

# **HANSARD**

**NOVA SCOTIA HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY**

**COMMITTEE**

**ON**

**VETERANS AFFAIRS**

**Thursday, January 10, 2013**

**Committee Room 1**

**Glooscap Heritage Centre and Mi'kmaw Museum**

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**VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

Gary Burrill (Chair)  
Jim Boudreau (Vice-Chair)  
Michele Raymond  
Howard Epstein  
Lenore Zann  
Hon. Wayne Gaudet  
Harold Theriault  
Alfie MacLeod  
Chuck Porter

[Jim Boudreau was replaced by Mat Whynott.]  
[Hon. Wayne Gaudet was replaced by Zach Churchill.]  
[Chuck Porter was replaced by Eddie Orrell.]

In Attendance:

Kim Langille  
Legislative Committee Clerk

WITNESS

Glooscap Heritage Centre and Mi'kmaw Museum

Gordon Pictou,  
Senior Heritage Interpreter and Program Manager



House of Assembly  
*Nova Scotia*

**HALIFAX, THURSDAY, JANUARY 10, 2013**

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS**

**9:00 A.M.**

CHAIR

Gary Burrill

VICE-CHAIR

Jim Boudreau

THE CHAIR: Let's think about calling our meeting to order. Our guest this morning had indicated to the committee clerk that they might not be here right at 9:00 a.m. and we do have some other things to attend to. I guess it's for the purpose of recording that we identify ourselves, so let's do that first.

[The committee members introduced themselves.]

THE CHAIR: Thanks. I wonder if maybe we could have a look at the correspondence we have in front of us, while we are waiting for our presenter. There are four things on this pile.

The first of them is this letter from Jacques Dufort, received here on December 13<sup>th</sup>, just acknowledging receipt of our letter that had gone on a motion from Mr. MacLeod, after the last letter, about the VAC cutbacks in Cape Breton. There isn't anything we can do with this other than receive it for information, is there? Is it agreed to do that?

It is agreed. Thanks.

Secondly, this letter from Frank Sullivan of January 3<sup>rd</sup>, we had at our last meeting followed up on criticisms that he had made and written to us about changes in the VIP program and the way it is administered. He is just writing to thank us for that intervention and to give a little bit more information. I wonder if it would be kind of a nice courtesy if we would ask Kim to just write, appreciating that he had given us this further information and let him know that if we came into receipt of anything further about the VIP changes that might be helpful, that we would write him. Would that seem reasonable?

ALFIE MACLEOD: So moved.

THE CHAIR: The motion is by Mr. MacLeod. Is there any discussion on it?

Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

The third thing, this from VAC, January 4<sup>th</sup>, this is acknowledging receipt of the letter that we sent after the last meeting, in response to the first letter that had come from Frank Sullivan. This is just an acknowledgement. There's nothing we can do but receive this for information, is there? Is it agreed?

It is agreed. Thanks.

The fourth thing in the pile has not been circulated ahead of time because it was just received here in the office yesterday, so you might want to take a second look at it. This is about the institutional diet controversy that has been ongoing lately. This is particularly about Pictou County. Let me take a second to have a look at this.

Mr. Churchill.

ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Chairman, we received a copy of this as well at our caucus. I've had a chance to look at this before. I think the allegations in this letter seem to be pretty serious, especially where it impacts potentially the health, well-being and happiness of veterans in a hospital designed to take care of their needs. I was pretty shocked when I saw this. We're also concerned in Yarmouth that we could lose our vets hospital, that's an issue for another day.

Whereas the seriousness of the issues that are outlined here, I'd like to make a motion that the committee request to have the CEO of the Pictou County Health Authority come and present to the committee on this and answer questions, and also the families of the veterans who are in that facility and veteran advocates as well.

HAROLD THERIAULT: I'd like to second that motion.

THE CHAIR: Is there any discussion on this motion by the Liberal caucus? Mr. Whynott.

MAT WHYNOTT: I have a question, Mr. Chairman, around the timing. I see the agenda there has been set for a little bit anyway, until March, so any time after that?

ZACH CHURCHILL: I would suggest, because of the seriousness of the issue, that we try to get those folks in here as soon as possible - perhaps the next meeting.

THE CHAIR: Mr. MacLeod.

ALFIE MACLEOD: I was just going to suggest the same thing that the member for Yarmouth suggested. I think that this is a very important issue and it's something that we should try to move forward as quickly as possible because we're dealing with the health of the veterans. I don't think there is a more important thing that we could be doing.

THE CHAIR: Ms. Zann.

LENORE ZANN: I have a question. Because it is so serious, is there no way that we can first of all send a letter to the county - whoever is in charge there - telling them of our grave concerns, that we've received this letter, and that, I believe, as one, we feel the same way - this is a serious issue and wondering if something can be done and, perhaps, even follow that up with a phone call. Is that possible? I'd rather see this move ahead quickly myself, rather than have to drag it out. Do we have the power of somebody making a phone call on everybody's behalf?

ALFIE MACLEOD: Where it appears that we all feel the same type of urgency, would it not be possible maybe to have a special meeting? We ask you as the chairman to contact them and see what would be a reasonable, early, possible date that they could come and we could come and have a special meeting to deal with this. Again, I think that when you're dealing with the health of a veteran, I don't think that their calendar or clock should be part of the factor as we move forward.

THE CHAIR: Would that be agreeable to the mover and seconder?

It is agreed.

So the suggestion is that we ask the parties named in the motion to come and address this issue at a special meeting of the committee as soon as can be reasonably arranged. Is there further discussion on this motion?

LENORE ZANN: Yes, also I think a letter as well - a letter saying our concerns.

THE CHAIR: Would it be agreeable to the mover and seconder that we include that in the intent of the motion, that a letter be addressed as well? You're speaking about a letter to the health authority?

LENORE ZANN: Yes.

ZACH CHURCHILL: I suggest we do one letter that outlines the issue and then request them to come and present here. I also think we should - as I mentioned in the motion - reach out to the families of these veterans as well somehow, or a veteran advocate from the area or both.

THE CHAIR: So the suggestion, Ms. Zann, is that this idea of a letter would maybe best be dealt with by including that in the letter of invitation to appear. Is that suitable to you?

LENORE ZANN: That's fine.

THE CHAIR: Any further discussion about this motion? Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

It is agreed. That is the decision of the committee. Thank you.

Moving to the next regularly scheduled matter of the committee - that is the tour on February 14<sup>th</sup> of the HMCS Sackville. There are a couple of logistical things about this I wanted to mention. One is that the people who will be organizing the tour - the exact details of which the clerk will be circulating to us - would like us to know that the way they would like to approach it would be to have a tour, which on site they would then follow with a presentation to us. They wanted to see that we were square with that ahead of time. Does that seem like a good way of doing it to everybody? It seems a good suggestion.

They also wanted to know - thinking about people's time - what we would think about receiving an invitation to lunch there with them at the end of that presentation? We would need to tell them whether we were going to do that or not. What do we think about that?

HAROLD THERIAULT: Sure, I'm all for a free lunch. (Laughter)

THE CHAIR: If this should be in the mid-morning it always leaves open the possibility the person could go on a four-meal day. (Laughter) Do we want to accept this invitation then? Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

Are there other administrative things that we need to think about? Ms. Langille has just pointed out that the meeting after that regularly scheduled February 14<sup>th</sup> meeting, we have a date for March 7<sup>th</sup> which isn't going to work in order to accommodate an out-of-town PC caucus meeting. One thing about that is we don't really have the option of moving to the following week because the committees don't usually meet on that March break. What do we think about moving to the previous week which would be Thursday, February 28<sup>th</sup>?

MICHELE RAYMOND: Who's the witness?

KIM LANGILLE: Dennis Manuge.

THE CHAIR: We don't know that the presenter would be able to do this on that date, we may have to jig and poke a little according to the new date. My proposal is that we move that meeting to February 28<sup>th</sup>? Does anyone have any thoughts about this? Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

Are there any other administrative things for us to deal with? I propose a 10-minute recess while we see if our guest is able to extricate himself from traffic this morning and reconvene at 9:30 a.m.

[9:17 a.m. The committee recessed.]

[9:34 a.m. The committee reconvened.]

THE CHAIR: I'm glad to see you, we've been having a collective worry here since we called Millbrook and got word from the staff that you had left quite a while ago.

GORDON PICTOU: It was really slow driving conditions.

THE CHAIR: We knew that. It's great that you got here. I'm Gary Burrill, the chairman of our committee. I represent Colchester-Musquodoboit Valley. Maybe before we ask you to present your material, we could quickly introduce ourselves, beginning with Mr. Epstein.

[The committee members introduced themselves.]

THE CHAIR: Our usual way of going ahead would be to have you make a presentation about the Wall of Honour and related things. Then we'd have an opportunity for you to be able to explain some things that might come up in the presentation, just in kind of a conversational discussion after that, if that would seem square. Great, it's all yours.

GORDON PICTOU: Are there any extra copies left, just to keep me on piece with what you guys are looking at. Normally I don't do PowerPoints like this but we had new defaults on our new Xerox machines so by the time they all printed out I was like, well, whatever.

Basically we started thinking about beginning this project back in 2009 when we made applications to gain grants. What we were wanting to do is add to our interpretive - at our centre we're a small museum so we try to tell the history of Millbrook and of Mi'kmaq people in Nova Scotia but also the large picture of First Nations people in Canada. One area often that mainstream Canadians don't always see is the importance of the contribution that First Nation people made to Canada and in the context of the different major conflicts and the role that we played in serving that. We wanted to bring that to the attention of the public and also have a place that remembered all our veterans and their stories.

So in putting in the proposal we created a vision that was sort of threefold. One was that we include veterans in the process of creating a lasting memory of themselves but also of all the people who came before them as well and served. We had an organized round table discussion from veterans from each of the communities in Nova Scotia. The other aspect that we wanted to do was to create public awareness through an interpretation museum but also the travelling exhibit that would go to schools and other public places and bring that story of how the First Nations have served and how Mi'kmaq people have served for Canada and also the larger context of a struggle for independence and also our governance.

Then the third aspect was to see, once we had that established, to organize a digital archive collection of those stories and memories from current veterans and also their families and friends of people who have passed now that existed and make that information available to the public and also to schools and create a curriculum that way.

It's a large plan that we hope to accomplish. We ran into some problems with doing it. At the beginning of this process we included a veteran from each of the 13 First Nation communities, as well as the RCMP, First Nation RCMP. There's a picture there of those members. Together, we met a number of times and created sort of what they thought this exhibit, this memorial, would look like and we came up with the memorial wall. We invited Mark Bishoff, who had done some work with people who had died in Afghanistan with the Forces. He had created these montages remembering them. Our veterans on the committee liked that idea, they thought that was a good way to go.

Then we established that the next important thing would be to try and gather all the names of all Mi'kmaq veterans in Nova Scotia but also try and get their pictures, which proved to be a much more difficult effort than we had sort of thought it would be - there's a picture of Mark here. So Mark has some really good technology for restoring old images, scanning them and fixing them up so that photographs that are in bad condition can be



brought into better condition digitally and he presented those ideas and the round table members thought that was a great idea. We asked the committee to go back to their communities and organize information sessions around it and try to collect and gather, borrow photographs from any families who had photographs and any current veterans to get them onboard. That's kind of where the beginning of problems happen so we had in Millbrook, the band was excellent, got almost every picture of everyone and we had our montage done in a month, almost every single picture, we're only missing a few that we don't have pictures for.

From the other communities we might have gotten two or three pictures from each of them. They were pretty good about getting the names, but we're way below having enough pictures to actually create the montages for most of those communities. The RCMP, we have every single picture now. On our montage that's on our mourner wall, when we first made the first montage we were missing two pictures, we've since gotten both of those pictures so once we get more pictures from the other walls we'll update that one and have that complete as well. That was a tough thing to get around because it wasn't our intention when we created the proposal for it to be on me or on other of our staff to go around and visit each of the 13 communities and stay there for weeks and try to get everybody to bring in pictures, so that's a stumbling point.

We decided we were going to try that and we sent Garrett Gloade, Mark Bichoff and David Touchie to Cape Breton and they visited three of the communities there. We had organized in advance, put the press out and had everyone know that we were going to come there, but then we got three pictures out of the whole thing and spent \$1,500. We decided that wasn't really going to be worth it if it was not coming from the community themselves to be organized around the veteran there, then we, being outside of their community, isn't going to be more successful. That kind of nixed or slowed down and we had to try to decide and plan around other ways to gather that.

We launched the opening of the Memorial Wall as it is, there is a big display panel, this was in 2010. Our centre was filled to capacity, there were actually people outside who couldn't come in, but still waited outside for the event. People were really excited about the Memorial Wall and about what we were trying to do, so that was a great success. At our launch we had all kinds of representation from the province, from the military, youth forces and community and that was really positive so even though we only had three communities' montage and the RCMP and our wallboard explaining it, we still felt at that time it was still going to roll forward and we still had the veterans on a committee who were still saying that they are trying to gather more images. From that moment through the next six months, we really didn't get too much more help from any of the veterans from their own communities to bring in any more. I think that for whatever reason they tried hard for a little bit and then when they didn't get the support, they didn't really didn't try very hard after that so it stalled.

Now we're into the idea of what we have to do to finish this project and get it moving forward from where it is. We're a pretty small organization, we try to do a lot of things with the manpower that we have and so allocating more resources to do it has been slow. Recently we tried - we're just about to launch the next wave of our attempts which is through Facebook. Our Facebook page with the Glooscap Heritage Centre, we started a new Facebook page called the Veteran's Memorial Wall project page. We're waiting for Mark to send all the digital files to us of the existing pictures so we can put those up, with little tag lines about who they are and a little bit of stories that we know. Once we have all that set up - and enough there is interest in people - we'll launch that site with some publicity around it. Hopefully, other people will, through the digital age, just upload their stuff and their stories and memories around that, and when stuff is uploaded, we'll contact them back and say, how about we make arrangements to come meet you and we'll scan it better, put it on a montage wall and maybe do an interview with you.

I think Prince Edward Island did a similar project - not through Facebook, but through YouTube - and people submitted a bunch of photos and memories to that and they did sort of the same thing. We're hoping that it will have a similar effect for us and with the publicity of launching the site and getting people's interest tweaked to go visit it, we hope that it will create more of a community-centred approach so that we might get 15 and 20 people from a community who will agree for us to come and get the proper permissions and do the interviews all at one time to make it actually worthwhile travelling to each community. Then we can hopefully move forward with it over the next little while.

I didn't really talk specifically about some of the things that are in there, the trip to Cape Breton there. Right now, we're still at the stage where we had to get all those pictures, so hopefully within the next few months we'll have Facebook launched and we'll have a start to be able to complete that. Before we have that part done, we can't really call back all our committee veterans to move forward with the visioning process for what a travelling exhibit would look like because the travelling exhibit that they were talking about when we did the round table meetings - it was centred around having all the pictures on there and they wanted to have a very picture-based spirally sort of thing that you could roll up like a scroll and then pull out and it would make shapes. People would walk along it through the different communities and get a little bit of an interpretation on the way through about the different conflicts and about our roles.

So that's kind of the idea we're moving forward with and that they wanted. We're not abandoning that idea yet, but we really have to capture these images. Part of the problem with getting people to give them up was that we couldn't say we were going to take them for two days because Mark has - depending on the type of picture and the condition that it's in, it might take a very long time for him to work it and be done with it before he can give it back. People were unsure about just handing over a very treasured, sometimes unique, picture of an ancient ancestor and stuff like that so getting that trust level. But if they're going to take a picture, an existing picture, and post it, we can schedule

an appointment to go there with the machine and actually take the images there at their house, I think that we have a chance. I'm hopeful, anyway.

That's kind of where we are right now. There is definitely a lot of interest from the communities to be involved. I think once we start rolling within one community, the rest of the communities will come with the rest of the pictures. It's just a matter of getting the snowball to start moving downhill a little bit. That's pretty much what I had planned to say. If anyone has questions, I'm more than happy to give some answers.

THE CHAIR: That's great, thank you. Are there comments or questions we want to ask? Ms. Zann.

LENORE ZANN: Thanks, Gordon, for the presentation. Obviously, I was really pleased that I could be there at that time when you did the big opening. It was very exciting and it was so nice to see some of our senior veterans honoured in such a way. I could tell they were very pleased, and some of the young ones as well. I'm just wondering - sometimes if you can get the children excited and interested in these projects they can get on board with getting their grandparents to be excited and tell the stories. I know some of them - even Ben Martin is getting on now. I think he's in his 80s somewhere and he has been in hospital a couple of times. It would be nice if he could even go through the schools, maybe through the education system.

My mother is involved with the Heritage Fairs and they've had great success last year with getting kids right across the province to put in different projects. Actually a couple of them made it to Ottawa and one boy in particular, from Bridgewater, I believe - he was one of the top six from across Canada for his project. When you get the youth involved, then they get excited and they can get their parents or grandparents excited. That might be another way too, to try and reach out through the Heritage Fair and through the schools and the children.

GORDON PICTOU: They were actually involved in the Heritage Fair this year so the Nova Scotia selections, we are planning to do the finalists. It's all about the Arctic this year. We're planning to have like a showcase of the finalists from Nova Scotia, to be presented at the Glooscap Heritage Centre as well. We've been helping to promote that with the First Nations communities, to try and get that out.

I definitely agree that getting youth involved in it can start, especially with the memories, the stories and stuff like that. From the legal point of view, though, it's hard because we have to, in order to us to use any of it we have to go through the actual permissions and all that, to be able to do. It would be, I'm sure, great to have youth involved in recording that and getting the ball moving within their communities and perhaps through - like we have the youth group in Millbrook and there's youth groups in other communities as well, having them maybe go around and help promote it would

potentially get the ball rolling. As them being the recorders and the information, we can't legally take the information that they provide us, unless they are 18.

LENORE ZANN: Then there's also Facebook, that can get around anything.

THE CHAIR: Mr. MacLeod.

ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Chairman, thank you for the presentation, I think it's a very worthwhile project. I'm just wondering, I know in the community of Eskasoni on Remembrance Day they put on a very nice service and there's a number of veterans who show up there. So to what Lenore was saying, I'm just wondering, have you dealt with any of the Legions in the local areas to see what connections and/or memberships they may have who are First Nation people?

Also, as I say in this one in particular, and I think I'd like to share this with the committee, when they have their Remembrance Day service there, after the service is over the veterans go outside the gymnasium and as the children are coming out, they shake every veteran's hands and they say thank you. Every child in the school does that. The first time I saw that it just blew me away because it's such a respectful act on behalf of the young people and the ceremony itself is very respectful.

I know that at the one in Eskasoni, there were probably 14 or 15 veterans there. I was just wondering if there's any way you can tie in. I would share with you later, if you'd like, the name of the guy who has been organizing it there the last few years. He may be able to tie you in with that. I just think that, and dealing with Nunavut Command to see what they may have in the line of people from the First Nations.

The other thing is I'm just wondering if you have been dealing with any of the Chief and Councils because the Chief and Council, as you know better than I, have a great respect for their seniors and maybe we can engage them to engage the others as well.

GORDON PICTOU: When we started the project, Chiefs and Councils - we invited them both to attend the opening but in the process of it as well invited them to promote the project and allowed them to display the information. When we went to Cape Breton on the trip that Garrett and Mark went on, the band had promoted the event and given us a space and stuff like that, so there's definitely a lot of support from Chief and Council. We actually didn't work too closely with individual Legions from each of the areas, but we relied on the representative who would have belonged to those Legions to network within it. I think that's also another good possibility - to start working more directly with Legions as well.

I think there are mobility issues and health issues with sort of offloading on the veterans as well in their communities - to be the ones to get around and get all the pictures. That definitely played into it as well. What we tried to do to help with that was each of our

veterans, we paired them up with a youth after the first couple of meetings and the youth were supposed to help them with the technology, organizing and the leg work and doing it, but it didn't turn out as well as it could have.

So points are taken - I think they're definitely, if we involve Legions - and I'll get that name from you as the contact. That's definitely another avenue.

THE CHAIR: Ms. Raymond.

MICHELE RAYMOND: I'm sorry I was late in joining you, but I certainly congratulate you on doing this. I know it can be really hard to begin to tease out a history. A couple of questions - one, there used to be a federal program and I don't know if it still exists, but you might want to look into it, the Virtual Museum of Canada. I don't know if that rings any bells. I'm not sure if it's still going, but what they used to do was to give small grants - \$3,000 to \$4,000 - to a group that would be preparing a virtual exhibit to be uploaded to the Virtual Museum of Canada, but they would give the group money for digital equipment and also some training. A group of those might allow you to actually set up some things in the community that could be more long-standing and you could just be gathering those.

The other thing is, though, the pictures are lovely and they're delightful, but don't let yourself get completely lost in the need for collecting those because if you get the names first - I mean, some of the most powerful memorials going are just the lists of names. Once people know that their names are there and they're in a place, they'll begin thinking about - well what can I add to this, if you just let them know. You don't have to get it all built at once. It looks like you're doing a wonderful job there, but at this point just gathering the names is going to be tricky enough, quite honestly.

GORDON PICTOU: We actually have most of the names now. I can't remember what the name count is at right now, but it's pretty high. I think we have about 400, almost 500 names.

MICHELE RAYMOND: Get those in place and then once people - as long as you have that - the pictures exactly are the things that people will never let go of. If you have their confidence that either you - as you say - take the machinery to their place or perhaps if you explore the Virtual Museum of Canada, there may be an option there to actually get the training there. Anyway, congratulations and good luck - it sounds wonderful.

THE CHAIR: Mr. Epstein.

HOWARD EPSTEIN: I too was happy to hear this presentation. I wonder if you could give us some idea of how the issues that are focused on in the Glooscap Heritage Centre are dealt with in other museums around the country. I haven't visited the centre, but I've been to some of the national museums in Ottawa. I'm wondering if you can tell us how

the story of First Nations veterans is dealt with in any national exhibits that exist elsewhere. As an associated point, I wonder if you could tell us what other First Nations communities elsewhere in Canada are doing about telling their own story, if they think it's not adequately dealt with at a national museum.

GORDON PICTOU: The Canadian Museum of Civilization and the Canadian War Museum, at last year's ANSM conference, Association of Nova Scotia Museums conference, I forget his name, I met him a number of times now, he came down as the keynote speaker, does anyone remember . . .

HOWARD EPSTEIN: I'm sorry, this is someone from the national museum?

GORDON PICTOU: Yes, the War Museum in Ottawa. He turned it around and created a totally technologically relevant way of doing things, they increased their traffic a zillion times from what it used to be. His name is escaping me. I actually brought up the project with him and talked with him a little bit about it and he had some interesting ideas and I guess what I took from that is that he was really more excited about the digital record, the digital archiving of stories and stuff, more than he was about an actual visual exhibit.

He said that for him that is the nuts and bolts of what it should be about and in discussion about how we involved the veterans at the round table and how that was set up, he said he would probably have gone about it differently and more like presenting ideas and getting feedback and consultation rather than letting them design it because the digital ideas that could have been out there and that Mark has would have made it simpler and a more effective story than having the sort of standards for a memorial.

He also emphasized that in learning about war and those stories and about the veterans, that if you want to capture the hearts and minds of people you have to make it more participatory and engaging in a way that lets people make up their own minds, to ask questions and investigate it further. The standard memorial - sort of a montage of names - leaves out a lot of opportunity for getting that involvement. By the time I was talking to him I was kind of already in the motion, but that has definitely stayed with me, especially with the importance of collecting the stories and the follow-up to it with the digital archives. I think that will probably be a very important component.

As a former teacher, most of my time in my role at the centre is actually with schools, with students and teachers. I know that there are very limited resources out there that tell First Nations, and specifically Mi'kmaq, stories, whether it's our veterans or any of the issues, it's really hard to find good, primary sources that aren't having to be reinterpreted from a European perspective 150 years ago. That's definitely a very, very important part for getting to the next level, but as far as the other communities go, I think for the most part what you normally find in most First Nations communities are generally more of the standard cenotaphs and the concrete things as far as I can see. There are some very large ones in different places, Saskatchewan has very large ones. Membertou even has

a really wonderful montage sort of wall, Dozay Christmas did the mural with it, so there are lots of different ideas out there.

I think trying to get the pictures was probably a mistake, but we already went down that road. When you look at other places in Canada, there aren't very many major cenotaphs that try to have 500 or more names that are going to try to attach pictures and specific histories to it, so we bit off a lot in trying to do that. I'm not giving up on it, but I think if this next phase of the Facebook project doesn't work, we'll have to consult other people about how to transform the information that we've gathered through this process into something that is still going to be a fantastic and engaging message.

HOWARD EPSTEIN: Photos are valuable, of course, but is part of the project interviewing any of the surviving veterans?

GORDON PICTOU: That would be our third phase. Our first phase was establishing the overall sort of story of Mi'kmaq participation in the different aspects, looking at the Treaty of Watertown, looking at pre-contacts, Warrior Society, looking at our role in the First World War, being turned away as not being standard, not being Canadian, having the provision that we could give up our status to fight and then get our status back. Those were sort of the lines that they are interested in telling about how a lot of Mi'kmaq people went to the United States to serve, because there was more opportunity there and because of our treaty right to do that and to live in a more multicultural setting in Boston and stuff like that. Those were a lot of the types of stories that they are bringing out and that we tell from the people who participated and from the stories that we gathered through that. That's in our telling of the exhibit, so these are just only a visual exhibit with a little bit of the panel board.

Our interpreters know the stories of the round tablers and of their own - like I have a grandfather on the wall. Every one of our interpreters has relatives whose names are on the wall. So when persons come through the centre, they see the thing but we talk about that story, we talk about First Nation governance, about the sacrifices they made, the fact that they didn't have to, the fact that Canada didn't want us to at the beginning of that relationship but we did it anyway because it was a way of affirming our own sovereignty and our own commitment to our treaties that we made with other international partners, like the U.S., and to protect our territory, so we tell those stories.

We also tell the specific stories of our family members and you know they're all different. For instance, when I talk about my great-grandfather I talk about his role and his family and what it meant to him. Denise talks about her cousins and Heather talks about her brother and so on. So there's a lot of different stories, contemporary and older, that come out and are woven into that.

Then we get a lot of great questions from whoever we're with, that get into more like, why did people fight if they were told they weren't really wanted? What was it like for

our former chief when he was in Germany? They know Lawrence Paul quite well and he's on the wall. Lawrence chaired a pretty in-depth, detailed sort of narrative with us, also we know about his experience in restoring Germany and lots of stories around that. Ben Martin, who was mentioned, he was an MP for a long time. He was in charge of protecting Einstein so he has lots of amazing, interesting stories that go along with that.

The actual wall is just the beginning of a personal connection that we have, as interpreters, and as a community, to the larger picture. Most people in Canada have some relation in some story that they're sharing, too. So it's a great way for beginning a dialogue. That was really the most important part of what we're supposed to do.

It sounds like I'm disappointed but actually I'm still very proud of what we have so far and of the interpretive experience it offers because when that wasn't there, it was really hard to bring up. Now it's there, it's big, it's attractive, people go right to it. The names that we already have out there, people read and we point to when we talk about all those important areas. For some people it's a 10-minute discussion, for some classes it's like a 10-minute or 30-minute discussion. Then there are people who have come and it has been an all-day discussion, where we give them other movies to watch in the theatre and they're really super-interested. It's definitely not a failure on that part, but we see so much more potential for what it also could be, and we also know what the veterans who participate in it, their vision and we want to make sure that comes true too.

THE CHAIR: I was wondering if I could ask about - I'm just thinking about the funding for the ongoing project. That program under which the centre got the money for the Wall of Honour that went out a year and a half ago or whatever - is there anything preventing you, through the project, accessing that again after a certain period?

GORDON PICTOU: I'm not in control of the money or finances so I don't honestly know the details of what the funding proposal was. I just know what we had.

THE CHAIR: It would be great if you could.

GORDON PICTOU: I think the New Horizons for Seniors Program money, I think that was a one-time deal, as far as I know. The Veterans Affairs money, we've already tapped into the second time for the second phase, but where we're still stuck on is figuring out where we're going to proceed from the picture standpoint and finishing the montage, so the current funding that we still have that we haven't spent is for trying to pay Mark to finish up the montages once the pictures are acquired. Once we either can do that or don't go forward with the pictures, then we can look at creating a different vision for completing it in a different way, and then there would be other funding - quite a few different, depending on the variables, where we could look for funding still.

THE CHAIR: Maybe another shot from VAC, which would be terrific.



Mr. Orrell.

EDDIE ORRELL: You have the video collection in your interpretive centre where they play and you say people go and they listen. Does that stuff go out to the school systems? If you look at history, anything that has been introduced that we try to get adults to take hold of - drinking and driving, bicycle helmets, recycling - once the children took a hold of that, it took off. So if it's done in the school systems - and all school systems, not just First Nations, because we have First Nations people who live in certain areas that maybe when the two or three children get a hold of that and say, well, your dad or your grandfather or my grandfather was and maybe they could start the ball rolling a little bit. Is that being done?

GORDON PICTOU: The beginning of the question was, do we provide schools with any of the archival . . .

EDDIE ORRELL: Videotaping.

GORDON PICTOU: We actually haven't been taking videotaping; we've just been doing microphone recordings of the narratives. So far they're not really in a finished state to offer it. That is definitely one of the end results that we want to have is actually on a Web site, to be able to have a lot of room that stores all that so you don't even have to come in and make special arrangements - that schools could just link right up to and be able to both see all the pictures that we have and the names for research projects, but also hear the stories, which is why I made a point of saying earlier that it's really important that when we do get the submission of the photo that we do try to get the legal permission to be able to record and make public the recordings of the narratives that go with that.

That's still a little bit down the road, but it is definitely a main goal - to get in the schools and help teachers and students be able to incorporate First Nations stories and Mi'kmaq stories, veterans' stories into a greater conversation. It's so hard to find it. There are not a lot of easy resources out there. There are a few documents that are in support of that. You can find the names and stuff like that without too much difficulty and a little bit of the general story, but finding specific detailed memories from a First Nations perspective really doesn't exist in a public forum very easily for students or teachers to access.

THE CHAIR: Ms. Zann.

LENORE ZANN: I have just a couple more things to mention. I was going to say I'm really so proud of what you do at the centre and I really highly recommend anybody, if you are passing by Truro, to stop in there. It's a very interesting museum and the fact that it's an interpretive museum is so wonderful. You can press little buttons on the wall and you can learn Mi'kmaq, it's very interactive.

The guides, the interpreters, are fantastic. They've won awards. I was at one of the award dinners there and the centre itself won an award. I know Garrett Gloade won Best Interpreter, and my mom actually went there with some people and they were very, very impressed. I think you're doing amazing work there.

As you said, I remember when we first moved to Nova Scotia when I was about eight, my mother was a history teacher and we were from Australia. Band councillors in Millbrook tell me today that they remember her first day of school, taking the history books and saying, I'm supposed to teach you from this history book but this is where the history book belongs, and she threw it in the garbage can. She said, I refuse to teach this because it's so racist and discriminatory about our First Nations people and the Blacks of Nova Scotia as well. She said she really went to the Archives and found anything she could. Of course there are some books that have been written by First Nations people and Mi'kmaq about the history.

The more that we can get the true history out to the children, as Eddie said, and to the people, I think the more people will understand how similar we are, as opposed to our differences. I think you're doing an amazing job telling that story and I really want to highly congratulate you.

GORDON PICTOU: Thanks Lenore.

THE CHAIR: Are there other comments or aspects of this we wanted to explore some more?

GORDON PICTOU: We're not open on the weekends until after Victoria Day, so from Victoria Day until Thanksgiving we're open seven days a week; from Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., until May 14<sup>th</sup>.

THE CHAIR: Okay. Was there anything, as we've been talking about, that you thought you might want to add at all?

GORDON PICTOU: No, but I'd like to thank everybody for the opportunity to be here and for your interest in the project. It is a project that's very close to our hearts. It has been kind of a difficult going in a lot of respects but it has also been a very rewarding endeavour. I thank everybody for their good ideas.

I'll leave my business card behind for anybody who has follow-up questions or other ideas that come to mind. We're totally happy to have any other ideas or any connections you have that you think would be good connections for me to follow up on, that would be fantastic. I appreciate it and I am open to any suggestions you might have. If you have any other questions down the road, please feel free to contact me. My e-mail always gets answered very promptly.

THE CHAIR: Well, we're some glad that you made it. It's great that you've been able to explain this all, so that's tremendous.

Are we agreed to adjourn then?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

THE CHAIR: Okay, thanks so much.

[The committee adjourned at 10:19 a.m.]