Honoring the Traditional Name & Place Protocol

Welcome to the unceded, traditional and ancestral territory of the L’nu people of the Mi’kmaki Territory.

What does this mean? Why is it important?

Image Credit: Teresa Marshall, Millbrook (Mi’kmaq Universe)
What does L’nu mean?

L’nu relates to the word for “tongue” or where our language originates from...

When we speak our language we say “L’nu’isn?” Do you speak our language?

E’e, Ln’uisi.... Yes, I speak my language!

Image Credit: Teresa Marshall, Millbrook (Mi’kmaq Universe)
What does Mi’kmaq mean?

Mi’kmaq is the plural form of Mi’kmaw (singular). Mi’kmaq comes from the root word Ni’kmaq or “My Family”. Those are Mi’kmaq people.

Mi’kmaw is the singular form “I am a Mi’kmaw person”.

Image Credit: Teresa Marshall, Millbrook (Mi’kmaq Universe)
Mi’kmaq
Key Words to Remember

K’WE
Pronounced… “G-WEH”
Our old word for “Hello”
Modern way is different.

Image Credit: Alan Syliboy, Thunder Child (Petroglyph Humans)
Mi’kmaq Key Words to Remember

Today’s way of saying hello...

“Meh T’al Wel’ane?”

“How are you?”

Image Credit: Alan Syliboy, Thunder Child (Petroglyph Humans)
What you need to know...

✅ 11,000+ Years of History

✅ Over 800 archaeological Mi’kmaq sites across Nova Scotia

✅ In 1985, the Mersey River Project uncovered over 100 Mi’kmaq sites

✅ Discovered over 10,000 artifacts

“The Mi’kmaq travelled and lived at different year round encampment sites”.
The 7 Traditional Territories comprised what is known as "Mi'kmak".

Fishing & hunting grounds extend across NS, NB, PEI, Nfld & parts of Quebec...
Piktuq (Pictou), Kespe’k (Gaspe), Epe’kwitk (PEI), Siknikt (Eastern NB), Sipekni’katik (Shubenacadie), Kespukwitk (Western Shores) & Unama’kik (Cape Breton) and after the last of the Beothuk another was added, Takmkuk (Nfld).

“Mi’kmaq did not recognize Colonial boundaries, only traditional territories”
What you need to know...

- History of the people
- Impact of First European contact
- Challenges faced in time
- Failed treaty obligations,
  Government assimilation initiatives

“Why was this information not shared with the mainstream population in N.S.?”
Mi’kmaq Statistics in the Atlantic Region

What you need to know...

✓ Population Statistics
  ✓ Approximately 45-50k Mi’kmaq
  ✓ 35+ Mi’kmaq communities

✓ Some challenges we face
  ✓ Gradually losing our language
  ✓ English language is now dominant

“Yet Reserve land has not increased, land claim negotiations have stalled repeatedly”.
What you need to know...

1. Reserve systems
   - First reserves were established in 1801 in Nova Scotia
   - Cape Breton – colony in 1820
   - Women were not allowed to vote
   - Education = disenfranchisement

Entire Mi’kmaq communities could be moved if towns grew to over 8,000 people.

If Mi’kmaq communities (like Membertou) were too close they were evacuated.
What does this really mean?

- Our Ancestors signed together
- Treaties focused on Peace & Friendship
- Treaties were signed between Nations
- Impact of Treaties (Then/Now)
  - 1725-63 Treaties prevented further wars
  - Recently upheld in the Courts to protect access to fishing & hunting rights

There were 5 key Treaties signed, most of these Peace & Friendship Treaties (1700’s).
Key impacts that lasted over 50 years in Nova Scotia

- Loss of connection to family
- Loss of cultural connection
- Loss of use of language
- Multiple forms of daily abuse
- Many children never returned

Image Credit: Nova Scotia Museum Archives
Key impacts that lasted over 50 years in Nova Scotia

- Government played a key role
- Religious org’s played a key role
- Traditional spirituality was a target
- Children were not protected
- Losses outweighed benefits

Image Credit: Nova Scotia Museum Archives
Assimilation (Then & Now)

- Residential Schools
  - Were a form of cultural genocide
  - Took young children from homes
  - Parents had no choice
  - Children would be away for years
  - Children would never be the same
  - Multi-generational effects

The TRC 94 Calls to Action were launched in 2015 to address these wrong doings.

Indian Residential Schools operated in Canada from the 1870’s – 1996.
It is estimated that close to 35% of the current Mi'kmaw population has diabetes.

TRC Recommendations

- 94 Calls to Action
- Important Lessons Learned
- Opportunities for moving forward
- Where does responsibility lie
  - Building strong relationships & partnerships
- Recovering what is lost
  - A process that will take many years

"The TRC Calls to Action will be an ongoing process for the next generations".
Assimilation (Then & Now)

✓ WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?
✓ Families were forced to move
✓ Entire communities were shut down
✓ Families with small children were evacuated and sent to centralized locations (Eskasoni & Shubenacadie)
✓ Homes/dwellings burned

Centralization took place in N.S. from 1942-1949 – Indian Affairs Branch (Federal)
Assimilation (Then & Now)

 WHY DID THIS TAKE PLACE?

✓ Government had a feduciary responsibility to the Mi’kmaw people through signed Treaties.
✓ Government developed an Indian Act in Canada to govern Indigenous people (1876/still in effect now).

Centralization took place in N.S. from 1942-1949 – Indian Affairs Branch (Federal)
Assimilation (Then & Now)

WHY DID THIS TAKE PLACE?

- Government was trying to both assimilate Indigenous people in fewer locations to control them.
- Government in effect was also trying to save money but spent more in the process of doing this instead.

Follow up studies/reports showed the lack of Indian Affairs officials to work together.
What did I learn today?

• Gained a broader range of history of the Mi’kmaq people of Nova Scotia
• Learned some of the real challenges that the Mi’kmaq people have experienced
• Hopefully better understand the complexities that have affected the overall quality of life for Mi’kmaq people.
• Leave here better educated
• Opportunity to improve relations through TRC recommendations.
Each year on October 1st Nova Scotia celebrates Mi’kmaq Treaty Day in honor of the Treaties signed between the British Crown and the Mi’kmaq people.
PETROGLYPHS
The eight (8) pointed Mi’kmaw Star found at the Bedford Barrens site depicts the special and ongoing relationship the Mi’kmaq people have with the stars and the environment still today.
This petroglyph that is carbon dated at a few hundred years old was found at the rocks of the Kejimikujik National Park depicts early European travelers to Mi’kmaki territory.
The Lord’s Prayer in Mi’kmaq Heiroglyphics

HEIROGLYPHIC WRITING IN MI’KMAQ TRANSLATION

This writing is in both Mi’kmaq and German
HEIROGLYPHIC IMAGES COMPARING SOME MI’KMAQ WRITINGS AND MEANINGS TO EGYPTIANS HIEROGLYPHICS
Mi’kmaq Flag
This version of the Mi’kmaq flag has flown and has been used for many generations. The true history of this flag has recently come with some very interesting likenesses... the Templars, the Protectors of the Holy Grail used a very similar flag during their reign.
Recent interest in this likeness has increased with the popularity and mention of the Mi’kmaq people on the Oak Island Mysteries Show with stories of the Templars rumored to have come to Nova Scotia.
Mi’kmaq Key Words to Remember

Mawiomi not Powwow
Mawiomi - A Gathering

Regalia not Costume
Regalia – traditional dress/wear

Wiku’om not Teepee
Wiku’om – is a traditional dwelling

Image Credit: Traditional Mi’kmaq Basket (Nova Scotia Archives)
Mi’kmaq Key Words to Remember

Saqamaw (Saw-gha-mow)
Traditional Leader (Chief)

Kji’puk’tuk (Gee-book-took)
City of Halifax (Great Harbour)

Wela’lin = Thank you (singular)
Wela’lioq = I thank you all (plural)

Image Credit: Traditional Mi’kmaq Basket (Nova Scotia Archives)
We do not have a word for GOODBYE… Rather we say…

“N’mul’tes”

This means...

“I will see you again”.

Image Credit: Alan Syliboys, Thunder Child (Petroglyph Humans)
Thank you!

Questions?

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