4 Increasing Awareness and Involvement of Aboriginal People in their Heritage Preservation: Recent Developments at the Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature

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Within cultural resource management, efforts to balance preservation and analysis of the archaeological record with the needs and desires of First Nations are currently in a state of transition. Few Native people are aware of the issues and even fewer are training to address them. Historically, archaeologists themselves have not been trained to address the issues and subsequently have left a legacy of decades of ineffective communication with Native communities.

The involvement of First Nations members in the management of archaeological resources has been accompanied by, among other things: the changing attitudes of some non-Native archaeologists; the emergence of a diversity of Aboriginal views which are undergoing change; a variety of stereotypes (many of which are incorrect); various levels of legislative responsibilities; cross-cultural differences; and variations in language, perceptions, and concepts. It is even debatable whether we should even be using the term *cultural resource management* for archaeological resources since *resource management* implies choices, analytical and evaluative arbitrariness, and the selection of some resouces at the expense of others. In addition, at least some Aboriginal people would argue that archaeological resources are part of First Nations heritage and, as such, have an importance that cannot be arbitrarily assessed and rejected (Eva Linklater, pers. comm. 1992). Therefore, we may need to start the discussions by distinguishing between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal heritage preservation.

Current developments in dealing with the ancient Aboriginal heritage preservation vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction and from institution to institution. Museums have played a particularly active role because they are the repositories of large numbers of Aboriginal items and, as public repositories, have had to respond to public requests and public issues more than other institutions such as universities. It is no surprise that the first broadly consultative Canadian task force on partnerships with First Peoples was the Task Force Report on Museums and First Peoples (Hill and Nicks 1992); protests to the *Spirit Sings* exhibit quickly brought the issues to the forefront. The staff at the Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature have been very involved over the last several years with various individuals and organizations in the Aboriginal communities to develop dialogue and linkages, and to build awareness and Native involvement in Native heritage and the "management"of these resources. This paper discusses some recent developments in Manitoba with an emphasis upon the archaeological record, namely that associated with the more ancient Native heritage.

THE MANITOBA SCENARIO

In Manitoba, as elsewhere in Canada, Native communities are being provided with the responsibility and opportunity to develop their archaeological heritage at a rapid rate. A number of reserves are completing multi-million dollar compensation agreements with Manitoba Hydro for flood damages, for example, some of which include the development of cultural centres with museological interpretive components. Other reserves have done, or are doing, feasibility studies for developing cultural centres as repositories and interpretive centres to re-introduce community pride in their heritage (e.g., Sagkeeng First Nation) and to bring tourism funds into the community (e.g., Brokenhead First Nation). Increasing amounts of land are also coming under Aboriginal jurisdiction as new reserves are being created and existing reserves are negotiating expanded resource rights beyond their reserve boundaries, while the Métis peoples are still involved with court battles for compensation for the loss of earlier lands. Manitoba has been chosen as the pilot

study by Indian Affairs to establish Native self-government. This latter process has already begun and it has major implications regarding responsibility for Aboriginal heritage preservation, both ancient (oral traditions and archaeology) and recent.

Legislative support or guidance for these changes is limited at present. The *Manitoba Heritage Protection Act* is being enforced or implemented without much support or enthusiasm. Unlike the United States and many other industrial nations, Canada, for a variety of reasons, has no federal heritage legislation (see Burley 1994 and responses). This lack of federal legislation means that there is no leverage to hold the province accountable for bilaterally funded projects, no precedents for the provincial politicians to become used to funding large scale mitigation projects, and no heritage legislation for federal lands, including reserves. The declaration of the new *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* (and accompanying Regulations) in 1994 (Canada Gazette 1994) does include archaeological resources, but its power and usefulness are, as yet, unknown. Future discussions between archaeologists and Native peoples, and future moves to Aboriginal self-government and responsibility for their heritage, will be hampered by the lack of a background of strong and straight-forward legislation.

In order for archaeologists to develop linkages with the Native community, it is necessary to be able to identify the many different Native interest groups who may be involved. These groups include elders and band councils; elementary, junior high school and university classes; municipal, provincial, and federal organizations; cultural associations; and training groups (Syms 1993). In Manitoba alone there are 61 reserve communities; a large number of non-status and Métis communities; seven tribal councils (e.g., the Northeast Tribal Council); The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs; regional groups of chiefs such as the Manitoba Keetwatinowi Okimakanak (MKO), which represents 25 northern reserves; and numerous urban groups such as the Winnipeg Aboriginal Women's Association, the Manitoba Indian Education Association, and the Manitoba Association of Native Languages. There are many different cultural groups represented, including the Dakota, Lakota, several Cree groups, Dene, Anishinabe (Ojibway), Inuit, and Métis. Finally, there is considerable diversity among the communities, ranging from strongly traditional communities that regularly seek the wisdom of the elders to councils run predominantly by Christian fundamentalists who reject traditional beliefs. To accomodate this diversity, many different strategies are required to develop awareness and to build networks with the Aboriginal communities.

Although I have worked with many individuals and have had several hundred Aboriginal people through my Archaeology Laboratory over the last four years, I am only beginning to understand the complexities of developing networks with the many Native groups. While it is dangerous to generalize, I would like to share the following personal impressions because they have ramifications for developing dialogue with Aboriginal peoples.

- Although some Native communities have maintained a strong sense of their heritage and identity, many groups suffered the loss of their heritage through declining use of language, the suppression of traditional ceremonies, a lack of teaching Native heritage in the schools, and the recent impact of TV and other media.
- Among Native communities there is a widespread sense of being outside of mainstream Canadian society and heritage, in part because of the imposition and limitations of the Indian Act. This separation is maintained by a variety of mechanisms including separate newspapers such as *The First Perspective*; by separate social centres, cultural centres, and bars; and by separate communities, even within the urban setting.
- Although there are strong oral traditions of local Native heritage, at least among the elders, there is often limited knowledge of the written historical documentation (e.g., as relating to the fur trade, and to historical and anthropological information) because heritage information tends to be based on verbally-transmitted oral tradition, because there tends to be little taught in the schools, and because there is a lot of distrust of written historic accounts.
- There is even awareness of the ancient heritage reflected in the 11,000 years of the archaeological record that lies buried in the ground.
- There is no tradition of building museums to house and preserve their heritage. None the less, members of a number of communities see museums and heritage centres as a means to reintroduce lost heritage to the young people, to preserve existing heritage, and to generate tourism revenue.

- Few Aboriginal committees have been established to address heritage issues, to encourage discussion or solicit views, or to respond to non-Native groups and agencies. Even the main political body, the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, has no heritage committee.
- There is little awareness by First Nations of the existing legal rights and responsibilities for cultural resource (heritage) management, including impact assessments and mitigation (recovery, analysis, and interpretation) of heritage resources (buildings, sites, and artifacts) that are being destroyed as outlined in the provincial heritage act and federal environmental legislation.
- Finally, there is a rapidly emerging awareness and concern of heritage about the loss of ancient heritage. Even only 15 years ago, Natives who gathered at environmental hearings greater part of the concern is with cultural/heritage impacts (Gary Dickson, pers. comm. 1992). Within the Native communities, much of this discussion centres around having cultural centres to reduce the loss of heritage.

FOUR RECENT CASES

At present, various Aboriginal communities and organizations are responding to heritage concerns on a case-by-case basis. The following cases reflect a variety of reactions but most clearly demonstrate a strong concern for Native heritage issues when they became aware and have the opportunity to become involved with them.

The Churchill River Diversion Archaeological Project: Post-Flood Surveys

In 1990, the South Indian Lake band council demanded that Manitoba Hydro recover eroding burials for reburial. Each year since then, Manitoba Hydro has funded the field costs for Historic Resources Branch archaeologists to have small crews, using mainly local Native trappers, recovering burials and doing shoreline surveys during the spring low-water period along various parts of the Churchill River Diversion (Riddle 1994a, 1994b, 1994c, 1994d; Smith 1995) and has funded a major part of the laboratory costs. As a result, the number of known sites has more than doubled, and a large number of burials has been recovered and reburied.

Before the excavations of any eroding burials, the project archaeologist did consult with the band council at Nelson House First Nation to ask their permission and to discuss the correct procedures required. The burials were subsequently recovered according to the wishes of the elders and excavations preceded by appropriate ceremonies. The band allowed a physical anthropologist to analyze the skeletal remains, and the associated artifacts were sent to the Museum to be illustrated, photographed, and cast to make replicas. The burials and associated grave goods were returned for reburial.

The elders were unhappy that "the old ones" had been disturbed but decided that "the old ones" had allowed themselves to be exposed and recovered at this time so that the knowledge of ancient Cree heritage they revealed could be shared with the young people today who are losing their heritage and because these discoveries could prove helpful in current efforts to get a cultural centre (Riddle 1994b). Although they required that everything be reburied, the elders also requested detailed records and interpretation of the objects recovered. Staff were contracted to do the illustrations and casting. Small organic samples have been extracted for AMS dating, a tecnhique that causes minimum modification of samples. Finally, replicas of burial items have been mounted in cases with interpretive text in both English and Cree syllabics (see below). The elders also requested that one item, a complete stone, Algonquian constructed neck pipe (also known by the misnomer "Micmac pipe") be returned for ceremonial use. The elders and band council reacted to the issue of burial recovery with a mixture of spiritual sensitivity and pragmatism.

In the summer of 1995, one elder was unhappy with the existing procedures used to recover an eroding burial. However, after the initial ceremony, he and the other elders were asked to excavate the burial. When he saw how interested and enthusiastic the others were about the accompanying cache of stone and antler artifacts, including the decorated harpoons, he reversed his opinion and now believes that the artifacts should be replicated and the replicas returned to the community (Dave Riddle, pers. comm. 1995). This same elder subsequently supported the need for archaeological recovery at a meeting of the Chief and Council that I attended.

The Opaskwayak First Nation Burial

Construction excavations for a house basement on the reserve uncovered a burial and numerous grave goods, including an antler pestle, two flakers, a Sonota-style antler atlatl weight, three dart points, and two large ceremonial bifaces of Gronlid siltstone. The RCMP visited the site and reported it to the Historic Resources Branch, which then sent a staff archaeologist to investigate the site; all of the skeletal materials and grave goods were sent to Dr. Chris Meiklejohn of the University of Winnipeg for analysis. The artifacts ultimately came to the Museum for conservation treatment.

The day after the artifacts were sent to the Museum, Eva Linklater, then a Native Archaeological Intern at the time (see Syms, Ch. 15), fortuitously met Chief Francis Flett of the Opaskwayak First Nation Reserve and invited him to the Archaeology Laboratory. He spent a half-day looking at the artifacts and talking about atlatls. Chief Flett gave permission to have the artifacts photographed, dated, and replicated, and he also telephoned the community and insisted that parts of one ceremonial biface still on the reserve be sent to the Museum. He requested that the research results be published and that a display of the replicas be set up on the reserve. The band council has since budgeted money to obtain two sets of replicas for their new hotel and for the community.

The Manitoba Model Forest Project

A number of federally-funded model forest projects has been proposed for various parts of Canada; these models are developed around principles and procedures for managing the forest resources as sustainable resources. One project, Manitou Abi Model Forest (Manitoba Model Forest News 1994), was proposed for southeastern Manitoba. During the planning phase, the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs was asked to be involved; the Assembly agreed to participate only if 50% plus one of the directors were Aboriginal. The project planners refused these demands and the two sides discontinued discussions.

The directors of the project, who represented foresty groups and academic researchers, none of whom are Aboriginal, subsequently turned down a request from archaeological consultants to incorporate GIS-focused modeling for predicting archaeological resources as part of the general forest model. They decided not to include archaeology, which they equated with Native heritage, because (they argued) there was no support or interest in it on the part of Aboriginal people. The archaeology community was left with the task of developing arguments for the inclusion of archaeological resource management in the forestry model. In discussions with members of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, it was made clear that they expected the archaeologists to persuade the directors of the forestry project to meet their demands (regarding Aboriginal representation), thereby forcing the archaeologists to become intermediaries. Some archaeologists contacted the Native communities in the area covered by the model, and a community ground-swell for concern of archaeological resources developed (Virginia Petch, pers. comm. 1996), but the urban assembly refused to become involved. This model for forestry management in Manitoba has subsequently been developed without incorporating management of the archaeological resources.

The Hudson's Bay Company Museum Collection

The Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) decided to turn their Archives over to the province of Manitoba and to find a permanent repository for the HBC Museum Collection, consisting of a large collection of ethnographic, historic, fine arts, Inuit art, and archaeological works. The archival materials were already on loan to the Manitoba Archives and the artifacts were in storage at Lower Fort Garry. These materials had been collected over a number of years and had been initially part of the Bay's museum display in the main Winnipeg store beginning in the 1920s.

When the announcement was made about the availability of the HBC Collection, discussions began immediately among senior staff in Ottawa/Hull and an ad hoc committee was struck. There were initial suggestions to have the collection deposited at the Canadian Museum of Civilization. The planing committee recommended that there be Aboriginal and Métis representation. When the discussion of an appropriate repository was raised, the Education Officer of the Manitoba Métis Federation, the Director of the Manitoba Association of Native Languages, and the elder from Sagkeeng First Nation Reserve immediately insisted that the materials stay in Western Canada and that the Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature was the most suitable repository; the

Museum not only had developed a detailed management plan that demonstrated its ability to handle the collection but was committed to community involvement. Their recommendations were accepted unanimously and the Collection was subsequently turned over to the Museum.

These four cases provide some sense of the diversity among the groups and individuals with whom it is necessary to develop liasons. Since many members of the Native communities are only now beginning to learn about their archaeological heritage, they have to think about the issues and develop their personal views. The experience of the Nelson House elder regarding the recovery of the eroding burial shows that there are, and will continue to be, changing attitudes.

In all cases, as Native people became more aware of their archaeological heritage, they became interested in and concerned with preserving it; most reacted with considerable enthusiasm. Access to and proper care of collections are important concerns as indicated in the Native and Métis reaction to the HBC collection. However, interest in these issues appears greater at the community level than at the provincial political level, as represented by the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs. These examples also illustrate how, archaeologists, as they deal with some of the more political groups, may become caught up in political tensions, or even become political pawns.

DEVELOPING AWARENESS AND BUILDING LINKS

Many members of the Canadian archaeological community have been aware that much of the record that we study is part of the heritage of First Peoples and that interpretations of it must include the perspectives of Aboriginal people (McGhee 1989; various authors, this volume). Recently, the Canadian Archaeological Association has developed a task force with regional committees to develop a code of ethics. The Saskatchewan Archaeological Society has also formalized meetings with elders (Hanna, Ch. 5). These papers present examples of initial, but effective steps in developing co-operative activities between archaeologists and Native people. A growing number of papers and reports in cultural resource management indicate that archaeological research has incorporated consultation with Native peoples.

Archaeologists, however, have not been trained to do archaeology that involves consultation or collaboration with Native people (Spector 1994). Some archaeologists have claimed, perhaps only half-jokingly, that they studied archaeology, rather than cultural anthropology, because they were not comfortable dealing with people. Much of what has been written by archaeologists reflects a focus on the archaeological record itself, with little attention given for the general public or the Aboriginal public in particular. Now we are asking archaeologists to work with Aboriginal people, most of whom have little or no knowledge of the archaeological record, may hold a variety of negative stereotypes about archaeologists, and have a different cultural perspective. As Bill Byrne has noted, the gulf of understanding between archaeologists and First Nations representatives can be so great that even when the two groups are talking to each other in the same room, one can have the impression that there are "two set of meetings going on simultaneously, and two separate agendas on the table" (Byrne 1994: 100). More optimistically, however, Byrne also noted that as dialogue continues, the two agendas draw closer together.

Given my experiences at the Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature, I suggest that archaeologists must: a) identify the diverse range of Native groups; b) develop awareness of what archaeological research methods attempt to do; c) commit to providing employment and training opportunities for Native people to work in archaeology and to become archaeologists; d) develop relevant and meaningful techniques and language with which the archaeologists can share the heritage information that they have been accumulating; and e) seek the opinions of Aboriginal people regarding alternative ways of interpreting heritage.

These activities are easier than they appear. The Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature has made a committment to "fast track" the process of developing awareness of ancient heritage among the Native communities; to develop linkages with these communities, and to increase the involvement of First Nation representatives in developing and presenting their heritage within the Museum, in their communities, and to the general public. Some recent and on-going experiences at the Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature, and elsewhere in Manitoba, provide useful examples and insights into these major developments and are outlined below.

Training Programs

There are relatively few Native people in the museology field. However, many Native communities are interested in developing cultural centres with a museum component to reduce the loss of their heritage. Although there have been a few Aboriginal and Métis interns in our general training program, we decided that it was imperative to develop training programs to prepare Native people to bring their own professional expertise and blend it with the communities' needs, rather than relying on consultants. We hope that these successful trainees will play leading roles in the development of Native heritage centres. We found that the rewards, both to us personally and to the Museum, were enriching and gratifying.

Two programs were developed at the museum:

Native Archaeology Internship. Using Access to Archaeology funds, I was able to initiate a program that provided a training program for two six-month Native internships. These two interns developed considerable expertise on their own ancient archaeological heritage and on archaeological heritage in general; encouraged broader awareness among Native Peoples by means of displays, tours, and personal discussion; and developed this awareness among several hundred people (see Syms Ch. 15 for details).

Museum Aboriginal Internship Program. Dr. Katherine Pettipas had developed a one-year internship program focussing mainly on recent Native heritage, particularly ethnographic and material culture analysis. The Aboriginal intern has a one-year or eighteen-month internship in which he/she learns about a variety of areas including collections management, exhibit development, and programming. Two interns have graduated to date and a third will complete the program in 1997. These interns are encouraged to develop some background in their more ancient heritage and have done projects on archaeology collection management and completed a permanent exhibit on Native horticulture.

Not only do these interns learn a great deal about their heritage and how to care for and present it, they also help to establish links between the Museum and the Native communities. They bring friends to the Museum and develop more formal relationships such as setting up agreements whereby the Manitoba Indian Educational Association (M.I.E.A) arranged to include the Museum as part of the orientation for first-year university students from Northern reserves.

As a result of these two internship programs, several hundred Aboriginal people, including students, teachers, and the general public, became aware of the Museum, visited it, and became more comfortable being in it. They learned what it had to offer and learned much about their ancient heritage that they had not been aware of before. Increased requests to obtain copies of early community photographs and to have students from Northern reserves visit the display in the Archaeology Laboratory reflect improved trust in the Museum and the development of a co-operative relationship.

Tours and Presentations

A major section of the Museum's Archaeology Laboratory is set up as a long-term display on a variety of topics including ceramic production and diversity, flintknapping, sophistication of atlatls and darts, local examples of Mississippian trade and symbolism, and fur trade and recent technology. This display is set up for both formal and informal tours, most of which consist of Aboriginal people. Some tours include visits to selected units in the galleries, such as to Paul Kane's materials, the Old Copper technology, and the Boreal Forest mini-diorama. These displays are viewed by more than 100 Native and Métis people each year, representing a variety of groups including 45 teachers from Northern schools, 58 elementary and junior school students from two Northern schools, school classes, small groups, and individuals, and a special Continuing Education class on small community economics for Band administrators and office trainees taking the Business Learning Opportunities (B.L.O.) program.

Tours are also given in the Ethnology Laboratory and the collections storage area by Dr. Katherine Pettipas. Visitors learn what items are present from their communities and what items would be available for temporary and permanent displays in their communities. They also can peruse (and often copy) early photographs of people and places in their community. Not only do these visitors learn about various aspects of their community, but discover that heritage materials are being looked after respectfully and are readily accessible to them. The tours often provide the first opportunity for many Native people to look closely at, and handle, both archaeological and

ethnographic items. While there is generally not much discussion during the tours, at least in the Archaeology Laboratory, it often takes place later. The common reaction to what these visitors find was summarized by the Native Practicum Supervisor for the Community Health and Human Services Group students of Yellowquill College, following a tour of the Archaeology Laboratory: "Being able to see, handle and hear about the artiacts that have been recovered was both enlightening and enjoyable. I received many positive comments and students particularly expressed pride in the skills and knowledge of their ancestors. Meegwetch!" (McClay 1996).

Finally, both Dr. Pettipas and I give a number of talks and slide presentations to groups and classes on Native and Métis heritage on a regular basis, including classes in the Native Studies Department and special history classes at the University of Winnipeg. Students are encouraged to visit the Museum on their own.

Exhibits

Exhibit development can serve several functions. Exhibits have an advantage over tours in that they are long-term or permanent, allowing them to be revisted and viewed by many groups of all ages over many years. They must, however, be highly visual; some visual media are of limited value if the viewers do not enjoy reading the accompanying text.

In addition to the in-house exhibits on Native heritage, we have been working on a number of temporary and permanent exhibits for the Native communities. In the early 1980s, I built an exhibit for the school at Oxford House First Nation (Figure 1) that summarized the interpretive results of an archaeological field school on the reserve in 1978 operated through the Brandon University Native Teachers Education Program (BUNTEP) at Brandon University where I was a staff member at the time. Until recently, this was the only community exhibit on Aboriginal heritage between The Pas and Churchill. Topics illustrated by this exhibit include proper excavation techniques, changing historical settlement patterns, flintknapping, ceramic production, reconstructing palaeoenvironment using palynology, cultural persistence in bone technology, and the changing function of smoking from the sacred to the secular. All of these messages are covered in an area four by eight feet.

As a result of the Churchill River Archaeological Project (see above), the Band Council of the Nelson House First Nation requested that a special display case be built for the replicas of the artifacts found in association with the two burials, which included a 4,100 year old harpoon, a sacred stone ball, and a variety of bone and antler tools dating to ca. 1,700 years ago (Figures 2, 3). Construction of the exhibit involved Native people from three communities and one Aboriginal business centre. The case was built on contract by a member of Peguis First Nation community. The text is written in English and Cree syllabics, the latter hand-written by two Northern community members and then transposed to the computer printed form by the Manitoba Association of Native Languages. The text and illustrations reveal the importance of the items, the rich heritage messages they convey, and their antiquity. The display was initially located in the Nelson House First Nation Band council board room, but was subsequently moved to the Native Studies classroom at the school.

One recently completed travelling exhibit, "Discovering the Archaeological Heritage of Aboriginal People," was requested by the Aboriginal Ethics Committee of the Canadian Archaeological Association. It was developed for Native Archaeologists to take to Native communities. It continues to be used at the First Nations Pavilion during Folkorama—Winnipeg's major multicultural event, and is also set up at a number of non-Native venues.

A recent Cree intern at the museum, Debra Prince, developed an exhibit on Native horticulture for the Kenosewun Interpretive Centre in Lockport as part of her internship training. She not only learned about a part of Manitoba's archaeological heritage, but also about horticultural activities of the Mandan and Hidatsa along the Missouri River could serve as ethnographic analogies for local Native horticulture, in addition to learning how to plan and make an exhibit. The Kenosewun Centre, in turn, gained a long-term exhibit that enhanced their interpretive centre, while the Native staff and Board members there realized that archaeologists can provide important information on their ancient heritage.

Dr. Katherine Pettipas has also had her Aboriginal interns working on temporary exhibits that were important learning experiences (Pettipas 1993). One Cree intern, Sharon Martin, worked with the Manitoba Aboriginal Veterans Association to compile a unique record of enlisted Native

Figure 1. Archaeological exhibit built for Oxford House First Nation School. (Photo: Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature)

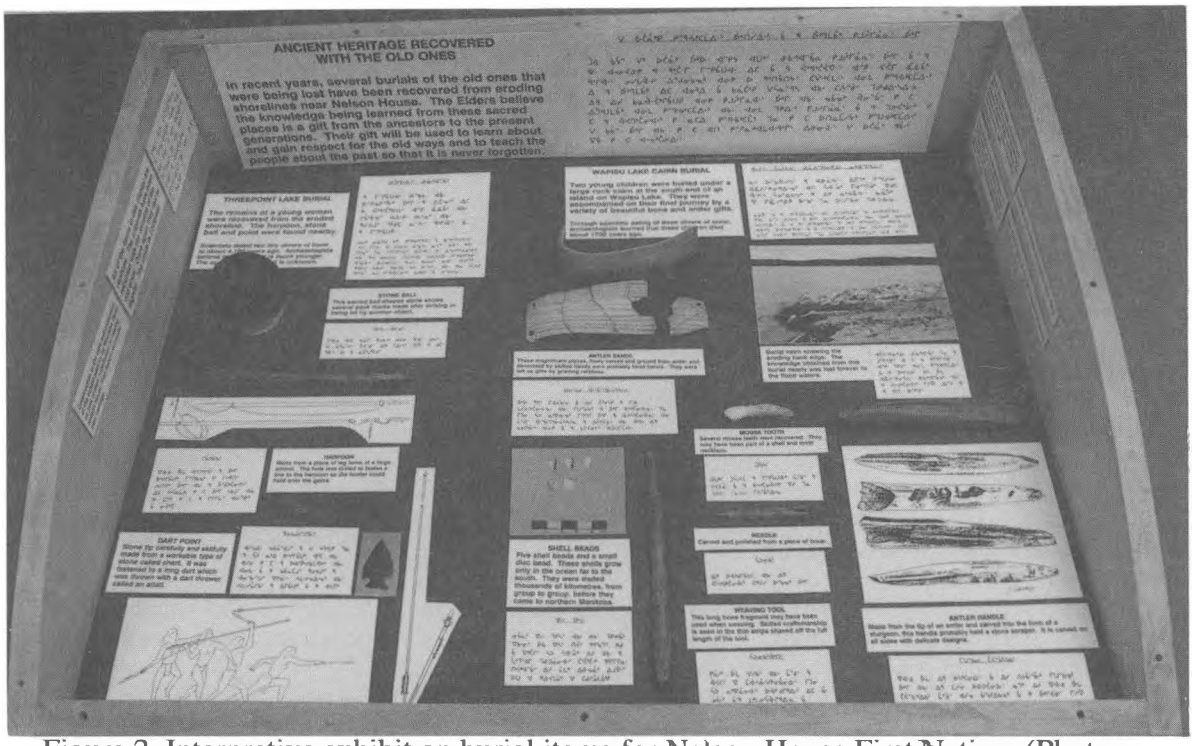

Figure 2. Interpretive exhibit on burial items for Nelson House First Nation. (Photo: Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature)

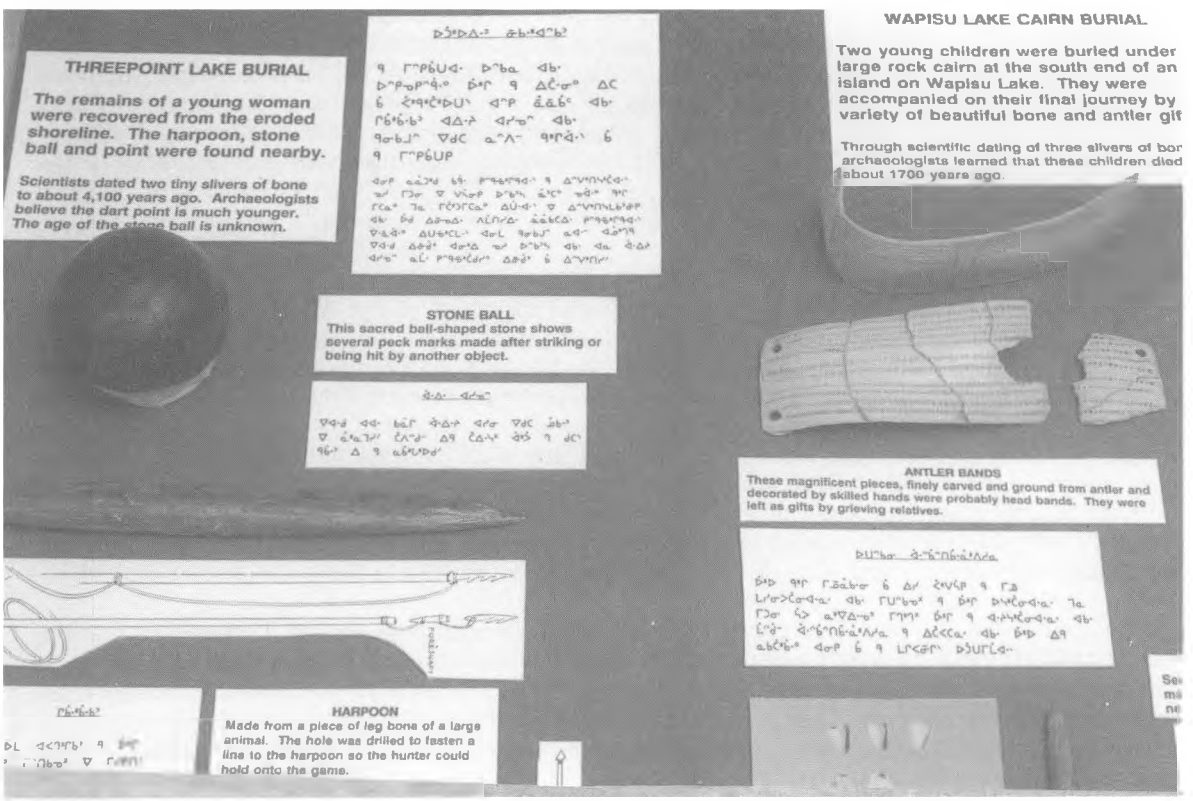

Figure 3. Close-up of part of the Nelson House First Nation exhibit. (Photo: Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature)

servicemen[1] and created the first display in Manitoba on this subject. The display was well-received in the Aboriginal community and prompted the Mayor of the City of Winnipeg to declare an Aboriginal Veterans Day.

The current Aboriginal Intern, Tanya Cochrane, has completed the exhibit "'Patterned with Pride'—Applied Decorative Art of the Dakota" (Cochrane 1996). This exhibit gave her the opportunity to learn about Dakota traditions, and to develop a beautiful display of early Dakota crafts, with accompanying educational text, that can be enjoyed by visitors to the Museum.

In addition, Dr. Pettipas has developed a number of temporary exhibits for Aboriginal-run conferences and special events. Although these are often of short duration, they do promote heritage awareness and develop further links between the communities and the Museum.

Special Programs

The Museum is involved with an increasing number of programs that provide opportunities to develop heritage awareness among Aboriginal people. For years I have talked about reintroducing the lost legacy of Native ceramic production. In April, 1995, Mary Ann Tisdale of Heritage Canada and I presented a four-session workshop on traditional Native ceramic production that included hands-on opportunities to make clay vessels. I specifically contacted several Native people who had expressed an interest and sent notices to some Aboriginal institutions. When the initial registration quota of fifteen was filled by non-Native applicants, we expanded the quota to include Native applicants who applied late. These extra efforts are necessary to encourage Native involvement until programs become well known. At a subsequent workshop, about one-third of the participants were Native. The workshop series was very successful. We foresee these as the first of a series of such workshops that will enable Aboriginal people to rediscover this tradition, teaching it to others as an example of their own heritage, and perhaps even developing it into a modern art form. In fact, one Aboriginal participant in this group, who is a member of the Aboriginal Artists Association, plans on teaching Native ceramic production to Native youth.

The Museum was also very involved with the development of the 1995 Archaeology Month activities. This was a collaborative series of events held throughout the province that had been coordinated largely by the Association of Manitoba Archaeologists. One set of activities included going to the community of The Pas to present a Sunday public program and a Monday school program on traditional technology including atlatl use, ceramic vessel manufacture, flintknapping, and birchbark working. Given the choice of working with the town public school or the reserve school, we chose the reserve school. As a result, 80 grade five Native students had an opportunity to learn about these ancient techniques of their Cree ancestors.

Developing Linkages

The Museum has a long history of working with members of the Aboriginal communities. Katherine Pettipas has, for example, collaborated with members of the Native Education Department, Department of Education, for many years. She has also started working with Saskatchewan elders to develop guidelines for the proper care and treatment of sacred bundles. She was a member of the Task Force on Museums and First Peoples, at the request of elders associated with the Saskatoon Tribal Council. She has also started working with the Saskatchewan elders, Dr. Margaret Hanna of the Royal Saskatchewan Museum, Dr. Gerald Conaty of the Glenbow Museum, and with several communities to develop guidelines on the treatment of sacred items. Many of the elders now comfortable enough to visit the sacred collections, and are satisfied that they are being cared for properly and with the way the Museum is serving as the custodian of the collections.

Katherine Pettipas has also recently established an Elders Advisory Committee for the Museum to help develop policy and procedure regarding the Museum's collections of Aboriginal materials. Sacred materials require special care; the elders identified a number of concerns relating to archaeological items. They recommended leaving tobacco where items are collected; any site where pipes are found should also be treated properly spiritually to reduce the potential danger to the archaeologists.

Dr. Pettipas sits on the Task Force on Museums and First Nations. As a member of the Manitoba Heritage Council, I have helped to make a number of significant changes that included the

[1] War time service records do not list Aboriginal identity and Native communities have tended not to compile these.

reformatting of the Archaeology Committee to the Archaeology and Native Heritage Committee which added two distinguished Aboriginal representative: Mary Richard of the Manitoba Association of Native Languages and Professor Colleen Cutschall, a Lakota art historian (Cutschall 1990), of Brandon University.

One of the spin-offs of the tours and other visits is the follow-up requests that come from various individuals and groups. They range from requests for information on community artifacts by the Norway House Historical Society to consultation visits from the Chief and councillors of Nelson House First Nation to discuss ideas regarding ideas for a settlement with Manitoba Hydro and the two levels of government regarding compensation for flooding.

Although we have a large number of projects that involve Aboriginal people, many of whom have made behind-the-scenes tours, we still reach only a relatively small percentage of the Aboriginal population of the province. We are considering other venues that will reach a broader audience quickly; these include presentations on Aboriginal television programs, videos for satellite television programs, articles in Native newspapers such as *Weetamah* and *The First Perspective,* and other media such as educational CD-ROMs.

DEVELOPING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Creating Aboriginal employment opportunities enables Native people to work with collections, to develop additional awareness of their heritage, and to encourage professional growth. For the Churchill River Archaeology Project, Dave Riddle has been hiring mainly local off-season trappers who have become interested in, and knowledgeable about, their ancient heritage. In the Archaeology Laboratory, I have been hiring one Native and one Métis student each year (Figure 4) to help process the collections. Some of these students will likely become archaeologists in their communities.

In addition to developing personal heritage awareness for these employees, these jobs create awareness of alternative job opportunities among even those who do not consider the archaeological heritage to be important. For example, in talking to local high school students, Chief Gerry Primrose of Nelson House First Nation Reserve has identified archaeological research as one of the reasons why they should stay in school and get an education for a profession. We hope that the northern Churchill River Diversion Project will provide opportunities for long-term seasonal and permanent employment involving monitoring, rescuing, and interpreting their archaeological heritage.

When Katherine Pettipas develops research projects, such as the background research for the planetarium show, "Snaring the Sun: A Journey into the Anishinabe Sky World," she contracted Native researchers to work with the elders in the communities (Pettipas 1993). When the Museum arranged to show the exhibit "Fluffs and Feathers" produced by the Woodland Cultural Centre to address the contemporary issue of stereotyping, she worked with the staff of the Programming Department and the Manitoba Indian Educational Association (MIEA) to hire Native staff to develop the in-house programs and to work as guides. This has become a very successful weekly program of Native performers and craftspeople as the programmers included topics such as "Becoming Part of the Circle: Understanding Aboriginal Traditional Values and Beliefs." Dr. Pettipas has also been contracting Native and Métis researchers to do community research for the development of the forthcoming Parkland and Mixed Woods Gallery. We specifically identified reserve communities to be included in a multi-community survey to determine what community members thought should be in the gallery.

There are other projects in the province that are taking advantage of job-creation programs that focus on hiring Native people. Professor Bev Nicholson of Brandon University hired northern Native students to work on archaeological excavations under the direction of Brian Scribe. Sid Kroker has hired Native tour guides for the public archaeological excavations at The Forks in Winnipeg. The Manitoba Historic Resources Branch hires students and northern off-season workers for archaeological field work.

Figure 4. View of the Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature Archaeology Laboratory with Native and Métis students processing collections of the Churchill River Archaeological Project. (Photo: Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature)

DEVELOPING RELEVANT AND MEANINGFUL TECHNIQUES AND LANGUAGE TO SHARE INFORMATION

Archaeologists and other researchers working with First Nations heritage must learn to work with Aboriginal people and to interpret the information that they gather in a meaningful manner. In addition to recognizing the tremendous diversity of backgrounds present, researchers must have respect for and appreciation of traditional beliefs (Hill and Nicks 1992) and be aware that there will be different concepts guiding some Native perceptions and views. When Kevin Smith, a Cherokee cultural coordinator at Tulsa's American Indian Heritage Cente), saw a Pawnee medicine bundle on display at the Museum of Modern Art, he "was extremely offended. I remember thinking, 'This should offend anyone with feelings for the sanctity of another person's religion'" (Bilger 1995: 25). Similarly, when an advisory group of elders visited our collections, several felt that some sacred objects in the collection "were imprisoned and by being put into museums, they had been 'broken' and were 'without spirit'" (Pettipas 1994).

On the other hand, there is a surge in interest in developing cultural centres with a museum component. As Bilger (1995) noted, most Oklahoma tribes are planning cultural centres. A number of Native groups throughout North America, with the support of their elders, has already developed their own museums, e.g., the Makah Museum in Washington State. Other museums have established Native sections and programming with the guidance of committees of elders, including the Wanuskewin Heritage Centre near Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, and the First Nations Gallery at the Royal Saskatchewan Museum. Furthermore, the sacred bundles in our museum have been visited by elders who are satisfied with the treatment these bundles are receiving and are happy that the Museum is being a responsible and respectful custodian. In Manitoba, at least five reserves are having discussions, doing planning for, or studying the feasibility of cultural centres.

Archaeologists must view the artifacts and their interpretations as part of peoples' cultural heritage. A ceramic sherd must be viewed as a series of skilled activities of craftsmanship including skill and pride in production, decorative beauty, and function rather than merely a "type" with an arbitrary irrelevant name (e.g., Selkirk, Laurel). Furthermore, it must be made clear that these scientific types are not cultural types. Native people tend to want to know about their people and their community in particular. Therefore, many people would want to know that Laurel pottery is

early Algonquian pottery made by the ancestors of the Anishinabe and Cree First Nations, and not a product of the "Laurel Indians," as presented in a recent video (Budak 1993).

We must also consider the terms we use to communicate.The term *prehistoric*, for example, is frequently identified as being offensive for two reasons (see Hanna, Ch. 5, McGhee, Ch. 16). On the one hand, many educational books on prehistory are about dinosaurs and extinct animals; Native educators object to being lumped in with fossils. On the other hand, *prehistoric* is sometimes considered as indicating a time before history, therefore having no history. It is ironic that archaeologists spend much of their careers recovering ancient Native history/heritage and then use a term that is considered to deny this cultural history. As archaeologists work with Native peoples, they must become sensitive to such offensive terminology.

A second example is the term *Archaic*, which is used in reference to a major period, technology, or tradition. Yet a perusal of a number of dictionaries will find that many include as one of the first definitions are of "earlier or more primitive time" or "antiquated." How then does one discuss concepts of highly skilled technology or continental trade networks and then assign to it a term that means "antiquated" and "primitive" to many? This does nothing for efforts seeking to improve the credibility of this early heritage, nor does it do much for the credibility of archaeologists.

We need to consider whose heritage we are dealing with when we assign names to cultures or complexes, sites, and types (see Trigger, Forword). To call the northern ceramic tradition of the Cree "Selkirk," after the name of a southern town that was named after a relatively recent European figure, does a serious injustice to Cree heritage and to archaeological credibility. Yet our reports and cultural chronologies are full of such examples. Names need to be chosen that reflect the regional landmarks and/or local Native terms. Aboriginal people in the North relate more to a projectile point type called Wuskwatim Stemmed, named after a local lake, than they do to Selkirk Stemmed.[2]

In addition, we need to be incorporating traditional symbolism to make our interpretations of the archaeological record meaningful, dynamic, and more interesting. This can take the form of interpreting readily identifiable symbols such as the identification of incised Thunderbirds, or portions of Thunderbirds, on northeastern Plains ceramics (Benn 1989; Flynn 1993), or water-related animals (e.g., salamanders) on a small ceramic bowl (Syms 1979). The symbols can then be incorporated into larger concepts of the cosmos and the symbolism of power (Pauketat and Emerson 1991). The other approach is to draw together a variety of elders' accounts to explain the presence of certain elements and artifacts, as was done with the ancient shaman of Long Point (Fox and Molto 1994). In all of these cases, the inclusion of traditional Native beliefs makes the interpretations more interesting and more relevant for Native people.

SEEKING DIALOGUE WITH ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

Seeking dialogue with Aboriginal peoples is to everyone's advantage. Through dialogue, non-Native archaeologists learn a great deal about Aboriginal culture and are able to interpret their work in a much richer and more relevant manner, while the Native people can expand their knowledge of their heritage. Even traditionalists have lost knowledge of such traditions as ceramic production, which virtually disappeared "overnight" in the 1700s. Although some Native people distrust any knowledge that they have not learned from their community elders, it has been my experience that most have a strong interest in the knowledge provided by the archaeologists. I have also observed that as elders become aware of the archaeologists' knowledge, a significant number wants to learn more about it and incorporate at least some aspects into their teachings.

In developing a dialogue, the archaeologist, whether Native or non-Native, must be prepared to deal with many different groups, to set up a variety of different kinds of opportunities, and to be ready to continually re-initiate efforts. Given that Native groups range from urban elementary classes to Northern community elders, it is necessary to establish many different settings and many different kinds of dialogue. It is necessary to introduce to members of these groups a whole new world of knowledge since there may be little general knowledge of local archaeological heritage. Some will respond enthusiastically, while others will remain skeptical. Since people of any

[2] For a more extensive discussion of such inappropriate terms, see Pettipas (1994).

background tend to want to learn about their heritage from their own people, it is imperative that we create job and training opportunities for Native archaeologists to take on this role.

There are times when it is better to go to community, school, or association groups such as the Manitoba Indian Education Association. At other times, working with political organizations such as the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs is more appropriate, especially since it is the group that is negotiating self-government and has the political and legal focus necessary to address the implementation of policy of leglislation (e.g., the new *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*).

In facilitating dialogue with such a diverse group, more than one approach is required. Tours, ceramic workshops, one-on-one discussions, exhibits, displays and educational materials all provide important opportunities for both sides to learn from each other.This is also true in using the media, whether it is the Aboriginal newspapers or television programs.

The linkages can be formal, as for example the development of the Ad Hoc Advisory Committee of Elders. Most, however, will be less formal. The archaeologist will usually be the one initiating the contacts although once established, one cannot assume that these contacts will continue. A number of factors, such as high staff mobility, and the myriad of issues being addressed make it necessary for the archaeologist to keep returning to the institutions, groups, and individuals to raise the issue of their ancient heritage. As awareness of heritage issues becomes more widely known and incorporated into educational and cultural institutions, the need to keep reinitiating the topic will probably disappear.

The linkages must, of course, be built in an atmosphere of consultation and trust. As Katherine Pettipas (1993: 97) has observed:

> Our goals of transforming the Museum into a more effective public learning and cultural resource centre with reference to Manitoba's First Nations can only be realized if we include those whose cultural heritage we hold in trust, and if we become proactive supporters of the regeneration of the cultural heritage agenda as espoused by those same supporters. Many of the Aboriginal healers in Manitoba believe this is the "Decade of Healing." However, healing is a slow process. A path based upon truth, respect, honesty, humility and an openness of heart and mind are necessary for the healing to occur, not only for the Native community, but also for museums. By empowering others, we empower ourselves. As the elders say, "What goes around comes around."

The opportunities to develop awareness of the ancient archaeological heritage have always proved satisfying and gratifying to me. There is a sense of doing too little, but there have been great changes in the last four years. We do live in interesting times.

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