

Association des Acadiens-Métis

Souriquois Newsletter

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Words of Wisdom

Two Wolves

One evening an old Cherokee told his grandson about a battle that goes on inside people. He said, "My son, the battle is between two 'wolves' inside us all."

One is Evil. It is anger, envy, jealousy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority, and ego.

The other is Good. It is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion and faith.

The grandson thought about it for a minute and then asked his grandfather: "Which wolf wins?"

The old Cherokee simply replied, "The one you feed."

AAMS President's Report (Winter 2011)

by Paul Tufts

The purpose of this report is to provide an update of the association business for the AAMS membership. For those members who wish to review past reports, they can be found in the past AAMS newsletters that are posted on the AAMS website at: <http://acadiens-metis-souriquois.ca>. The business and activities of AAMS are the responsibility of a Board of 14 Directors (Deputies). Since the last newsletter, AAMS business was conducted at five directors' meetings, three special meetings and one annual general meeting.

Membership: At the beginning of January, 2011, the membership list numbered 320. It is interesting to note that a significant portion of the membership applications are received from Acadian-Métis who live outside of the local communities. The AAMS policy, relating to annual membership dues, is that a notice of dues payable will be mailed, in January of each year (or shortly after), to each member whose AAMS membership is **older than six months**. Last year, notices were mailed to 156 members and unfortunately 38 members did not respond. This year's notices will be mailed to 272 members, with the remainder not having to renew until 2012. AAMS has taken an association membership with the Clare Acadian Society (Société acadienne de Clare).

Finances: At the time of writing this report, the AAMS bank statement was at \$ 6,188.58. Please keep in mind that membership dues are the only source of funding for the operations of AAMS. Your directors (deputies) have to work without remuneration so that AAMS can function. Therefore members should show support by paying their dues. Of course, extra donations are always welcome.

Communications: The AAMS website is regularly updated at: <http://acadiens-metis-souriquois.ca> . Information has been provided via newsletter, an annual general meeting, a public information meeting about “medicinal plants”, boy scouts and school visits, and via press, radio and TV interviews/presentations. E-mail communications are always significant.

Events and Activities: AAMS pursued its objectives by involvements in Nova Scotia activities associated with Aboriginal Day (Quinan, Pubnico and Church Point), Canada Day (Wedgeport), Equinox (Church Point), Mi'kmaq/Acadian Festival (LaHave), Keji Mi'kmaw Gathering (Caledonia), Membertou 400 (Port Royal and Halifax), National Seniors Council Roundtable Consultation (Halifax), Buy Back Nova Scotia Coalition (Yarmouth), Deportation Commemoration Day (Grand Pré), National Acadian Day (Grand Pré), and the Acadian Festival (Clare). Acadian Festival activities for AAMS included a bazaar booth to distribute promotional cards, a Métis float that won the parade's “Overall Grand Prize”, reenactments of the Order of Good Cheer and of Membertou's Baptism, and participation in the Tintamarre. Many of these involvements have promotional value for AAMS.

Community Issues and Rights: The New Brunswick court came to a negative decision on December 17, 2010, in relation to the Jackie Vautour case for the recognition of his “Métis Community Rights”. The court found that the defendants had failed to establish the existence of a historic Métis community. A Nova Scotia court decision in the Jean-Paul Babin case will also be announced soon. In the Spring of 2010, AAMS assisted in a significant Doctorate Degree study that was carried out in the Acadian communities of Digby and Yarmouth Counties to establish that these communities are “culturally Métis”, both presently and historically. Also, reports indicate that legal action will be taken against the Crown and the Federal Government, as an accusation of “genocide” by Chief Stephen Augustine, by the N.B. Métis Peoples, and by the Vautours via the lawyers “Elders without Borders”. Part of this legal action will involve “recognition” of the Acadian Métis and the government's failure to do so. Also on November 12, 2010, the government of Canada finally endorsed the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, thus providing hope for a better relationship between the federal government and Canada's Indian, Métis and Inuit peoples.

Acadian-Métis Identity and Pride: Two special director's meetings were held to determine how AAMS members could identify themselves at public Métis events, in a manner to show pride in a heritage that includes both Acadian and Native ancestry. How could both be shown without losing the Acadian identity and while avoiding the label of “Want-to-be Indians”. It was decided that the preferred dress code for this dual identity should be the Acadian costume (vest) with a Métis sash. However, since individual preferences must be respected, it is also acceptable for some to wear the Métis sash alone or with more Native apparel, thus representing our mixed identity. During ceremonies it was decided that both Acadian and Mi'kmaw songs would be sung at the beat of the drum. The song “Coureur de Bois” by Philip and Wendell d'Eon was accepted as the AAMS theme song. AAMS has also designed a logo to represent this Acadian-Métis mixed heritage. The significance of this logo can be viewed on the AAMS website. This logo is now displayed on AAMS accessories (caps, T-shirts, license plates, embroidery, etc.) that can mostly be purchased at Acadian-Métis events.

Métis Humour

Vegetarian – Métis name for a bad hunter

Métis Recipe

Submitted by Michael Deveau

Beaver Roast

1 beaver, well dressed and cleaned
3 - 4 large onions, quartered
Rosemary, thyme, sage, parsley, salt, pepper to taste
2 – 3 cups of chicken **or** pork broth **or** water

several strips of salt pork or bacon
4 – 5 cloves garlic
chilli peppers – a sprinkle
aluminum foil

Use well dressed, well cleaned whole beaver. Rinse well. Put in roaster and lay strips of salt pork or bacon on top, adding spices and broth or water. Add a little more liquid if needed.

NOTE: Seal roaster with aluminum foil **before** covering with roaster lid, and do **not** open cover or remove foil while baking.

Start at 400 degrees F for 30 mins., then decrease heat to 325 degrees F for 3 – 4 hours (depending on size), or until tender.

Options: Make gravy with drippings as you would with any roast, or try making your favourite turkey or chicken stuffing to go with it as a side dish. Very Tasty!!

AAMS Cultural Identity

In the spring of 2010, a three week study was carried out in various French Nova Scotia Acadian communities in Digby and Yarmouth Counties. This ethnographic study was undertaken by M. Emmanuel Michaux for his Doctorate Degree in Anthropology from Laval University, Quebec, Canada. He was attracted to research the Acadians of Southwestern Nova Scotia, since a great number of local people identified themselves as Métis and French on their Canadian Census Forms.

His thesis involves a comparative analysis of the French Métis cultures across Canada, and specifically how these cultures of a minority population have continued and survived despite dominant assimilating pressures from English Canada. The ultimate objective of this study of our cultural practises is to prove the existence of an Acadian population that is “culturally” Métis, with a Métis lifestyle. M. Michaux indicates that the Court Judges, who generally focus on cultural history to establish Métis Identity, are more just than the Governments that seek genealogical proof.

M. Michaux was able to conduct his study in Southwest Nova Scotia thanks to the volunteered assistance of the AAMS Directors who provided housing, transportation, time and money. M. Michaux was able to visit a total of 50 Acadian villages in Digby and Yarmouth Counties, where he was introduced to the appropriate people in order to conduct interviews, and to observe and experience most of our cultural practises. He was focused on our industries, occupations, activities, crafts, customs, traditions, foods, music, language, religion, history, art, and education, and how they compared to his findings of Métis culture elsewhere in Canada. He hinted that the conclusions of his study should indicate that the French Acadian communities of SW Nova Scotia are indeed “culturally Métis”, a factor that will be useful in our fight for Métis recognition.

We Get Letters

Many letters have been received from our members, and we would like to share a few with you from time to time. We welcome all comments and opinions, so please feel free to contribute.

From Member #0145

Some people are able to trace their family ties through a straight line back for many generations. I am not one of those fortunate ones.

After years of research I've found branches from Bavaria (now part of Germany) to England, France, Spain and North Africa and into North America.

My original intention was to find out where I came from and I was lucky enough to do most of it.

Being allergic to many wild meats, I no longer hunt and have no reason to hunt or trap. Too old to go to University and no off-spring in need of education or other help.

I joined AAMS in order to re-connect with my roots, and to be able to give back a bit to my community.

AAMS Grand Prize Winning Float – 2010



Many people helped raise the profile of our Association by participating in the design, building, and manning of our Grand Prize winning float in the Clare Days Parade. We also won the award for Best Organization Float! A very big thank you goes out to all our creative and industrious volunteers! If you would like to participate in this year's parade.....don't be shy! We will be looking for volunteers again!

Mi'Kmaw Heritage

Talking Circle: AAMS Deputies' meetings are held in the form of a traditional talking circle. All Deputies present at the meeting sit in a circle. The leader (Chairperson) introduces the subject under discussion and then a feather is circulated in a clockwise direction to anyone who wishes to speak. Only the Deputy holding the feather is allowed to talk, and all other deputies show their respect and wait their turn. The feather is passed around until the leader decides that the subject has been adequately discussed and all Deputies have been given the chance to express his/her opinion. The circle is only broken if there is a 'time out' agreed upon by all Deputies.