

## **NWAC President's Report**

This publication highlights the various activities the President has undertaken throughout the month of October.



### **LORRAINE WHITMAN**

Lorraine Whitman was elected as the President of the Native Women's Association of Canada on September 14, 2019. Prior to her presidency at NWAC, Ms. Whitman served as President of the Nova Scotia Native Women's Association and has been advocating for Indigenous women's rights over the past 45 years.

My Dear Friends,

The month of October was full of many days of honouring and days to mark; Harvest season, International Day of Rural Women, Women's History Month, Treaty day and of course, Thanksgiving. It is a time for celebration for many of our people but at the same time we have always given thanks every day for what we have - including the feast and celebrations that we have. It's not just the feast that we celebrate within one day and many do celebrate thanksgiving. It is up to each individual on how they choose to celebrate.

On this month too, Halloween took place and I do think of the differences and definitions between costumes versus regalia. Regalia is another word for clothing. It is a representation of our culture and depending on the event or situation, the regalia for an Indigenous person may differ. A costume however, is when someone dresses up as something else, for example, Halloween.

On October 1st we held to Treaty Day, a statutory event in Nova Scotia held each year on October 1st.

In 1985, the Supreme Court of Canada confirmed the validity of the Treaty of 1752, signed between "*Jean Baptiste Cope, Chief Sachem of the Tribe of Mick Mack Indians, Inhabiting the Eastern Coast of Said Province,*" and Peregrine Thomas Hopson, Governor of the Province of Nova Scotia – in its ruling of the court case, James Matthew Simon v. the Queen. This ruling not only validated our Aboriginal Treaty rights, but also confirmed the unique relationship which exists between the Mi'kmaq and the Crown, an agreement which is further maintained within the Covenant Chain, a series of interconnected treaties of mutual consent.

In 1986, Grand Chief of the Mi'kmaq nation, Donald Marshall Sr., invited all Mi'kmaw to "observe October 1, 1986, and every year thereafter as Treaty Day to commemorate the unique and special relationship that exists between the Mi'kmaq and her Majesty." Since then, the Union of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq, with the involvement of other reputable Mi'kmaq organizations and associations, has spearheaded the organizing of activities for the celebration of October 1st – Treaty Day.

Treaty Day festivities in Nova Scotia are first and foremost and reflect the beliefs of the Mi'kmaq people with respect to the obligations of our Treaty Rights – an aspiration only possible through the careful planning of various events and activities. Throughout the festivities, the Nova Scotia population are becoming more aware of the Mi'kmaq Nation and our history, which will only enrich their own cultural and historical knowledge of the



Lorraine Whitman  
@LWhitman\_NWAC

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Mi'kmaq, but will also enable the Mi'kmaq Nation to be recognized in a manner of which they are deserving.

October also saw some changes in our government with the announcement of the new cabinet ministers, which I felt was a breath of fresh air. I look forward to working with the Ministers in their new roles: Minister Marc Miller as the new Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, replacing Carolyn Bennett, and Patty Hajdu as the new Minister of Indigenous Services to name a few.

I hope your harvest month was a good one and I look forward to filling you in on the months to come!

Wela'lin

  
President Lorraine Whitman  
 [@LWhitman\\_NWAC](https://twitter.com/LWhitman_NWAC)





## My October Agenda

### Award at Government House, Nova Scotia

I was honoured to be a part of and to accept the 2020 Grand Chief Marshall Sr. Elders award at Government House which was awarded by Lieutenant Governor LeBlanc at the Nova Scotia Treaty Day Ceremony as well as the Truth and Reconciliation Event. At the event there was a commemorative flag raising and I met with the L'Nu Affairs Minister Karla MacFarlane and the new Premier of Nova Scotia Tim Houston at that time.



Lorraine Whitman @L... · 2021-10-02 ...

I am so honoured to be receiving the Grand Chief Marshall Elders Award at the NS Treaty Day Ceremony. Seen here; Lieutenant Gov LeBanc & his wife, my husband Tom and myself, celebrating Treaty Day!

#TreatyDay  
#NS



### Treaty Day, October 1



Lorraine Whitman @L... · 2021-10-01 ...

This year's theme of Mi'kmaq History Month is "Exploring Treaties and Treaty Relationships."

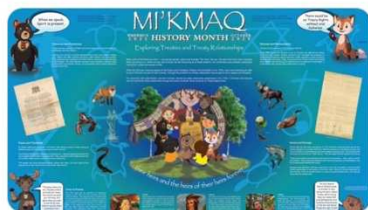
Happy Treaty Day!

#treatyday

#Mi'kmaqhistorymonth

#novascotia

#truthandreconciliation



I had the privilege of attending the October 1st treaty day and awards ceremony of Grand Chief Donald Sr. Elders Award, our youth award and scholarships which has been given to the Mi'kmaq people and to be able to see how refreshing it is for our youth to be out there and to be able to see their dreams and aspirations in life. It's been 2 years since we have not been together but the spirit is alive and well and it will be nice when we can get into the new norm of visiting our friends and family once the pandemic is controlled.

### Devour! Fest Event

Having taken place in Wolfville, NS, the 11th edition of Devour! marked the week-long return of the Devour! Opening Gala Reception coordinated by Taste of Nova Scotia featuring Nova Scotia's finest beverage purveyors and chefs coming together to create a sensory exploration celebrating Indigenous cuisine. Indigenous culinary supervisor, Joseph Shawana, Founder & Chair of Indigenous Culinary of Associated Nations, curated and oversaw all dishes across this delicious event. I was honoured to be a part of the event and started with opening remarks to the event. This is an important event that has the inclusion of Mi'kmaq and community of Glooscap involvement.

### NWAC Sisters in Spirit Vigil

October 4th is a day when we honour the lives of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people, support grieving families, and create opportunities for healing. The violence experienced by Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people in Canada is a genocide. In light of COVID-19, NWAC held a live-streaming Virtual Vigil which was initially postponed due to Facebook world-wide technical issues. It did take place however, on Oct 7, and we did commemorate the event in a

different way; having youth involved, contributing and showing their way of honouring the family members and poets. Our guest attendees were Bernie Scarf from the Yukon who took us on a virtual walking tour to see the MMIWG statue there and what it signified, a monument to honour the Missing and Murdered women, two-spirit and girls in the Yukon area. We were also honoured to have youth Lily Beth who created a painting to commemorate MMIWG, Julie Pellissier-Lush who quoted poetry and song in commemoration and a beautiful song that was sung by Jeremy Dutcher, Two-Spirit and Juno award winner to also commemorate. It was a beautiful and unforgettable event.



**Lorraine Whitman @L...** · 2021-10-25 · Relaxing the morning after our AGA meeting. Thank you to all the delegates for attending and for your comments. Looking forward to working together for our women, girls and our gender diverse.



### Travel to Ottawa, Resiliency Lodge, Chelsea QC & Lodge Events

In my travels from Nova Scotia to Quebec, the trip by road was long but it was well worth to be connected. My trip to the Resiliency Lodge due to the pandemic, I chose to drive to the lodge for my own health and safety. Once I arrived and saw the lodge for the 1st time, it was certainly overwhelming, so impressive and I believe all of our women deserve a place such as this, to be able to come into a place like the lodge for healing and to walk the beautiful pathways behind the lodge to

reflect and connect to Mother Earth. I was able to take the time to visit the Cultural Innovation Centre in Gatineau with our CEO and spent some time with our NWAC staff through various meetings.

### BC PTMA Virtual Meeting

We were able to meet with BC PTMAS as we were able to with all of our PTMA's, in "What can we do for you." Our CEO Lynne Groulx and myself met with BC in order to assist in building up their capacity as a PTMAS in what services we can provide in order that they would be able to build up their capacity.

### APTN & CBC INTERVIEWS RE VIGILS

Informing the general public in honouring and commemorating our sisters globally. We were not deterred by the Facebook tech issues, and the vigils continued to be held during the week. I am grateful to our participants who were able to accommodate the changing vigil times and still attended.



## ALBERTA SIS VIGIL

Attended the Sisters in Spirit Vigil via Zoom with our Alberta PTMA, Lisa Webber. It was an online gathering for the Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women on Oct 4th a ceremony and community update on the action plan to address violence against Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit people was discussed. I was honoured and privileged to be a part of the Sisters in Spirit Vigil.

## LEAD WITH LOVE EVENT

Lead with Love was a documentary that was shown on Oct 9th, which I had taken part in the creation of (interviewed in), which held its debut, opening night in Halifax. Lead with Love is about leading from the heart, a new series sharing candid conversations about racism in Nova Scotia.

## AGA MEETING

It was enjoyable to be able to hold the AGA from the Lodge and be able to see all of the PTMA's and all of their board members at this event. Hopefully in the new year we will be able to meet in person. COVID has made a new norm in our lives and we work with it under the circumstances.

## VIRTUAL ENHANCED CITIZENSHIP

I was honored to take part and lead the opening remarks and prayer for the enhanced citizenship event where new citizens were sworn in. Due to the pandemic it was a virtual event this year.



Lorraine Whitman @L... · 2021-10-12 \*\*\*

A very special thank you to those who attended our Sisters in Spirit Vigil last week. We had a great turnout & our Elders with our guests (Julie from PEI, Bernie from the Yukon Aboriginal Council, Youth Advocate Lily Beth from NS and [@jdutchermusic](#)

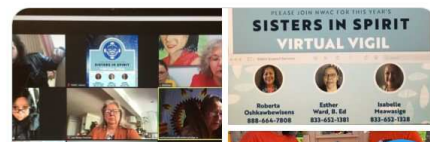
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Lorraine Whitman @L... · 2021-10-12 \*\*\*

Our thoughts continue to be with our Missing & Murdered [#Indigenous](#) Women, Girls and Gender diverse & their families.

[#MMIWG](#)  
[#MMIWG2S](#)







**Lorraine Whitman** @L... · 2021-10-05 ...

Our Sisters in Spirit Vigils are so important. We are there walking with the MMIWG families to let them know they are not alone. Thank you to all that have attended events across the country. To the families: We stand up with you & support you.

@AcadiaU  
#MMIWG  
#SISVigil



**Lorraine Whitman** @L... · 2021-10-12 ...

Pictured here is my shoulder [#basket](#) (as opposed to a current purse). This is one that I embrace and carry with pride as it expresses my identity as a Mi'kmaq woman. So proud to wear a [#traditional](#) [#handmade](#) creation!





Native Women's  
Association of Canada



L'Association des  
femmes autochtones  
du Canada

[nwac.ca](http://nwac.ca)