. He'd never been inside the church for a long time. So, his wife talked him into coming to church. I was also there doin' the reading and he kept looking at me. When we got finished, he kept looking at me like mad. He says, 'when did you become a priest?' 'Oh, my God!' Matt mimics, 'I been a priest for a long, long time.'" Matt laughs and relives the tease. "I was just reading the gospel. His wife says to him, 'He's a gospel reader. He's one of the readers. He's not a real.'" Matt jumps back to the joke. "Oh, I been a priest a long time!"

And now was the time for a musical treat. Matt had promised to demonstrate his ability at the electric keyboard and the organ. "You'll see when I play," he says merrily. "You'll see a difference. First I started out with the old time music. Then I got into the swing music. Then I got into calypso." Anna explains that when he started it was all classical. "Yeah, nobody would listen to me. My relative was a classic music player and he taught me a lot. He was Bill Cody. We used to call him 'Wild Bill.' He had completed his high school education and so we called him 'the professor'."

Matt sat down at the keyboard. "I'll do a variety," he explains, and immediately begins playing the calypso tune *Kingston Town*. Switching accompaniment styles he plays *Mocking Hill*, *McNamarra's Band*, and a bawdy *We were only playing Leapfrog*. Moving over to a two manual organ he lights into a rollicking Beer Barrel Polka and to finish off, he accompanies his singing of *Now and Then There's a Fool such as I*. The windows over the organ allow full view of the bay. The waves seem to dance in time to the music. A boat comes in to the dock and it is time to depart.

Conclusion

The preceding conversations with eight residents from Goulais Mission, Ontario, illustrate how narratives combine drama, practical experience and moral content. There is testimony here, showing respect for tradition, hope in adversity, and encouragement to counter the forces that divide First Nation citizens. In this text, stories revive memories of the transition away from a barter economy when "we were all one community a long time ago." Today, residents of Goulais Mission still acknowledge the importance of each other's contributions to commu-

nity well being.

The social power and significance of storytelling is explored by anthropologist, Julie Cruikshank, in her book, *The Social Life of Stories, Narrative and Knowledge in the Yukon Territory*. Basing her insights on interviews with Yukon elders, she says. "Their narratives do far more than entertain. If one has optimistic stories about the past, they showed, one can draw on internal resources to survive and make sense of arbitrary forces that might otherwise seem overwhelming" (Cruikshank 1998: preface, p. 12). Referring to Mikhail Bakhtin, Walter Benjamin, and Harold Innis, she expands the influence of story telling, showing not only how culture is carried forward through story, but how it defies the "imposed categories" of hegemonic institutions and counters the "fragmentation of meaning" that occurs when indigenous knowledge is taken out of context and used by the dominant culture.

Many non-Natives expect a unified voice from First Native communities. It is politically strategic for Native communities to present a collective voice, but, as Cruikshank points out, "any idiom developed to do two things at once—to mark ethnicity to outsiders and to create internal cohesion—must necessarily be simple and inevitably becomes too restrictive to provide a meaningful metaphor for organizing personal behaviour over the long term" (Cruikshank 1998: 141). In Goulais Mission, the observation is born out in personal response to challenge. It makes each participant unique. But whether it relates to court challenges, language revival, effective education, or sustaining health, all participants base their meaningful metaphor on prior knowledge. The memories of earlier times give tangible evidence that cultural knowledge was and still is the key to survival.

Knowledge from experience is knowledge attached to place and time. It has a context. The intuitive knowledge of survival skills which are learned through practice is explained by Cruikshank when she writes, "[This] knowledge is not amenable to direct questions nor can it be easily formulated as a set of rules. It must be demonstrated so that others can see how it is used in practice. Such knowledge is a relational concept, more like a verb than a noun, more process than product, and it cannot easily be construed as a written, formally encoded, reified product. Once it is, and once it becomes authorized in this way, it begins to accumulate different meanings...." (Cruikshank 1998:70). Likewise, the dominant cultural meaning of terms such as "ordinarily resident" in the Indian Act puts a straight jacket on Native concepts relating to land. Here we see how knowledge is tied to social function. Experience in Goulais Mission illustrates how local knowledge used out of context sometimes "turns against you."

Time and place are wrapped together in memories of meaningful events. Kinship and land still create powerful attachments. But movement away from Goulais Mission came with the necessity of feeding families in difficult times. The *Agawa* decision upholding treaty rights to Native fishing allows the Goulais traditional economy an avenue of survival. Traditional knowledge functioned well within the community it sustained. Cruikshank alludes to the paradox that Indigenous northerners should contribute their observations and interpretations of environmental phenomena only now, in the wake of global disasters. "Even more ironic," she continues, "is the expectation that they should make these contributions at national and international levels, as members of conference panels and regulatory boards rather than at a local level where such knowledge could make an actual difference. Such a formulation seems to suggest that Indigenous traditions should provide answers to problems created by modern states in terms convenient for modern states" (Cruikshank 1998:51).

Cruikshank says it is unknown how local knowledge can maintain its own integrity. If sustainable development is possible, it means sustaining human lives as well as natural resources. A balance is needed between the rational and the intuitive. Respecting prior knowledge, sharing power, and responding to cultural voice all point to ways of helping local knowledge maintain integrity.

Conveying knowledge through storytelling uses a more flexible format than that accorded to written texts. Story is told in a particular way depending on listener and context. Some stories help us feel the tension caused by cultural clash and others display a comfort with cultural duality, but all stories break down barriers. This power has much to do with how oral tradition balances "spacial with temporal concepts by reinjecting an appreciation for the importance of qualitative time in human affairs." And those who laugh, or those who last, show the qualitative time that story occupies in healthy lives. Healing laughter has that ability to reverse our preconceptions of who controls the interaction or who has the power.

There is a saying that a memory is a treasure that lasts. The stories of Greg Agawa, Mary Allen, Mary Beaver, Raymond Cress, Angela Neveau, Mike Neveau, William Neveau and Matt Robinson give us memories of their changing world. Their cultural spirit remains intact, ready to be acknowledged for its knowledge, voice and power.

Notes

1. The spelling of Batchawana using all 'a' vowels is consistent with maps and local preference. The spelling Batchewana with an 'e' is used in the title Batchewana First Nation.
2. Barbara Chisholm and Andrea Gutsche. (1999). *Superior-Under the Shadow of the Gods*. Lynx Images. Toronto. p. 25. The strangers appearance alarmed the group. He eyed the young children ominously and refused to eat fish that was offered. When Alexander's men followed the stranger to his camp, they saw in the ashes of his fire, a baked hand.
3. Akwesasne to Wunnumin Lake. (1992). *Profile of Aboriginal Communities in Ontario*. Ontario Native Affairs Secretariat. Historical Notes: "The Batchawana people originally lived on a tract of land that encompassed the Lake Superior coastline from Sault St. Marie to the Pukaskwa River and the islands opposite. Following the signing of the Robinson-Huron Treaty in 1850 and subsequent land surrenders, including one in 1859 when the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, R. T. Pennefather, negotiated a treaty that resulted in the sale of nearly all the Batchawana lands, most Band members found themselves landless. They moved to the Garden River reserve, but the Garden River Band was also involved in several land surrenders in the late 19th century and this placed continuous pressure on reserve resources.
The Batchewana Band began looking for reserve lands of its own and succeeded in purchasing Rankin Mining Location in 1939 for \$17,000. Rankin Location was officially declared a reserve in 1951. It is within the boundaries of the territory described by the Robinson-Huron Treaty of 1850."
On reserve population: 446 (INAC, 1991) Linguistic Affiliation Algonkian (Ojibway). Mother Tongue: information not available. Land Base: Rankin 15D-1,537 ha, Goulais Bay 15A-675 ha, Obadijiwan 15E-58 ha. Affiliations: TC: Mamaweswen North Shore Tribal Council PTO: Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians. Electoral Ridings: (F) Algoma (P) Sault Ste. Marie.
4. My sincere thanks to all those who have assisted in this research project at Goulais Mission. I am especially grateful to Former Chief Angela Neveau for introducing me to the community in 1998, and to current Chief Vernon Syrette of Batchewana First Nation and Councilman Greg Agawa at Goulais Mission for permitting this collection of community profiles. Father Don McMillan and the parishioners of Our Lady of Sorrows Roman Catholic Church made this

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5. The annual procession at the Mission is also know as the "Procession of the Blessed Eucharist" or the "Corpus Christi procession." "It is led by a community member who carries the same cross that Bishop Baraga himself made for the church [Our Lady of Sorrows Roman Catholic Church] over 100 years ago." *Sault Daily Star*, June 6, 1958.
6. English often uses a feminine pronoun in reference to ships. Ojibwa language treats the masculine, feminine and neuter animate persons equally. *His, her, or its* rudder are all correct.
7. Breathers are rocky shoals which break up the big surf. On a 1982 Canadian hydrographic chart L/C 2300, there is a large area of shoals on the west side of Michipicoten Island labelled "The Breeders".
8. Mainland here means the Agawa Rocks because they are so close to the main shoreline of the Pictured Rocks and Sinclair Cove. The chickens were on the Agawa Rocks.
9. Jackladder. A long belt with hooks like a conveyer. It grabs the logs, takes them up the belt where they can then fall into the boat.

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