

INDIGENOUS

A HISTORY AND CONTEMPORARY
OVERVIEW OF FIRST NATIONS
AND MÉTIS LIFE IN THE
MCCAULEY NEIGHBOURHOOD

MCCAULEY

WRITTEN BY
**MARILYN
DUMONT**

EDITED AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY
PAULA E. KIRMAN



Edmonton



INTRODUCTION

“IT’S IMPORTANT FOR PEOPLE TO LEARN ABOUT INDIGENOUS HISTORY IN EDMONTON BECAUSE THEY WERE NOT TAUGHT OUR HISTORY IN SCHOOLS SO THERE IS A VACUUM AND DEARTH OF HISTORY IN EDMONTON . . . PEOPLE NEED TO LEARN ABOUT THE TREATIES THAT WERE SIGNED AND HOW THOSE AGREEMENTS WERE SUPPOSED TO GOVERN RELATIONS BETWEEN FIRST NATIONS AND CANADA PLUS THE SETTLERS WHO CAME TO LIVE ON OUR LANDS. PEOPLE NEED TO KNOW THAT IF NOT FOR OUR CONTRIBUTIONS, CANADA WOULD LOOK MUCH DIFFERENT TODAY AND THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN US WOULD PROBABLY BE FURTHER STRAINED.”

**CHIEF CALVIN BRUNEAU,
PAPASCHASE CREE NATION SOCIETY**

McCauley is a central Edmonton neighbourhood that is bordered in the north by 111 Avenue/ Norwood Boulevard, to the west by 101 Street, and in the south east by the LRT line and the Commonwealth Stadium.

Before discussing the Indigenous history of McCauley, it is important to recognize a general history of Indigenous settlement in the Edmonton area.

Oral history and archeological evidence reveal that Indigenous Peoples lived in the Edmonton area for over 8,000 years and provided significant contributions for the success of the fur trade of the Hudson's Bay and North West Companies. Prior to European explorers and traders visiting the Edmonton area, the territory was inhabited by many Indigenous Peoples including members of the Assiniboine, Blackfoot, Cree, Dene, Iroquois, Salteaux, and Sioux Nations. They lived for generations with unique cultural, governance and economic systems that related to the unique environmental features of the region, not the least of which was the expansive Boreal forest and *kisisk ciwani-s piy* (swift flowing river).

Known by many Indigenous Peoples as Turtle Island, the arrival of Europeans in Canada, brought about the intermarriage of Indigenous Peoples with French, Scottish, and English settlers. "For

three generations, Fort Edmonton was a place where Métis culture would thrive and their religious beliefs, culture and traditions would dominate the Alberta landscape. Today, the Métis settlements that evolved at Fort Edmonton, Lac Ste. Anne, and Ste. Albert are distant reminders of their [The Métis'] central role in the founding of our province."¹

Alberta is home to 45 First Nation communities in Treaties 6, 7, and 8, and eight Métis Settlements. Alberta is the only province with officially recognized Métis Settlements. Edmonton is located in Treaty 6 territory. Treaty 6 was signed on August 23rd, 1876. The Cree name for Edmonton is *Amiskwacîwâskahikan*, which means 'Beaver Hills House'. The nearest Métis Settlements are Buffalo Lake and Kikino. The nearest First Nations within 75 km of Edmonton are Alexander First Nation, Alexis First Nation, Enoch Cree Nation, Louis Bull Tribe, Montana First Nation, Paul First Nation, Saddle Lake Cree Nation, and Samson Cree Nation.

The Papaschase First Nation, while not officially recognized as a First Nation by the federal government, has many descendants throughout Edmonton. Their ancestors lived in what is now the Rosedale Flats and River Valley with a designated reserve that stretched across the North Saskatchewan River and into Mill Woods.

TIMELINE

1844 Lac Ste. Anne renamed by Rev. Jean-Baptiste Thibault of the Oblates (was originally called Wakamne or God's Lake by the Nakota First Nations and Manito Sakhahigan or Spirit Lake by the Cree.)

1847 Rundle Mission established by Robert Terrill Rundle, Wesleyan chaplain with Hudson's Bay Company (HBC).

1862 Victoria Settlement established by Rev. George McDougall

1870 Rupertsland, when transferred to Canada from HBC, is inhabited by many First Nations and Métis.

1876 Treaty 6 is signed at Fort Carlton, Saskatchewan. The Treaty covers sections of Alberta, Saskatchewan, and includes fifty nations. In the Edmonton area, this includes 15 nations of Cree, Nakota Sioux, and Dene Peoples.

1892 Edmonton, its original Cree name being *Amiskwaciwâskahikan* (meaning "Beaver Hills House") is incorporated as a town.

1904 Edmonton becomes a city. Boyle Street and McCauley are two of the city's first neighbourhoods. The McCauley neighbourhood derives its name from Edmonton's first Mayor, Matthew McCauley (1892-94), and was a member of the Home Guard forming to protect settlers during the Riel Resistance in Batoche.

1905 Alberta becomes a province.

Frequently overlooked is the knowledge that this city was first settled and surveyed as river lots and "the vast majority of river lot occupants on both sides of the North Saskatchewan in the 1870s were either Métis on the one hand, or, on the other hand, Presbyterian and Anglophone first-generation immigrants from the Orkney Islands or other areas of Scotland, usually married to Métis women."²

Citations:

1. *Castles to Forts, a true history of Edmonton* by Phillip R. Coutu, Edmonton: Thunderwoman Ethnographics, 2004.
2. *Old Strathcona: Edmonton's Southside Roots* by Tom Monto and Metis Strathcona by Randy Lawrence, Edmonton: Pioneer Press, 2011

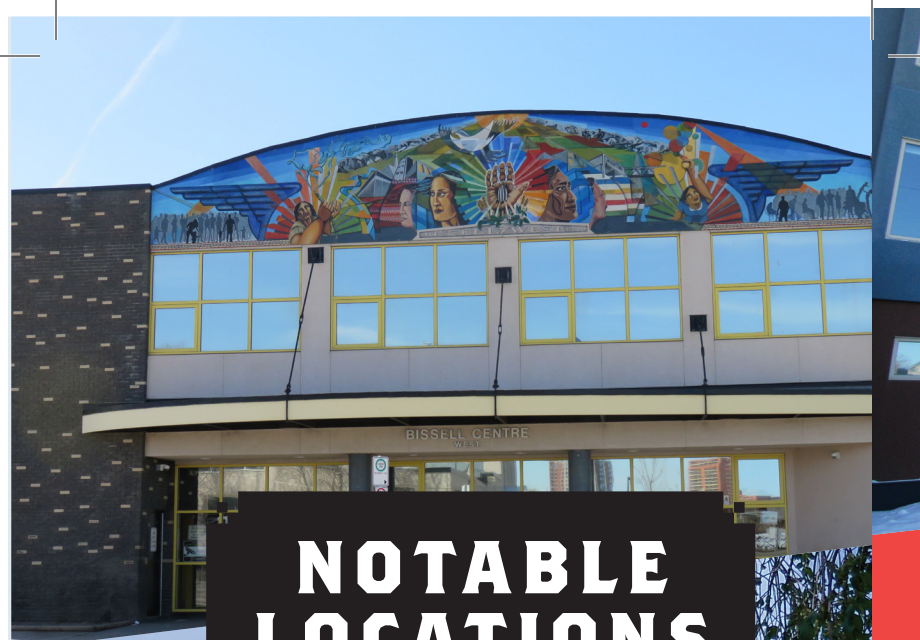


A NAME IS AN ADDRESS

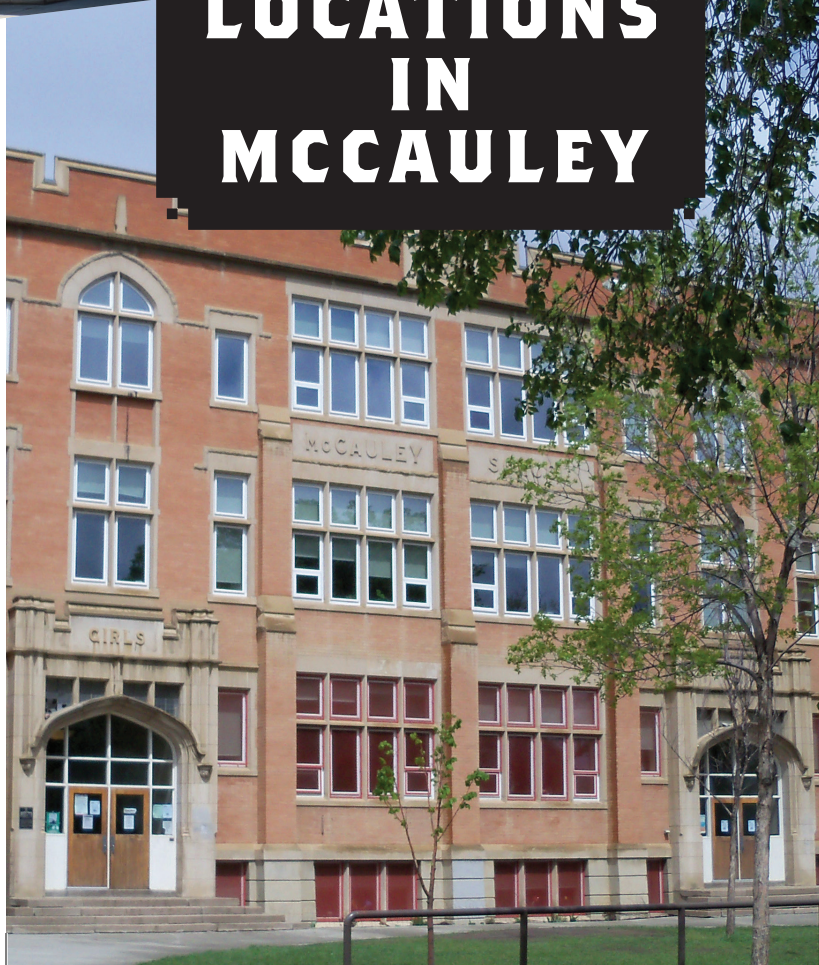
A name can frequently locate an individual in a nation, language group, and family lineage.

The names of First Nations and Métis individuals involved in the fur and pemmican trade are still present in McCauley and other Edmonton neighbourhoods today, a testament to their leadership and contributions in building the communities of which they are a part.

First Nations and Métis names prevalent in the area (there are too many to mention them all): Arcand, Alexis, Belcourt, Belrose, Bird, Brosseau, Bruneau, Buffalo, Cardinal, Cote, Crier, Calihoo, Couteoreille, Courtepatte, Cunningham, Daigneault, Donald, Daniels, Delorme, Desjarlais, Dumont, Flett, Gladue, Houle, Ladouceur, Laderoute, Letendre, L'hirondelle, Lussieur, Morin, Poitras, Sinclair, Steinhauer, St. Germaine, Quinn, Ward. Indigenous peoples with names such as these, and many other names, reside, work, use services, shop, go to restaurants and festivals, and/or attend one of the many churches on Church Street (96 Street between 107 and 111 Avenues).



NOTABLE LOCATIONS IN MCCAULEY





AMBROSE PLACE

9629-106 AVENUE

Generational trauma as a result of Indian Residential Schools and ongoing discrimination in society, have resulted in First Nations and Métis people experiencing high levels of homelessness, poverty, and substance abuse.

Ambrose Place is an example of an initiative that is doing things differently by prioritizing the unique needs of Indigenous peoples including: “Indigenous culturally sensitive staffing, designated ceremonial room in the shape of a teepee, the presence of an elder on-site two and a half days per week, and access to smudging, pipe ceremonies, and other culturally relevant practices.” The brightly painted row of housing on 106 Avenue and 96 Street provides culturally sensitive, affordable housing taking a harm reduction approach for individuals and couples of Indigenous ancestry who experience homelessness, disabilities, and chronic substance abuse.

Niginan Housing Ventures, the organization that built Ambrose Place, is a non-profit company incorporated in 2003 to provide housing and community supports for Indigenous Peoples residing in the Edmonton area. Ambrose Place, initially challenged by some parts of the neighbourhood because of the prevalence of social housing and services in the area, finally opened accepted its first client in November 2014.



AMBROSE DANIELS

Ambrose Place is named after Ambrose Daniels who suffered health issues as an Ironworker, and the resulting unemployment and addictions forced him to live on the street where he died of pneumonia at the age 53. Faye Dewar, once Ambrose's social worker, lobbied upon his death for such a housing facility.

Ambrose, who always had a toothpick in his mouth, was born and raised on the Buffalo Lake Métis

Settlement, 125 km northeast of Edmonton, and is remembered as being mischievous and personable. He became recognized on the street as an Elder who helped others, as evidenced by the Ambrose Daniels Volunteer Award given yearly at Boyle Street Community Services.

"I remember him breaking up fights in the Boyle Street drop-in on multiple occasions," says John Gee, a former employee of Bissell Centre. "He was a tiny, disabled man but when he got in between two big guys who were fighting, they would back off. He was respected by everyone there."

Gee adds, "I also remember that the nurses in Streetworks used to look after his foot which was chronically infected. It used to make them laugh that he talked about 'my blister' when it was actually much worse than that. He showed great determination in dealing with a very difficult life."



CAROLA CUNNINGHAM

"I know that you can never give up on human beings. Everybody has the ability to change if they feel loved."

Carola Cunningham, who has an extensive background in Indigenous program design/management, pre-employment, and life skills, has been the Executive Director of Ambrose Place since it opened in 2014.

She is the daughter of Dr. Chester R. Cunningham CM, LLD - Métis from Slave Lake, Alberta - who was the recipient of the 2000 Alberta Order of Excellence as a humanitarian and educator because he was a tireless Métis leader, teacher, and speaker on/for/about Indigenous Peoples in Alberta, North America, and the world.

Sources:

"Ambrose Place in McCauley gives Edmonton homeless hope." CBC News.ca, Thursday, Feb. 12, 2015. Government of Alberta website: The Alberta Order of Excellence



ATONEMENT HOME

11035-92 STREET

Our Lady of the Atonement Home opened as Catholic boarding school by the Franciscan Sisters in 1928. The 24-bed residence operated as a temporary shelter to boys and girls, ages 3-12, while Alberta Social Services' goals were to return the children to their natural families or suitable foster homes. ¹

Alex Lameman (Cardinal), who resides in Edmonton, lived at the Atonement Home during the 1960s from the ages of two to nine years old, and reflected negatively about this time in his life at Atonement Home (referring to it as a "prison" and stating that it was a worse "hellhole"). Alex and his sisters Lillian, Rose, and Irene were then moved to foster homes upon leaving the Atonement Home. ²

Atonement Home was requested to be added to the list of Indian Residential Schools recognized by the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement. However, because there was no clear federal government involvement with its operations, it was left off the list. ³

Sources:

1. "Children's Shelter to Close," Diana Coulter, *Edmonton Journal*, June 22, 1987.
2. Interview with Alex Lameman.
3. <http://www.residentialschoolsettlement.ca/FULL%20List%20of%20Schools-%20ENGLISH.pdf>



BISSELL CENTRE

10527-96 STREET

The centre had its early beginnings as the All People's Mission in 1910 through the direction of Rev. W.H. Pike, a Methodist minister who wished to provide immigrant services and language training to Ukrainian immigrants.¹

With money donated from the estate of T.E. Bissell in 1936, the service was housed in an old blacksmith's shop at 103A Avenue and 96 Street, and later moved to its new location.

Bissell provides services ranging from childcare, and youth development programs, to women's programs for support and development.

Inner City Pastoral Ministry in an interdenominational Christian outreach service that meets at Bissell Centre and grew in response to the number of Indigenous clients of the Bissell Centre and because of the 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission's final hearings in Edmonton.

STANDING STONES LITURGY (Standing Stones refers to stones used to mark food caches, ceremonial sites etc.) “Is a gathering in which Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples explore God” in a Cree context.²

Lay ministry in this inter-denominational Christian practice incorporate Christian beliefs with Cree spiritual tradition and language with terms such as *oskâpêwis* that loosely means “helper” in Cree. Oskapewis in the Cree tradition undertake a lengthy spiritual mentorship with an elder or medicine person by assisting them with all the ceremonies, acquire teachings and learn to live a life of dedicating oneself to the service of others and the Great Spirit’s teaching. Other Cree spiritual beliefs celebrated through this ministry are recognition of the four elements and sacred directions, smudging and sacred medicines, oral storytelling, and the sharing of bannock and berries.

OSKAPEWIS FOR STANDING STONES

MICHELLE NIEVIADOMY

is Cree from the Kawacatoose First Nation in Saskatchewan.³



SHARON PASULA

with the Anglican Church of Canada, was born in Edmonton and raised in McCauley. Her parents were Archie Letendre and Carolyn Belcourt from Lac.Ste. Anne.⁴

Sources:

1. “80 years as an oasis in inner-city desert” Florence Loyie, *Edmonton Journal*
2. Anglican Diocese of Edmonton Indigenous Ministry pamphlet.
3. <http://dojustice.crcna.org/author/michelle-nieviodomy>
4. Interview with Sharon Pasula



BOYLE MCCAULEY HEALTH CENTRE

10628 96 STREET

A non-profit community health centre, the BMHC was established in 1979 to offer medical and dental services to inner city clients, many of whom are vulnerable and may have trouble accessing medical attention. This includes a large number of clients of Indigenous descent.

MIYOWAYAWIN

This clinic is the partnership of the Edmonton Native Healing Centre and the Boyle McCauley Health Centre. It opened March 11, 2016 in the Inglewood area. Offering a variety of medical services, it is a positive initiative helping to fill gaps that have been left in service to First Nations and Métis people.

CENTRE FOR RACE AND CULTURE (CRC)

9538-107 AVENUE (MCCAULEY SCHOOL)

In 1993, the Centre for Race and Culture grew out of the Northern Alberta Alliance on Race Relations as an expanded service which seeks to advance intercultural understanding and tolerance on the individual, collective, and systemic levels in the community through research, community building, workplace development, and education. The Centre for Race and Culture provides consulting services and collaborates with clients in research, course design and development, and training.

REUBEN QUINN



Cree language instruction has been offered through the CRC for the past four years under the guidance of Reuben Quinn, originally from Saddle Lake First Nations – son of Maurice Quinn and Elizabeth Houle. Reuben's father's side extends back to Papastayo. In 1877, Chief Papaschase and his people signed Treaty 6 for land in the southeast part of Edmonton,

which was eventually absorbed by the City of Edmonton. Many proud Papaschase descendants currently reside in Edmonton, although the band is not yet officially recognized by the federal government. A step towards recognition occurred in May of 2014 through a swearing-in ceremony for Chief Calvin Bruneau and council by the City of Edmonton. The City of Edmonton was present at the swearing-in ceremony for Chief Calvin Bruneau and council, and presented funding support for a research project to the Papaschase Cree Nation Society.

Mr. Quinn teaches through the *Nehiyaw* (Cree) *cahkipenhikanak* (syllabics) method referred to as Spirit Markers (Star Chart) which he learned from Rosanna Houle of Saddle Lake and Carolyn Hunter of Goodfish Lake.

Sources: www.cfrac.com

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Papaschase>



GARDEN OF TRUTH

9652 – 108A AVENUE

The Garden of Truth is a community garden to “honour and commemorate” Indigenous history in Edmonton and in response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s investigation into Indian Residential Schools. The garden, situated on the site of a previous gas station, will be tended by residents of the nearby Excel Society and is made possible by the City of Edmonton’s Alternative Brownfield Grant, targeting parcels of land with petrochemical contamination.

This green space will be designed in consultation with an Indigenous Elder who was yet to be named at the time of this publication.

Source:

“‘Garden of Truth’ to end blight of old gas station in Edmonton neighbourhood,” Elise Stolte, *Edmonton Journal*. January 17, 2016.



GIOVANNI CABOTO PARK

95 STREET AND 109 AVENUE

Located on 95 Street (formerly Syndicate Avenue) and 108 Avenue, this park used to be called Patricia Park, named after veterans of the Princess Patricia's Light Infantry. It was also referred to as Gyro Park because of the 1921 Gyro Clubs playground movement.¹

Then in 1975, Alfonso Iafolla made the first request for the park to be changed to Giovanni Caboto Park, and in 1981 members of the Giovanni Caboto Cultural Society living in the area successfully had the name changed.²

Giovanni Caboto was a colonial explorer credited with discovering North America. This interpretation of history does not account for the pre-contact inhabitation of North America by Indigenous peoples. However today, the park is a neighbourhood hub and plays host to numerous Indigenous community events.

Caboto Park hosts many gatherings and festivals throughout the year. Some of the many events that held in the park are Heart of the City Music and Arts Festival and the Edmonton and District Labour Council Labour Day BBQ. Although there are no specifically Indigenous-led festivals held in Caboto Park at the time of this publication, Heart of the City often features First Nations artists, including drumming groups. There have also been a number of one-time events, such as ones presented by Wicihitowin and celebrations of Aboriginal History Month organized by a variety of community groups.

Sources:

¹ <https://www.fortedmontonpark.ca/1920-street/the-playground-movement-edmontons-gyro-playgrounds>

² "The Name Game: Take your pick, Italian, Ukrainian, Cree, Canadian..." Reg Silvester, Edmonton Bullet, September 1981.

KINISTINO AVENUE

96 STREET BETWEEN 107 AND 111 AVENUES

Known today as Church Street, it was originally call Kinistino Avenue until 1913. Kinistino is a word believed to possibly be Cree in origin, but whose meaning is debated. According to Gary Garrison and Sara Coumantarakis in *McCauley Then and Now: A Walk Through One of Edmonton's First Neighbourhoods* (City of Edmonton/McCauley Revitalization, 2013):¹

In Ancient Land Ancient Sky: The True Story of the Discovery of Canada, Peter McFarlane and Wayne Haimila say that the first Europeans to enter the interior of North America "mangled and often mispronounced some difficult names, often beyond recognition.

The best example of this was the Kenistenaag people living around James Bay. The French first mispronounced their name as Kristinaux and then shortened the misnomer to Cris, which the English then rendered as Cree."

Then there's Chief Kinistin, the first leader of the Kinistin Saulteaux Nation in Saskatchewan. According to a Government of Saskatchewan website, the name Kinistin means "Cree" in the Saulteaux language "and was given to Kinistin because of his ability to speak the Cree language." There's also a Kinistino, Saskatchewan, near Melfort, where Herb Jamieson (#62) once served as a minister. There's even a suggestion that the "o" at the end of the name was due to a clerical error somewhere along the line!

According to David Pentland of the University of Manitoba, Kinistin w was the name of a Cree sub-group, and the word could mean "person from the fast-winds place." He suggests that it "was borrowed by Ojibwa speakers in the form ginishtinoo," and in Old Ojibwa it was "kirishtinoo", which "was borrowed by the French and later shortened to Cris" and became the source of the English "Cree."

Another explanation is that kinistinaw means "we are three" in Cree, which could be a reference to the Trinity and the Christian churches on this street. The evidence all points to Kinistino Ave. being named after the Cree people in some way. It's impossible to know what those who named the avenue were thinking at the time.



NAMAYO AVENUE

**THE PORTION OF CHINATOWN THAT RUNS THROUGH
MCCAULEY IS 97 STREET
BETWEEN 105 AND 107 AVENUES**

The original name for 97 Street is Namayo Avenue. Namayo is the Cree word for “sturgeon.” 97 Street is the road to the town of Namao.¹

Sources:

1. *McCauley Then and Now: A Walk Through One of Edmonton's First Neighbourhoods*. Gary Garrison and Sara Coumantarakis, City of Edmonton/McCauley Revitalization, 2013.

NATIVE PASTORAL CENTRE

The Native Pastoral Centre was not actually in McCauley. It was located at 109 Street and 105 Avenue, near the old Rathole. However, before Sacred Heart Church of the First Peoples, Indigenous Peoples in Edmonton (for whom it was illegal to practice their traditional spirituality until 1951) congregated at the Native Pastoral Centre.

In 1980, Lucienne Cote Meek was the first director of the Native Pastoral Centre and part of a group of individuals including “Connie Morin, Eva Ladoceur, Dan Shank, Yvonne Shank, Florence Krogel, Lillian McCulla, Freda Turcotte, and Christina Daniels.”¹

In 1984, the Pastoral Centre rented the warehouse at 109 Street and 105 Avenue, which was owned by The Brick. One of the group’s concerns was baptism; therefore, monthly masses were arranged at the Sacred Heart School Gymnasium by Father Gauthier. The efforts of the individuals that formed the Native Pastoral Centre eventually led to the designation of the Sacred Heart Church of the First Peoples.

LUCIENNE COTE MEEK Lucienne (1940-1998) moved with her husband William Meek to Edmonton in 1977 from Anishnabe territory in Tenagami, Ontario. She studied theology at Newman Theology College in Edmonton following in the footsteps of her grandfather, Alex Paul, who taught her about the Indigenous and Christian beliefs, and who performed at wakes, funerals and baptisms in the community of Tenagami. Before she became the executive director



of the Native Pastoral Centre, she was a nursing assistant at the Royal Alexander Hospital for nine years and she worked at the Boyle Street McCauley Health Centre and at the George Spady Detox Centre.²

Sources: 1. “Native Pastoral Centre finds a home at Sacred Heart,” *Boyle McCauley News*, Vol.5, No 8, Oct/Nov, 1991.

2. “Christianity and Indian spirituality coming together,” *Windspeaker*. Vol.8. Issue: 2, 1990, pg. 16.



SACRED HEART CHURCH OF THE FIRST PEOPLES

10821-96 STREET

“In the native community, faith runs as deep as the pain of life.” ¹

Of Gothic design, the Sacred Heart Church, with its two towers (the tallest at 130 feet), celebrated its first mass with Rev. M. Pilon on Christmas Day, 1913. In 1966, the church was damaged by fire, while renovations in 1967 altered the church to its present condition.²

In the 90s, church attendance had dropped and decisions from the Archdiocese to staff the church with Oblate priests to work with the inner city Indigenous population bolstered attendance, and for some time the church was shared.³

Sacred Heart Parish was designated a Native Catholic centre in 1991 which then became “the country’s first Catholic church outside a reserve (or Métis settlement) to be designated a native parish - the Sacred Heart Church of the First Peoples - in October 1995.”⁴ This designation ended more than 10 years of Indigenous Peoples in Edmonton meeting in school classrooms and makeshift places of worship.

The service incorporates local Indigenous languages of Cree, Nakoda, Dene, and Chipewyan in the prayers and hymns; Indigenous symbols of the sacred circle which designates all in the circle as equals; the medicine wheel and four directions as a guide for living a balanced life; the eagle as a symbol of vision, strength and courage; and the eagle feather as a symbol of stability and balance. Additionally, the four medicines like sweet grass, sage, cedar, and fungus are used as incense, and cultural items like the pipe is honoured and the drum is used to invoke the ancestors. The Stations of the Cross that adorn the walls of the church were painted by Sheldon Meek, and in the additional church murals he was joined by artist Barbara Marquis.⁵

EVA LADOCEUR

Elder Eva Ladoceur is now 94 years of age and resides in bordering Boyle Street neighbourhood in Renaissance Place for Métis residents. She was born to Louisa and Modeste Ladoceur, a trapping and fishing family from Fort Chipewyan, Alberta. She was married and had five children, and worked as a housekeeper for Governors Generals Frank Lynch Staunton (1979-85) and Ralph Steinhauer (1974-79). She remembers moving to Edmonton when she was 22 years old.

Eva says the opening prayer every Sunday at the Sacred Heart Church of the First Peoples, and was the Cree hymns choir instructor prior to this, a position she held for 21 years at Lac. Ste Anne Pilgrimage, as well as at the Native Pastoral Centre.

Eva was also one of the first people to translate the Canadian anthem from English to Cree in 1979.

Sources:

1. “Faith runs deep in Father Jim’s inner-city parish,” Don Retson, *Edmonton Journal*.
2. “A Brief History of Sacred Heart Parish” *Edmonton City Archives*.
3. “Cree hymns and sweet grass,” Heather Hill, *Edmonton Journal*, April 7, 1996.
4. *Ibid*
5. *Ibid*



SACRED HEART SCHOOL

9624 108 AVENUE

In 1907, the Catholic Mutual Benefit Association building housed the beginnings of the Sacred Heart School. Its first permanent structure was built in 1908 when the enrollment was 200 students. Throughout the years, as the student population grew, so too did the additions to the school until 1913 when it boasted twelve classrooms. By 1917, St. Josephat's school operated by the Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate joined the Sacred Heart. A new Sacred Heart School was built in 1962 and the Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate taught at the school until 1971.

The school closed operations in 2003 and now houses the Department of Learning Services - Enhancement along with Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) – The Sacred Heart Foundations Program which offers language and literacy to Canadian newcomers.

Source:

"Sacred Heart School," Edmonton Catholic School District Archives, 10425-84 Avenue, Edmonton.



SOCIAL JUSTICE

INDIGENOUS MCCAULEY: A HISTORY AND CONTEMPORARY OVERVIEW OF FIRST NATIONS AND MÉTIS LIFE IN THE MCCAULEY NEIGHBOURHOOD

McCauley has had a long history of social justice. This may be because of the number of churches in the neighbourhood and / or because it situated in the heart of the city and steps away from the railway station. Edmonton's Canadian Native Friendship Centre also used to be located in Norwood, near McCauley. Friendship Centres were a first in Alberta, established in 1960 to help serve the needs of First Nations peoples moving from rural areas to urban centres.

Immigration Hall 10534-100 Street (1930 Alberta Heritage site) also welcomed and offered services to immigrants to the city. The Immigration Hall was taken over by Hope Mission whose early food program evolved into programs offering addictions/ abuse counseling, women's programs and shelters. This impulse for social justice was taken up by settled immigrants such as Frank and Rina Spinelli and other community members. Today, the neighbourhood sometimes hosts marches by anti-poverty, and anti-racism groups. Most recently, McCauley has been a neighbourhood which held marches organized around Idle No More and Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women. The annual Memorial March for Missing and Murdered Women in Edmonton is held every year on February 14, starting and finishing at Sacred Heart Church. The final hearings of the 2014 Truth and Reconciliation Commission, at the Shaw Conference Centre, is a location near McCauley.

In recent years, the Ben Calf Robe Annual Traditional Pow Wow has taken place in the Commonwealth Recreation Centre, which is located in McCauley. Chief Ben Calf Robe was a Blackfoot Elder and a residential school survivor. He spent his life advocating for his people's right to an education.



THE FUTURE

With the advent of the Arena District to the west and the Quarters directly to the south of McCauley, there is a lot of redevelopment currently taking place in and around the area. There are new signs around Boyle Street indicating the original street names, and the Métis Capital Housing Corporation now operates Renaissance Tower on 105 Avenue and 95 Street, which provides affordable housing for seniors. With the forthcoming Garden of Truth, possibly future events held in and around the area, and the continued popularity of Sacred Heart Church, the future of Indigenous life in McCauley looks like it will continue to be a vibrant part of the neighbourhood's multicultural and diverse make up.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



MARILYN DUMONT is a writer and teacher whose family were members of the Kikino Métis Settlement. Her family is related to Gabriel Dumont, Louis Riel's general, through Senior Gabriel Dumont whom Louis Riel's general is named after. Senior Gabriel Dumont was captain of the hunt at Lac Ste Anne and later a leader of the Laboucane Settlement at Duhamel, Alberta, now disbanded.

Marilyn has published four collections of poetry, three of which have won awards, and she has been the Writer-in-Residence at four Canadian universities and at the Edmonton Public Library. She has been faculty at the Banff Centre, leading Writing with Style and Wired Writing workshops, and advising and mentoring in the Indigenous Emerging Writers' Program.

COVER IMAGE DAKOTA WARD DANCING
IN GIOVANNI CABOTO PARK IN JUNE OF 2011

