

A vibrant field of pink flowers, likely prairie wildflowers, stretches across the foreground and middle ground. In the background, three people are walking away from the camera on a grassy hill under a clear blue sky. The overall scene is bright and natural.

Wîpinâhwasowin: English-Metis & the HBC

*Following the Tracks,
Trails, and Resting Spots
of our Ancestors*

CONTRIBUTORS



Dr. Anna Corrigan Flaminio is Metis from St. Louis and grew up in the city of Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. Her Metis family is buried at Halcro cemetery on the South Saskatchewan River. Anna is the Co-Researcher on this project and serves as an Assistant Professor at Toronto Metropolitan University.



Leah Marie Dorion is a Metis artist, writer, and community based researcher who specializes in Metis fur trade family history. She is the Co-Researcher on this cemetery project. Leah currently lives near Prince Albert, Saskatchewan in the Rural Municipality of 461.



Richard Louis Lafferty is a Metis freelance photographer with roots to the North Saskatchewan River and the McKenzie River in the Northwest Territories. Louis states that, "I enjoyed photo documenting our Metis history on this project." His photos are featured in this publication.



R. Curtis Breaton is a Metis Elder and serves as the Spiritual Advisor for this project. Curtis was president of the St. Louis Metis local for many years. He is a descendant of the Labadie Great Lakes trading family and is originally from Dresden, Ontario.



Wipinâhwasowin Research Project Reference Map hand designed by Leah Marie Dorion



INTRODUCTION by Dr. Anna Corrigan Flaminio

Wipinâhwasowin: English-Metis & the HBC – Following the Tracks, Trails, and Resting Spots of our Ancestors occurred in the summers of 2021-2022. The project centered on visiting Anglican English-Metis cemeteries in the Saskatchewan River Valley, near Prince Albert, Saskatchewan in order to give respect and acknowledgment to the original fur trade families. We visited our Metis ancestors at seven cemeteries between the North Branch and South Branch.

The Research Team consisted Dr. Anna Corrigan Flaminio, and Metis community researcher Leah Marie Dorion. We were assisted by spiritual advisor Curtis Breaton and freelance photographer Louis Lafferty. Our research method incorporated Elders and youth involvement.

This project was supported by Metis women community elders/hosts such as Vivian Maebre, Faye Corrigan Flaminio, Brenda Hryciuk and Laurie Paul who attended the ceremonies at the site locations and accepted gifts of acknowledgment for their assistance.

Our project honoured the visiting method of kiyokewin whereby we travelled to the grave sites of our Metis ancestors and gave offerings and prayers for intergenerational healing. The research was grounded in wipinâhwasowin: making a 'peace offering.' We gave offerings, such as tea, berries, and tobacco. Elder Curtis says, "Our ancestors regularly need to be fed with offerings from us such as food, tea, tobacco, and pipe ceremonies so they can help us learn from them and give us their blessings."

Our goal was to practice sitting on the Earth with our relatives - mâmawapôwin achiôma, ni-wahômâkanak (sitting together here with my relatives) - and to consider Metis-specific ways of "making peace" with the history of the Northwest Saskatchewan River Valley. By visiting each English Metis cemetery site, we recognize historical and present-day Metis women as peacemakers; of doing peacemaking or making peace with/between our Metis ancestors who we pray rest in peace on the banks of the North and South Saskatchewan rivers.



Anna and Leah sitting at the grave of Maria McKay Corrigan

St. Catherine's

ANGLICAN CEMETERY

[Sunday, June 06, 2021]

St. Catherine's Anglican cemetery is located west of the city of Prince Albert, along the North Saskatchewan River, and is a beautiful and peaceful old gathering place that welcomed families from the Red River Settlement such as the Fidler's, Hodgson's, Inkster's, Sanderson's, Sinclair's and Whitford's. The cemetery is located upon a beautiful hill which was a common practice among early Metis church builders.

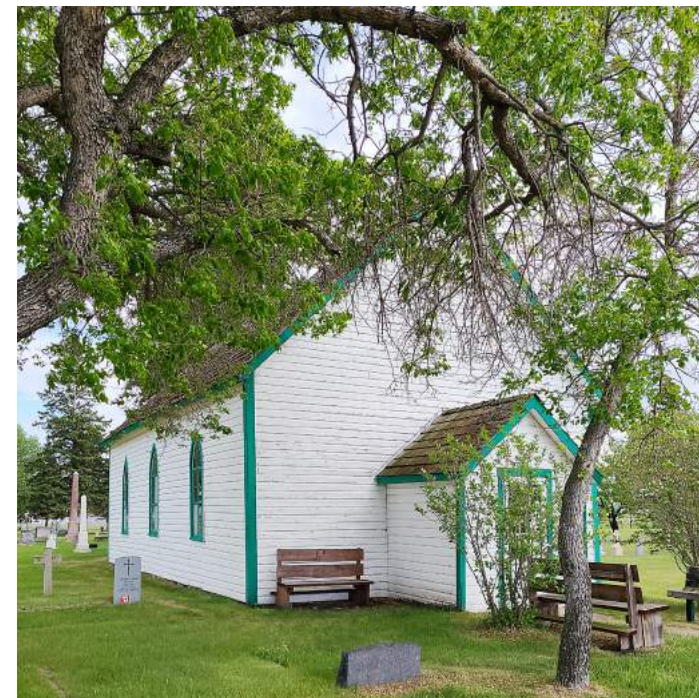


St. Mary's

ANGLICAN CHURCH AND CEMETERY

[Sunday, June 06, 2021]

St. Mary's Anglican cemetery includes respected English-Metis leader James Isbister, friend and supporter of Louis Riel, and also includes many individuals that were part of the 1885 Battle of Duck Lake. The Anglican church at St. Mary's still has beautiful Maple trees and Spruce trees that are common markers at many Metis historic resting places.



St. Andrew's

(HALCRO) ANGLICAN CEMETERY

[Sunday, June 13, 2021]

Maria McKay Corrigan was born in Headingly / St. Francois Xavier in 1867 and was the local midwife in the Halcro and Gerrond districts. Her parents were Catherine McCorrister and Alexander McKay. She married William Thomas Corrigan and they both are buried at the Halcro cemetery near the South Saskatchewan River. The early Metis churches often had bells which were important tools of communication and religious expression. Halcro cemetery still has an original working bell at the entrance.



St. Paul's

ANGLICAN CHURCH / LINDSAY CEMETERY

[Sunday, June 20, 2021]

Lindsay cemetery is a beautiful historical cemetery located southwest of Prince Albert and includes many Metis families who came from the Red River Settlement after 1870 such as the Adam's, Anderson's, Bannerman's, Pocha's, Sinclair's, Smith's and Tate's. Many Anglican churches in the region were originally made by Metis families in the log home style. The Lindsay cemetery currently has a beautiful log cabin on site to commemorate this heritage tradition.



St. John's

ANGLICAN ROYAL CEMETERY

[Sunday, June 27, 2021]

Catherine Kate McBeath, the daughter of Adam McBeath and Mary McKenzie, was born in Kildonan, MB in 1873 and she married Thomas McKay who was once the mayor of Prince Albert. Also Margaret McKay, daughter of Alexander McKay and Catherine McCorrister, was born in 1857 and married John Turner. She passed away in 1928 and herself and her husband are both laid to rest at St. John's Royal cemetery. This cemetery is located beside Red Deer Hill, the original location of the McKay family lodge and their farm. Red Deer Hill is also known as a sacred landmark to First Nations.



Glen Mary

(CHURCH OF THE EPIPHANY) ANGLICAN CEMETERY

[Sunday, July 10, 2021]

Glen Mary cemetery includes many Metis families such as the Umpherville's, Sayese's and McKay's. Mary Swain married Andrew James McKay and many of their children are buried at Glen Mary. The Weldon Ferry makes Glen Mary Church and Horseshoe Bend accessible from Prince Albert. The Old North Branch and South Branch River Ferries are important markers of Metis history in the region as many Metis operated and used the original ferry systems.



St. Cyprian's

WINGARD CEMETERY

[Sunday, July 17, 2021]

Sarah McKay Kennedy was born in Brandon House in 1859 and was the daughter of John "Jerry" McNab Ballenden McKay and Mary McCorrister McKay. Sarah married William Kennedy in Prince Albert in 1874 and they are both laid to rest at Wingard cemetery above the North Saskatchewan River. Wingard cemetery is near Fort Carlton, an original Hudson Bay Company post which was located on the North Branch of the Saskatchewan River system. Many historic English Metis have kinship to this location.



Community Hosts

"Thanks to our grandmothers for your support, care, and love for our project"



Laurie Paul is a Metis educator and member of St. Louis Metis Local. She is a descendant of the Bird and Corrigan families and other English Metis from the HBC system. Every year she helps coordinate the care of the Halcro cemetery.



Brenda Hryciuk is Metis community knowledge keeper who is involved with the Friends of Batoche and the National Historic Park. She is also involved with Gabriel Dumont Institute Culture and Heritage. She is a mother and grandmother and has Metis relatives in the central Saskatchewan.



Faye Corrigan Flaminio is a Metis community advisor who is originally from the Gerrond and Halcro districts on the South Saskatchewan River. She has been involved with the River Women Collective and other cultural support organizations in Prince Albert.



Vivian Maebré (maiden name Pocha) is a Metis Elder who is part of MacDowell Local #83 and is also active in the St. Louis region. She is a recognized Metis Elder with the Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Program in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan.

CONCLUSION by Leah Marie Dorion



Our English Metis history and heritage along the north and south branches of the Saskatchewan River system are in much need of further study. I want to acknowledge Dr. Anna Corrigan Flaminio for her commitment to supporting this project to implement this pre-research project. This research was completed in accordance with many principles and practices gained from spiritual concepts, kinship responsibilities, and cultural teachings. We were able to visit and conduct important traditional protocols at our Metis gathering spaces at Anglican Church cemeteries. This project is special because we followed the trails of our ancestors, we visited the land, our river, travelled the ferry systems, and respectfully visited our historic cemeteries to develop a greater sense of our collective Metis history in our region. Making peace and initiating healing begins with knowing where you came from...



Peace... Perfect... Peace.

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