Winnipeg | Indigenous Relations
Relations avec les Autochtones

JOURNEY OF RECONCILIATION
LES CHEMINS DE LA RÉCONCILIATION

WELCOMING WINNIPEG – Request Summary

NOTE: Request summaries are compiled by Indigenous Relations employees to ensure that identifiable, or potentially identifiable, third-party personal information or information of a sensitive nature is excluded from what is made publicly available. Indigenous Relations permits viewing of the full original submission by appointment through 311.

Request ID: 2022-009

Name of Request: Creating New Marker – Assiniboia Residential School

Address: 621 Academy Road

Demonstrated Community Support:

- Petition submitted: No. Due to COVID due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and physical distancing precautions, the City has temporarily suspended this requirement.
- Letters of support provided: Demonstrated support from 6 organizations for this project.

Project Details:



The Academy Road site is to be redeveloped as a meeting/healing place for all survivors of the residential school system. We have utilized the survivors' own words to populate the 3 panels, these quotes are taken from the book "Did You See Us? Reunion, Remembrance and Reclamation at an Urban Indian Residential School" published last year. The quotes will be translated into Cree and Anishinaabemowin.

Witnessing

The incarceration of these children is recognized for its lifelong damage to the students, their families and their communities.



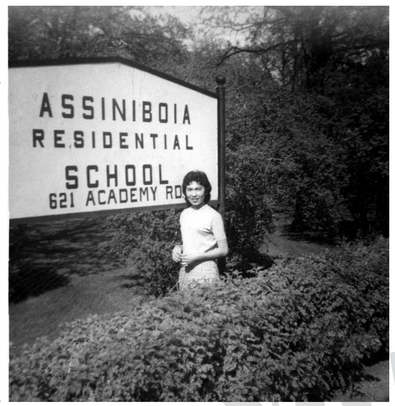
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Caroline Perreault (née Seymour), Waanibiigaaw

Hollow Water, Manitoba, Attended Assiniboia 1958–1962

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“ What I recall most is the loneliness. I came from a family that was very close, and to not have any contact with them was very difficult.”

David Montana Wesley

Longlac, Ontario, Attended Assiniboia 1963–1965

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“ There was a high school that was 50 kilometres away from where I lived in Longlac and I thought we were going to high school in Geraldton, but the bus kept going and going...800 kilometres later we ended up in Assiniboia.”

Hubert (Gilbert) Hart, Kinosawi Sipi

Norway House Cree Nation, Manitoba, Attended Assinioboia 1964–1968

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“ We came in at night, so we just slept. We woke up in the morning, then went and had breakfast. And we saw all these people all over the place. I’m wondering, “What the hell am I doing here?”

Martina Fisher (née Young), Misko-ziibiing

Bloodvein First Nation, Manitoba, Attended Assiniboia, 1969–1972

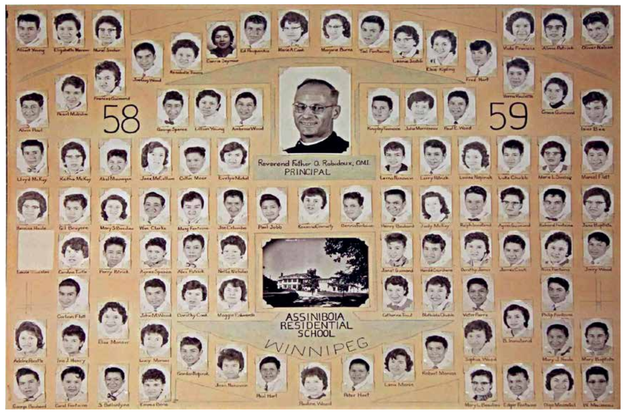
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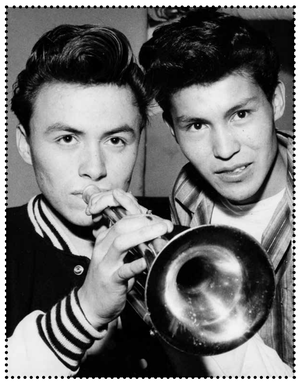
“ And you know these are the things that they’re talking about, the intergenerational effects of Indian residential schools. Because I didn’t know how to parent, and I didn’t know how to deal with certain stuff with my children. Even though I told them after a while that I love them, I couldn’t keep them. I couldn’t go to them.”

NOT DESIGNED
CONTENT PLACEMENT

Surviving

These teenagers were sent to Winnipeg's Assiniboia Residential School to continue their education in an attempt to further assimilate them into the larger Canadian society.









Jane Glennon (née McCallum)

Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation, Saskatchewan, Attended Assiniboia 1958–1961

ninanâskomon: kotak kîsikâw î-mîthikawiyân; î-mithwâyâyân; î-mithwâyâcik nicawâsimisak ikwa nôsisimak; î-kî-âstîpiyân kayâs; î-wâpahtamân kâ-mithonâkwahk askiyikwa î-pihtawakwâw pithîsîsak î-nikamocik.

" That sense of forced isolation from loved ones was one shared by many of my classmates."

Theodore Fontaine, Zaagiing

Sagkeeng First Nation (Fort Alexander, Manitoba), Attended Assiniboia, 1958–1960

ninanâskomon: kotak kîsikâw î-mîthikawiyân; î-mithwâyâyân; î-mithwâyâcik nicawâsimisak ikwa nôsisimak; î-kî-âstîpiyân kayâs; î-wâpahtamân kâ-mithonâkwahk askiyikwa î-pihtawakwâw pithîsîsak î-nikamocik

"Students from Assiniboia also faced a barrage of racial epithets while competing in hockey, baseball, football and track and field meets. In one sense, it prepared us for the barrage that continued into our adult years.".

Mabel Horton (née Hart)

Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation (Nelson House, Manitoba), Attended Assiniboia 1962–1967

ninanâskomon: kotak kîsikâw î-mîthikawiyân; î-mithwâyâyân; î-mithwâyâcik nicawâsimisak ikwa nôsisimak; î-kî-âstîpiyân kayâs; î-wâpahtamân kâ-mithonâkwahk askiyikwa î-pihtawakwâw pithîsîsak î-nikamocik.

" We were so happy to be home when we saw the lights of our communities. There was no electricity then, just little fuel oil lamps; but you could see the lights and we were so happy."

NOT DESIGNED
CONTENT PLACEMENT

Honouring

This sacred space is given to the community in tribute to all those who attended Assiniboia Residential School as a place of healing and remembrance.









Martina Fisher (née Young), Misko-ziibiing

Bloodvein First Nation, Manitoba, Attended Assiniboia, 1969–1972

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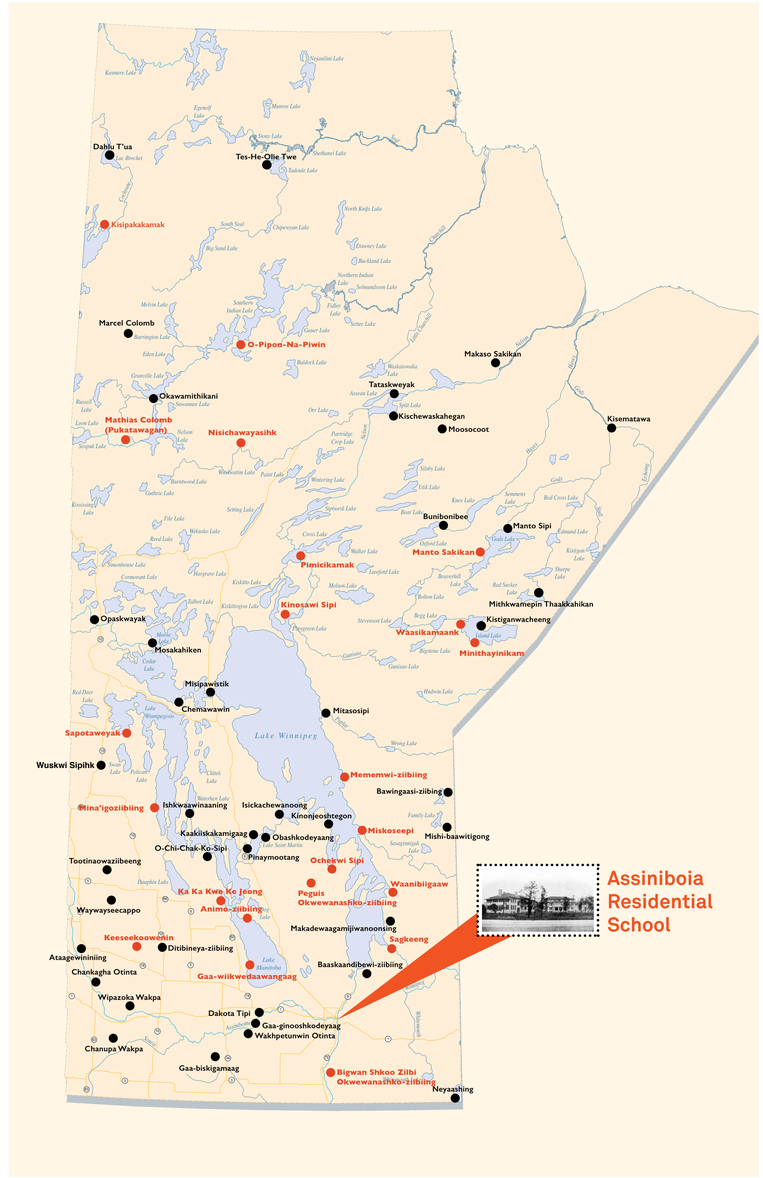
“ When the kids went to residential school, when their parents died, they were not told. When the child died at the residential school, the parents were not told. How much damage can anyone put on a people: And now we’re telling our stories; and it’s like a fresh wound when we talk. Right now, I’m just shaking inside, because I’m releasing, but it’s also healing.”

Betty Ross

Pimicikamak Nihithawi (Cross Lake, Manitoba), Attended Assiniboia 1962–1963 and 1963-1968

ninanâskomon: kotak kîsikâw î-mîthikawiyân; î-mithwâyâyân;
î-mithwâyâcik nicawâsimisak ikwa nôsisimak; î-kî-âstîpiyân kayâs;
î-wâpahtamân kâ-mithonâkwahk askiyikwa î-pihtawakwâw pithîsîsak
î-nikamocik

“ Our families made huge courageous sacrifices to let us go from their hearts in order to see us fly towards newer heights. Some of us persevered, others waved goodbye, still others simply walked away and never looked back.”



On this site, over 800 students attended Winnipeg’s Assiniboia Residential School from 1958 to 1973. Students ranged in age from 15 to 20 and were taken from First Nation reserves across all of Manitoba as well as Saskatchewan and Northwest Ontario.

Saskatchewan Communities:
Assin’skowitiniwak
Ishkwaawinaaning
Keeseekoose
Opawikoscikcan
Wapaskokimaw

Ontario Communities:
Aroland
Ashkibwaanikaaning
Asubpeeschoseewagong
Beejikamaang
Eabametoong
Ginoogaming
Gojijiing
Keewaywin
Neh gaaw saga’igan (Sandy Lake)
Kiashke Zaaging
Mammamattawa
Manidoo Ziibi
Memekweso Sakahekan
Migisi Sahgaigan
Mishkeegogamang
Mishkosiminiziibiing Anishinaabeg
Ogookiing Onigaming Anishinaabeg
Misque Sakigon
Naicatchewenin
Naotkamegwanning
Neh gaaw saga’igan
Obishikokaang
Waabishka-adaawang
Wauzhushk Onigum
Wikamikong
Wikiwemikona
Zhingwaako Za’Iganing

NOT DESIGNED
CONTENT PLACEMENT

How does this project contribute to a 'Welcoming Winnipeg', as defined in the policy and what kind of evidence/research can be provided to support this statement?

- **Ultimately achieves a balanced perspective/story**

  The panels will give visitors a glimpse into the reality students of residential schools faced, which was far from the generous narrative that was portrayed by the Canadian government.

- **Honours Indigenous peoples as the original peoples of this land and the contemporary context in which Indigenous peoples continue to have relationship with this land**

  This project has been led by survivors and intergenerational survivors. Appropriate protocols have been followed, with a blessing of the site, tobacco has been offered and a pipe ceremony was held to ensure this project can move forward in a good way.

- **Promotes Indigenous reclamation of land, space and/or language**

  The quotes on the 3 interpretive panels will be translated into Cree and Anishinaabemowin.

- **Offers an educational opportunity**

  The monument will have the names and communities of all of the former students; this will help visitors understand that students were completely cut off from their families and communities. They were often hundreds of kilometers from home and not provided with transportation for visits home.

- **Supports telling the complete history of Winnipeg**

  Many residents in River Heights didn't know about the school's existence and many people in Winnipeg did not know that there was a residential school in that neighbourhood during that era.

Does this site have historical significance to the Indigenous community?
Research Support:

There were 17 federally funded Indian Residential Schools in Manitoba which included one location in Winnipeg known as the Assiniboia Indian Residential School. Federally funded and operated by the Grey Nuns and Oblate Fathers, the Assiniboia Indian Residential School was part of the federal government's educational system under the Indian Act which operated from 1958 until June 1973. The school still stands today and now functions as the Canadian Centre for Child Protection including Child Find Manitoba, the official address is 615 Academy Road of River Heights.

If this application is not supported, what would the negative impact on the community be? (If applicable)

Winnipeggers will not fully understand the history of the school and the negative affects it had on its students.

Any additional information the applicant would like the CCM to consider in making their recommendation.

Not applicable.