

SOUTH AND NORTH

THE SPRING TOUR

APRIL 27 - MAY 4, 2009

MONDAY, APRIL 27TH

Hitting the Ground Running



The first interview of the spring tour was with George Wapachee in the Band Office in Nemaska. Film subjects were given the choice of English or Cree for their interviews. George's entire interview was done in Cree.

Following the conversation with George, we drove out to his camp on the Nemiscau River. We did another short interview in George's camp with him and his wife, Charlotte, and filmed the camp environment. We quickly learned who had packed appropriate clothing for the elements and who had not. Charlotte helped us take the damp chill off with hot tea and bannock.

TUESDAY, APRIL 28TH

The Road to Waskaganish



We took our time driving toward the coastal community of Waskaganish on the 28th, making many filming stops along the way. Our focus was to capture signs of spring on film.

Upon our arrival in Waskaganish we were joined by our Community Liaison, Ian Diamond. We settled into comfortable rooms at the Kanio Kashee Lodge and enjoyed a hearty dinner.

Before we called it a night, the crew went out to film the sun setting over Rupert Bay.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29TH

At, On and In the Bay



The film crew was out on the land most of the day. We began with the filming of Allan McLeod in his goose blind at the gravel pit. A young boy, William Salt, was also filmed driving around on his 4-wheeler.

In the afternoon, the crew was lucky to be assisted by a local man on snowmobile (Roy Blackned) as we transported our equipment through slush ice and out to a blind on the bay.

The crew filmed local hunter Derek Jonah in his goose blind. The white-on-white of the camouflaged hunter on the ice made for some captivating footage and Derek proved to be a fantastic actor.



G.C.C.E.I.



The remainder of the afternoon was spent interviewing people at the Smokey Hill camp, including Johnny and Clymie Weistche. The interview was done entirely in Cree. We sampled some of our hosts' bannock and talked to one of the elderly women about how we could get our hands on some of those beautifully handmade moose-hide mittens and moccasins.

We were given access to the Waskaganish Cultural Institute archives by Sinclair Diamond, who was very accommodating.

We had hoped to see the Northern Lights at night, but they weren't visible in the darkened sky. Perhaps we will have more luck on our next visit.

THURSDAY, APRIL 30TH
Sunrise on the Bay



Our intrepid camera crew rose before the sun on Thursday to meet Derek Jonah at his goose blind on the bay. The colours of the rising sun were breathtaking, in contrast to the glowing white ice and snow. We got some footage of the elusive goose in flight, and were very satisfied with

the early-morning outing. We staged and filmed a re-enactment of a 1970s goose hunt on the bay with Derek as our acting talent.

At breakfast that morning, Ian asked if any of us had been experiencing vivid dreams after spending so much time in the bush. Apparently that is to be expected if you are a newcomer.

Later that day, we returned to Smokey Hill and filmed the preparation of geese at the Weistche camp, from plucking to cooking over an open fire in the smokehouse.

We interviewed Ruth Salt, a consultant with the Cree School Board, about issues surrounding Cree education. The Weistche family was particularly gracious to allow us to film and conduct interviews, as the feast was an intimate family gathering in celebration of the first goose of the season.

Tallyman Sanders Weistche was kind enough to fly in from his hunt camp to speak with us on camera. The interview questions from the Director were presented in Cree by Pearl Weistche.

FRIDAY, MAY 1ST
Dinner with the Diamonds



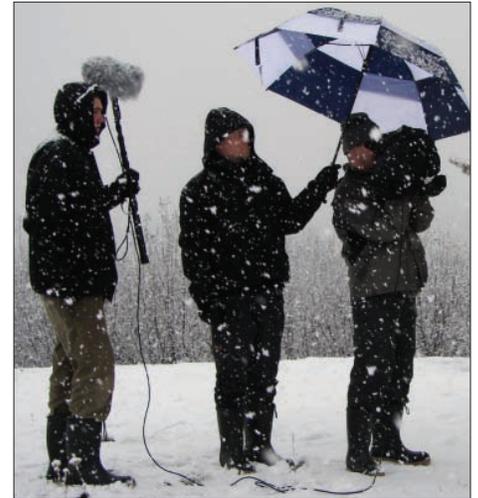
The morning was occupied with research and community filming.

In the afternoon, we were guests at the Diamond camp, where Elizabeth cooked two geese for dinner.

We got some photos of Elizabeth cooking goose and bannock in the teepee while Billy was being interviewed back at the cabin.

The Diamonds were very generous with us. We truly enjoyed our goose feast and look forward to returning the favour on our next visit.

SATURDAY MAY 2ND
A White-out on the Road to Nemaska



The camera crew was up early filming in and around the community as we said goodbye to Waskaganish and hit the long and open road to Nemaska.

We stopped to do some filming along the way, capturing spectacular footage of the Rupert River in a major snowstorm.

On more than one occasion on this tour, we were surprised by how quickly the weather can change in James Bay. This road trip started in fair weather, but we soon found ourselves in white-out conditions, hoping not to meet any oncoming transport trucks travelling at high speed. The weather cleared up again in the next hour, with very little snow on the ground. By the time we arrived at the Nemaska Motel, the sun was shining.

SUNDAY, MAY 3RD
Up, Up in the Air



Joanne Prince of the Nemaska archive was very helpful. We scanned some beautiful La Rusic photographs from the 1970s, depicting the key players of our story as history was being made.

The camera crew was out on the land filming for most of the day. Our videographer Douglas did a ride-along in the helicopter of the Margaret Tent family. He stayed at their hunt camp for an hour, where he captured footage of the helicopter being unloaded, the camp being set up, and a flock of geese coming in for a landing.

While we were out in the community, we met several people who had read about our film production in local media. Everyone we met was gracious and accommodating.

MONDAY, MAY 4TH
Goodbye for Now



The crew was up at dawn in order to catch up with the caribou that were spotted the day before near the hydro camp. They managed to get some really great footage of the herd eating breakfast beneath the hydro wires.

We joined up with Lawrence Jimikin and his wife after breakfast, and conducted an interview with them in their home.

It was quite warm and sunny when we left Nemaska at about 5 in the afternoon. We boarded the plane to Montreal feeling quite satisfied with the results of our excursion.

We are already planning our next trip to James Bay. In the meantime, research will continue. Preliminary editing for Phase Two will begin as soon as we have the interviews transcribed and translated where necessary.

We would like to extend our gratitude to each and every person who assisted us in making this trip such a huge success. See you in the summer!

