

BRANDON INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL
BRANDON, MANITOBA
OCTOBER, 1961

Dear Friend:

This is the first in a series of newsletters that will be printed and mailed out from the school to parents of children and all interested friends. Its aim is to be informative and to help create understanding between the native population and our white neighbors and friends. Much of the news and comments will center around the school activities.

I read an Editorial somewhere a number of years ago on an article relative to the Native Indian population and seem to remember a statement that was made and it went something like this, "a heart-sickening shadow is slowly creeping over the horizon covering those of us who work with the Native Indian",.....I can well see the sagging shoulders and dejected attitude of a discouraged worker who perhaps was not able to see too far into the future. I am sure that if this worker saw the progress the Indian is now making, tho seemingly slow, towards finding a qualified status in a fast-moving civilized society, he would once again square his shoulders, look up and take heart. It cannot be denied that we are finding our rightful places, gradually, and it is our duty and need to assist and encourage where we can, those who are following in our footsteps.

As we go into a year of activity which centers around some two hundred young people.....let us be ever mindful of the important responsibility of molding these young lives so that they too might eventually take up their rightful places in a mixed society, thereby hastening and furthering the cause of complete integration.

Sociologists have told us that it takes three complete generations to civilize a people from his native state to a civilization acceptable to the present day standards. We are fast approaching the turning era but it also seems there are regions where it will take five complete generations to make the acceptable change. This is where the present boarding schools with their remodelled administrations, dedicated teachers and school staffs hold a great responsibility in molding our Indian youth. How we teach, nurture and encourage these young folk in their formative years will be the deciding factor in just how soon and how well they will adjust to the required civilized standards in order to be normally and happily situated. Much can be said and written in this direction, but for the time being I will confine my views to this paragraph. However let us not consider or dare to accept the Indian as a lost soul, as I heard expressed on an occasion sometime ago. From a secular and spiritual viewpoint let us never accept that attitude as final but let us raise a challenging arm to claim whatever is humanly good in us.

Your Editor,

Ed. Stonechild.

In order to acquaint you with the personnel I should like to devote this space to printing the names of administrative, teaching and supervisory staff. It is hoped that in our next letter I will devote this space to the children attending our school.

A word of commendation is certainly due this group of people who I personally feel are a dedicated group, well qualified for their positions in that they are able to offer a sympathetic ear, or nurse a bruised knee, display a tender love and yet maintain a firm attitude as the occasion arises. Because of these qualifications a harmonious atmosphere is created thereby benefiting both staff and children alike.

OPERATING STAFF

Mr. Ford Bond.....Principal	Mr. E. Hawke...Ass't to the Principal Christian Education Director and in charge of all integration activities.
Mrs. C.Greaves.....Office Secretary	
Miss E.Hounsome.....Cook in charge	Miss V. Sparvier.....Trainee
Mrs. A.Shields.....Ass't Cook	Miss M. PrinceTrainee
Mrs. M.Dow.....Dining Room matron	

Laundry Personnel

Mrs. I. More
Mrs. A. Morgan

Sewing Room

Mrs. P. McKay

Maintenance

Mr. J. Spence

Engineer

Mr. W.J.Reeves

Mrs. E. Hawke.....Girls Matron
Mrs. W. Lucy.....Boys Matron

Mrs. G.Van-Male.....House-mother
Mrs. K. Rea.....House-mother

Girls Supervisors

Mrs. J. Williamson
Mrs. J. Partridge
Miss L. Dobson

Boys Supervisors

Mr. N. Bird
Mr. T. Berehulka
Mr. E. W. Stonechild

Teaching Staff

Miss J. McGill.....Sr. Teacher
Mrs. J. Spence
Miss M. Morris
Mrs. L. Ames

Integration Counsellors

Mrs. F. Bond
Mrs. D. McFadyen

HONORABLE MENTION

Each month we hope to allow space to include the name of an individual who has given much time and effort to some aspect of the work with no thought of personal gain or reward, but solely for the purpose of giving. This month it gives me much pleasure to introduce MRS. RUTH TESTER as our guest of the month.

Mrs. Ruth Tester is a native of Brandon. Her father was at one time Mayor of the City. She has been associated with the Girl Guide and Brownie movement for many years in Brandon and District and began work with the C.G.I.T. at the Indian Residential School in 1956. Her hobbies are numerous and varied. They include pottery, ceramics and stuffed toys, felt work, aluminum etching and many other kinds of hand-crafts. She has been a Sunday School teacher for many years at Knox United Church. Her main interest at present is with the Indian children. Thank you very kindly Mrs. Tester and may you continue with us for a long time to come. We wish you continued success in all your interests and endeavors.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Ford Bond, Principal of the Residential School, was guest speaker at the following places on dates mentioned:

- Roseland United Church, Friday, October 13th, 1961.
- Regent United Church, Sunday, October 15th, 1961.
- First United Church, Brandon, Sunday, October 22nd, 1961.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

It is a pleasure to submit something from the Christian Education Department and in keeping with all the little children enrolled in this School, I submit this poem.

The world has grown so dark with sin
That God seems far away,
But never comes an evening dusk
When children do not pray.

All day men's greed and hate and fear
Bring heartaches and despair,
But never when the day is through
Small heads are bowed in prayer.

Though tyrant lusts and vain desires
Have torn our faith in parts
As surely as the twilight falls
Prayers rise from little hearts.

So much strange terror haunts the night
And bitterness the day
But all of life can not be wrong,
As long as children pray.

Edgar R.Hawke.

STORY OF THE MONTH

An elderly Indian man was invited for a meal by a prominent business man in a city because it seemed that the Indian man was hungry and out of work. The two went to a Cafe and a meal was ordered and the man attacked his meal quite heartily, whereas the business man just picked at his food. Finally he looked to the Indian man and remarked, "Boy, I sure wish that I had an appetite like yours." The Indian looked up and said, "This is the limit.....First you take our lands, then you shoot all our buffalo.....take everything we had and now you even wish for my appetite."

AROUND THE SCHOOL

A very enjoyable evening was spent on September 23rd in the auditorium when the picture "Northwest Stampede" was shown. September 30th "Great Dan Patch" was shown. Our first Sing-Song was held on Friday, September 29th. A very good start was made with Mr. N. Bird entertaining with his guitar.

Due to a Teacher's Convention and the Thanksgiving holiday the children did not attend school for five days and you can rest assured there was much activity in every direction. I overheard a conversation where the remark was made, "Boy I wish they had more of these teacher's holidays." I don't think that the teachers would agree wholeheartedly.

Bus-ride outings were arranged for all age groups and these were well enjoyed. A number of inter-group ball games were played by the Senior Boys and Girls and my cub reporter tells me that the boys are by far the champions, while the girls tell me the umpire was very "unfair".....frankly I have never saw an unfair umpire.

A sing-song was again held in the auditorium Friday, October 6th, which was well attended. Participation was enthusiastic. We were also privileged to be entertained by two young accordionists, Norman Gamble and Ken Sigartson, who played several solos and duets. Also we had a guest artist, Dave Bilbkaski, who sang and accompanied himself on the guitar. The applause told us how well it was enjoyed. Full chicken dinner was served and enjoyed. Saturday after a day of activity a show entitled "Kyber Pass" was enjoyed by all. Monday, October 9th the senior boys enjoyed two hours of roller skating down town, and in the afternoon the senior girls also enjoyed two hours of roller skating. In spite of a few bruises and bumps everyone was happy. To top off the day the show "Northern Pacific Agent" was shown in the auditorium.

A very special thanks was expressed to Mr. Bond by the children for arranging the fine schedule of activity.

The following is an article that yours truly submitted and had published in a Saskatchewan Periodical and I feel that it bears reprinting here. The opening and closing prayer and proverb were passed down from the original native and the wisdom implied may well apply to us yet. These two extracts were taken from the book entitled "The Gospel of the Red Man" by Ernest Thomas Seton.

An Indian Prayer

"O Great Spirit, this is my prayer; Grant that fear may never enter my heart to be the guide of my feet."

May I add with sincerity that often in answer to prayers for guidance the path that appears before us as the right one seems great with difficulties and obstacles. Yet, if this way opens to us in answer to earnest seeking, we may take courage and follow it without hesitation. The things that seem difficult in the beginning will prove to be blessings and stumbling blocks will become stepping stones. We may feel that more courage than we can possibly muster is required, still we can take heart in the assurance that ALL that we NEED is ours for the asking. As we remain steadfast on the paths on which we seem to be led, we shall soon see that it is right and our faith shall be strengthened. The Power greater than ourselves, or God as we understand Him, will reward us for our steadfastness.

An Indian Proverb "The path of the lazy leads to disgrace."

E. W. STONECHILD

So we have come to the end of the letter for this month and we hope to be around to visit you again about the 15th of November. Since we do not have a cover design for the letter we would appreciate hearing from you, our reader, and invite suggestions. Your comments, opinions and views are welcome. The letter will prove as interesting as the readers who submit to it.

I might add that the opinions and comments are not necessarily the views of the school, but those expressed by the contributor whose name appears under submitted article.

All submissions should be mailed to the Editor, Newsletter, Brandon Indian School, Box 490, Brandon, Manitoba.

Let me hear from you on THE TOPIC: Native Intergration.....so we may best further it.

See you all next month.

Yours truly,

E.W.Stonechild.