

**History
of the
Native
Women's
Association
of the N.W.T.
and
Resource
Manual**

History of the Native Women's Association of the N.W.T. and Resource Manual

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Funded by the Secretary of State with support from its
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reface

This resource manual was compiled because of the many inquiries and requests for information to the YVA/MAIT. It was also a good opportunity to compile the chronological events of the NWA/NWT since its beginnings at the Founding Conference in 1977 and to recognize some of the many native women living in the N.W.T. who have been involved with the organization.

It is meant to provide information about the NWA/NWT and also to encourage individuals and community groups to set up their own problem-solving structures.

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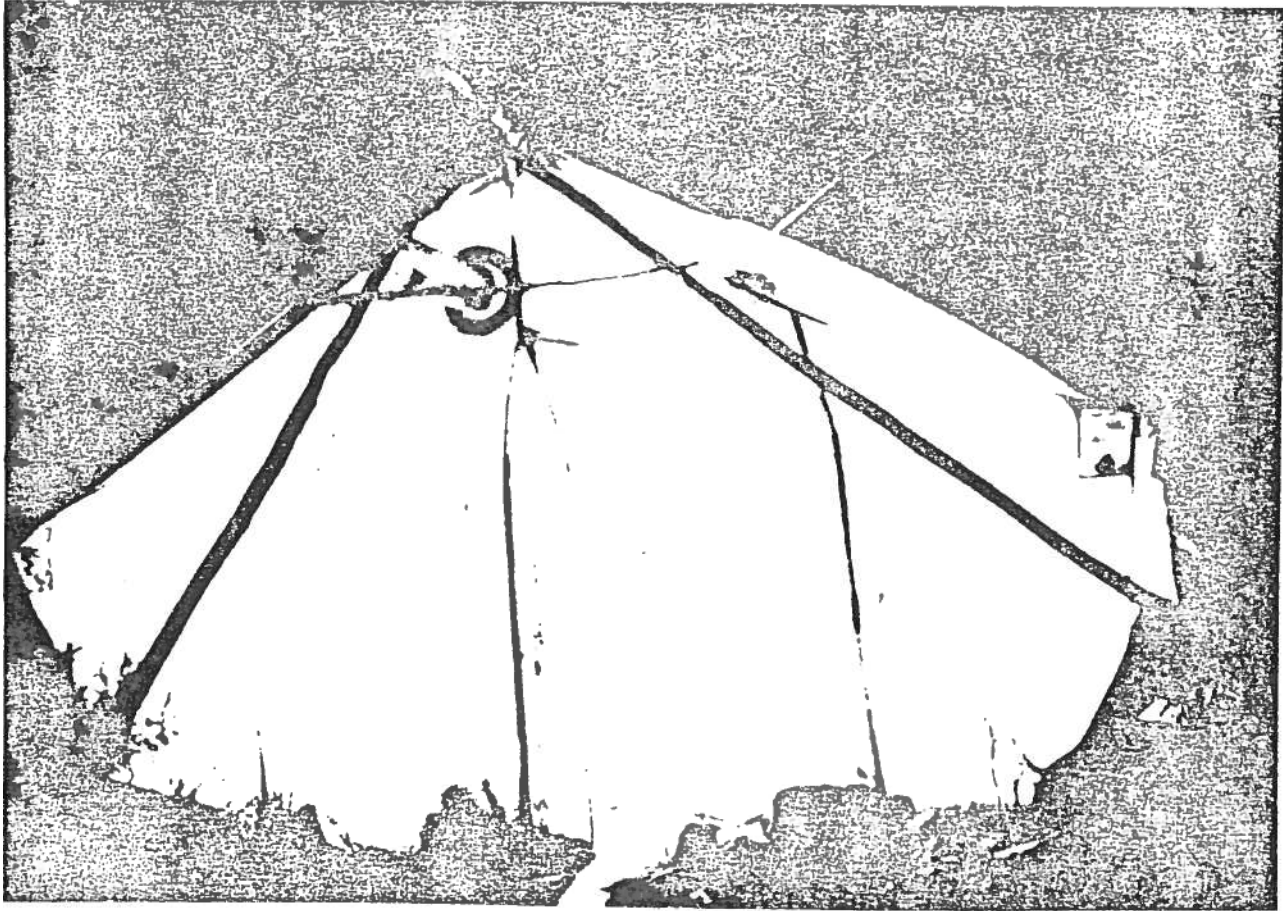
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I Aim Siih h/N/ S

Native women's love and strength of culture form the backbone of the native family and community.



Philosophy of the Native Women's Association of the N.W.T.

To develop programs by Native women of the N.W.T. so that we function in areas that affect our daily lives: economically, educationally, culturally, political-ly and socially.

Introduction

The history of the NWA/NWT is a brief one, spanning only a few years since its beginnings at the founding conference in 1977. The chronological (by date) unfolding of the Native Women's Association is a small part of the whole story — it is an example of the perseverance, faith and courage of the native women of the North throughout unwritten as well as written history. It is an example of the love and strength of culture that forms the backbone of the native family and community and of the bonds that join native people of all tribes and nations together through their women.

Often the historian has neglected the women of the past and emphasized instead political events and inventions largely engineered by the men. We hope that this manual will recognize the equally valuable contribution of native women in the areas they know best — health, education, child care, social services and self-development. Although not often measurable like historical events in the political arena, the positive and strengthening impact of these women's efforts will be felt in their children and children's children for generations to come.

1970's

Highlights

- 1974 Native Women's Association of Canada incorporated
- 1975 Native Women's Conference, Ottawa
- 1975 Native Women's Conference, Pangnirtung
- Berger Inquiry on the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline

In the 1970's there were women's groups in the N.W.T. who represented women in general. There were also male-dominated native organizations which separately represented the Inuit, Dene and Metis political

interests. However, there was no unified group of native women in the N.W.T. to represent their own grassroots interests and priorities. The moccasin telegraph was really the only existing communications network.

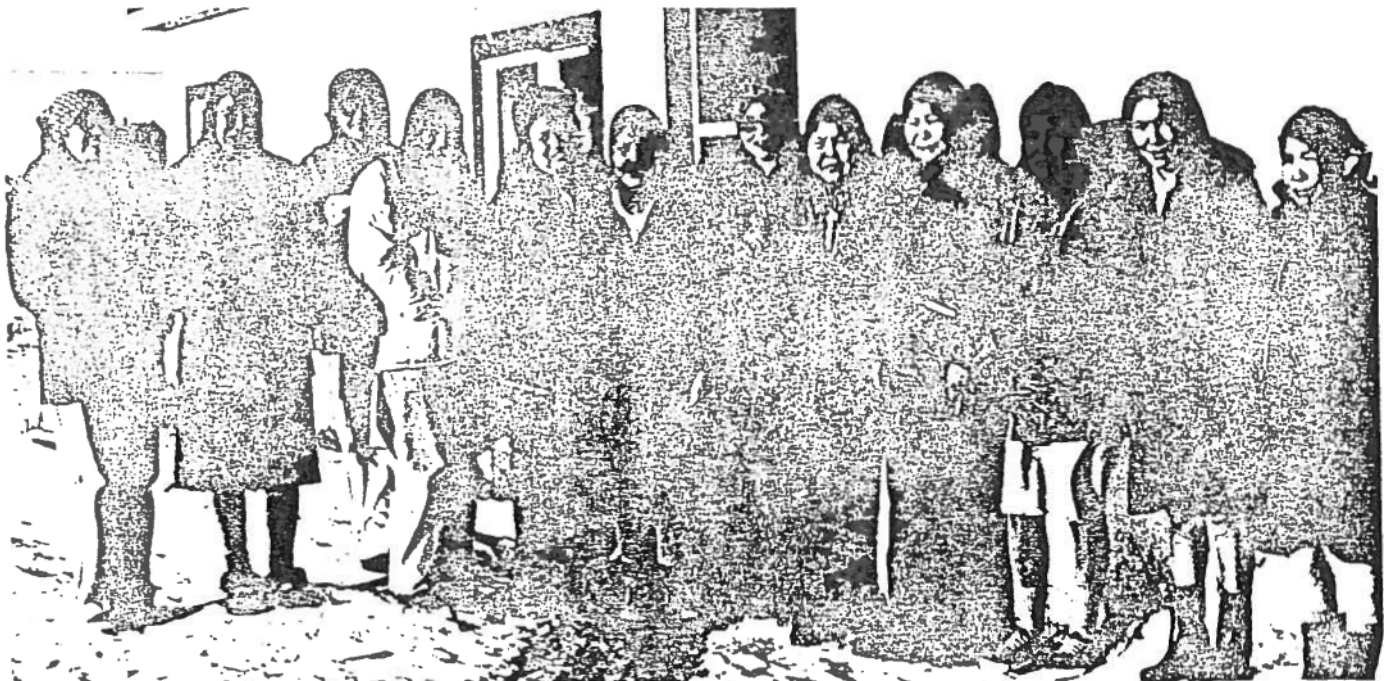
At this same time, southern native women's groups were starting to organize around issues such as discrimination under the Indian Act. Individual native women in the N.W.T. attended some southern native women's conferences and started promoting their own regional concerns. At that time these concerns included the political issues of the proposed Mackenzie Valley Pipeline and land claims and the immediate social and economic issues affecting Northern women and their communities directly.

Numerous submissions by Dene, Metis and Inuit women were also made to the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry headed by Mr. Justice Thomas Berger. They emphasized the vital importance to the North of its women and children and their concerns about the human element of development and the problems of an educational system that encourages confusion about people's values, aims and identities.

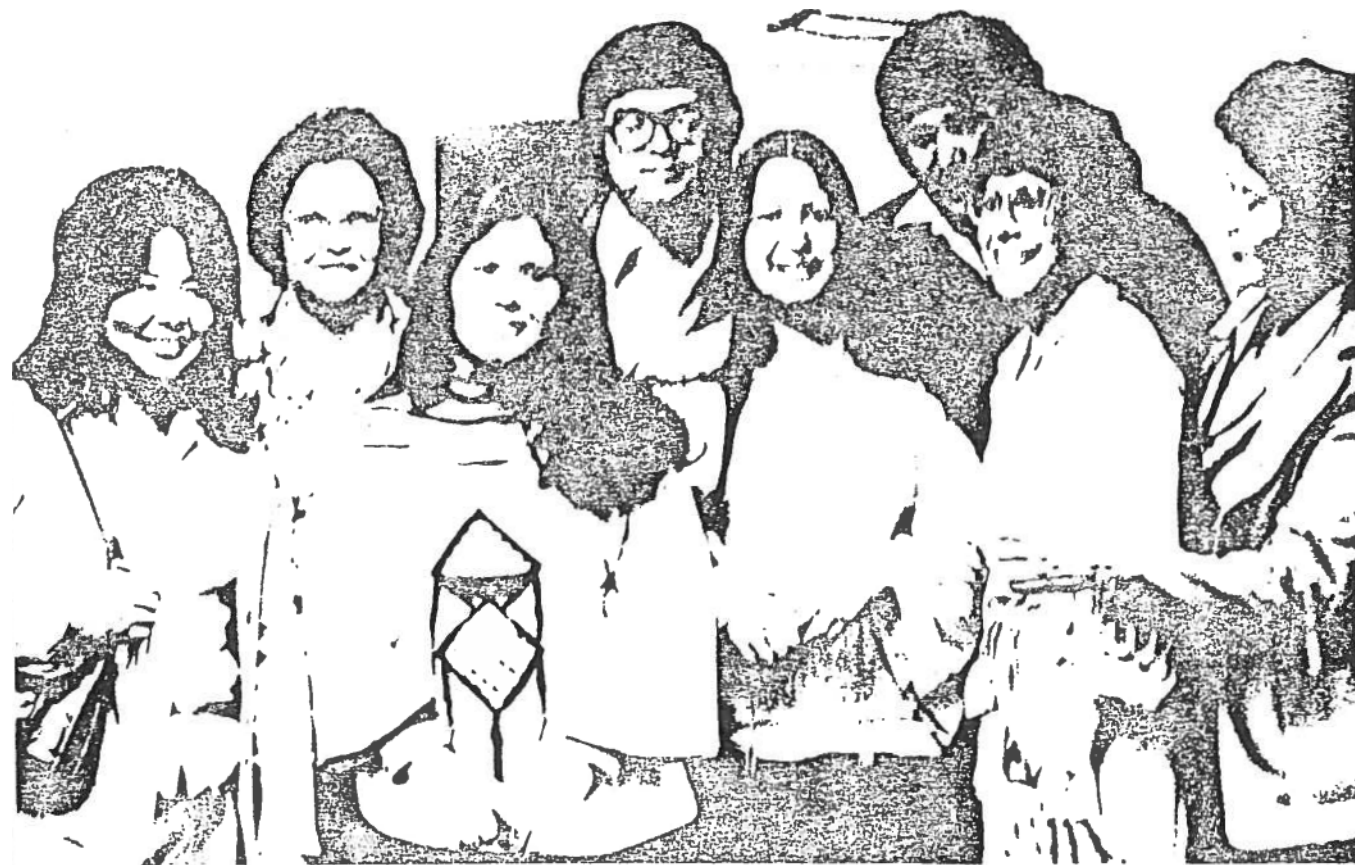
The Native Women's Association of Canada was incorporated in 1974 to promote the interests of all Canadian native women regardless of status. Bertha Clark Jones, from Fort McMurray, Alberta, was the first NWAC President and later worked for the NWA/NWT for a period in 1979.

Events such as International Women's Year in 1975 gave encouragement to Northern native women to get together to voice their particular concerns. An Inuit Women's Conference was held in Pangnirtung in the summer of 1975. Some women from the Delta attended.

Also, some N.W.T. communities started to organize their own local native women's groups. Esther Lazore, Adeline Landry and Margaret Vandell started a group in Fort Providence with about 15 local women to work on various community projects including arts and crafts.



The Fort Providence women's group formed in 1975.



N Heron/INCS

Founders and early members of the NWANWT: (from left to right) Muriel Betsina, Albertine Rodh, Alizette Tatsiechele, Esther Lazore, Eliza Lawrence and Bertha Allen.

Native Women's Association of the N.W.T. Founding Conference

In 1976 the idea of an all-native womens conference was conceived for the native women of the Mackenzie Valley and Western Arctic, spearheaded by a planning committee including Bertha Allen (Inuvik), Albertine Rodh (Fort Simpson), Eliza Lawrence (Fort Resolution/Yellowknife) and Alizette Potfighter (Detah).

Right from the beginning they decided that all North-ern native women, regardless of status — Metis, Dene or Inuit — would be welcome to participate.

Funding was provided by the Department of Indian & Inuit Affairs and Doreen Mullins of that Department helped with the planning for the initial meeting. At the second planning meeting of the interim committee, Gina Blondin was hired to co-ordinate the first native women's conference to be held in the summer of 1977.

Albertine Rodh felt that getting involved with the native women's assembly was great. "The reason was there; the time was right. The most important thing the native women wanted to do was to prove they could accomplish something and we've done that...there's a lot of hidden talent out there."

The historic meeting took place July 19-21, 1977, at Akaitcho Hall in Yellowknife and delegates attended from 29 different communities in the Mackenzie Valley and Western Arctic. The theme was "Community Action".

The Founding Conference opened with prayers by Elizabeth Yakelaya from Fort Norman, Bertha Allen, later elected as First President of the NWA/NWT, chaired the meeting. She encouraged all the women who attended to discuss and identify specific issues that concerned them and then begin to act constructively in their own communities to solve them. Unity was the key to effective action, she stressed.

Mary Ann Lavallee, a native woman from the Cowessess Reserve in Saskatchewan, was the keynote speaker. Mrs. Lavallee told the delegates that they represent the soul of the North and that it was up to them to educate their children in their own culture and languages. Her main message was that women are the key to the survival of the native people and in order for them to continue they must first love their people, love their ways and live them instead of just talking.

The first executive of the Native Women's Association was formed at this founding conference:

- Bertha Allen, President;
- Rosa Brunt, Vice-President;
- Esther Lazore, Secretary-Treasurer;
- Alizette Potfighter (Tatsiechele), Secretary.

From day one arts and crafts was of major concern to the women. Other concerns were alcohol abuse, foster care and adoption of native children, nutrition, health and education. These were the issues around which the Native Women's Association was formed.

1978

Highlights

- Native Women's Association of the NWT incorporated
- First Program (Foster Care)
- First CORE funding from Territorial Government
- Opened office in Professional Building, Yellowknife
 - Assembly theme: "Working in Unity to Help Ourselves"
- First Native Woman of the Year: Bertha Allen

Incorporation

Bertha Allen was largely responsible for putting together the NWT's new constitution. She had gathered constitutions from many other native groups to get ideas. It was at that time that John Bayly, a lawyer, arrived at her door in Inuvik and, in return for a pair of moccasins for his wife, helped Bertha draw up the new constitution.

The Native Women's Association of the NWT was officially registered under the Societies Ordinance, March 15, 1978, and the document was signed by the founders of the Association: Bertha Allen, Alizette Tatsiechele (Pot-fighter), Eliza Lawrence, Albertine Rodh and Gina Blondin.

The society was to operate in the Western Arctic and Mackenzie Valley.

Its objectives:

1. To work towards a solution of social, economic and political problems and to promote the interests of native women in the N.W.T.
2. To encourage native women to assume a more positive and active role in assisting native peoples to achieve their rightful place in society.



3. To assist and encourage native women to contribute ideas and skills to the social, cultural and economic development of native society.

1. To assist local women's groups in the development and management of their local projects within the N.W.T.

2. To study, in conjunction with other native organizations, problems confronting native women and to make representation to government on behalf of native women.

Bertha Allen

Born and raised in Old Crow, Yukon, and resident of Inuvik since 1956, Bertha Allen was a founding member of the NWA/NWT. She has been President of the Association since the 1977 Founding Conference. Bertha was also the third person to hold office as President of the Native Women's Association of Canada.

One of the goals which Bertha cited as her "dream" was to see the establishment of a native arts and crafts program controlled by native people. This goal became a reality in 1980 with the formation of the NWA Arts Crafts Program.

In 1984 Bertha was elected as President of the N.W.T. Status of Women Advisory Committee, thus expanding her areas of interest to include all women in the N.W.T. while retaining her dedication to the preservation, well-being and advancement of native culture.

Bertha was honored at the 1981 NWAC Conference in Regina for her long service to the national organization. She was also chosen Native Woman of the Year at the 1978 NWA Assembly in Fort Smith.



As Bertha Allen stated in her address to the Legislative Assembly, February 19, 1982: "We would rather concentrate our energy at the grassroot level. Our priority areas remain in health, education, social services and the provision of opportunities to increase self-sufficiency."

Membership in the Native Women's Association was open to any native woman residing in the N.W.T., including Status, non-Status, Metis and Inuit.

Until the 1983 assembly the NWA/NWT had an Executive consisting of a President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary plus a Board of Directors representing five regions — the South Great Slave, North Great Slave, South Mackenzie, North Mackenzie and Mackenzie Delta. These positions were elected every two years. At the 1983 Assembly in Yellowknife an additional Executive position was added — 2nd Vice President in charge of Arts and Crafts, and the Regions were renamed and increased to six — Delta, Sahtu, South Slave, North Slave, Deh Cho and Deh Cho Gha.

The By-laws were also amended so that elections would be held each year for half the Executive and Board to encourage continuity of NWA business.

When the NWA/NWT first began, it was a very small organization with one employee, Greta Baetz, who started as Co-ordinator of the Foster Care Program. Greta is still with the NWA/NWT, currently as General Manager of the Arts & Crafts Program. She also held the elected position of Treasurer on the Executive for several years until 1983.

The Association first worked out of a corner of the Mental Health office and also at Eliza Lawrence's Home Management office then run by the Territorial Government's Department of Education. Greta had a portable filing cabinet that she carried under her arm from place to place.



Cooking dinner for Yellowknife/Detah elders

Programs and Activities

One of the NWA's first projects was a Foster Care Program started in February, 1978 with a grant of \$25,000 received from the Territorial Government's Department of Social Development. This Program was co-ordinated by Greta Baetz. Five fieldworkers visited the communities of the Mackenzie Valley to survey potential for native foster homes. This information was then passed on to the Department of Social Services for follow-up.

Fort Providence was very successful with this Program, bringing back six foster children and continuing to place others within native families in the community.

In June, 1978, Greta Baetz was appointed to the NWT Alcohol & Drug Co-ordinating Council which replaced the inactive Territorial Youth Council. The NWA/NWT was represented on this Council until 1981 when the Council was reduced in size.

Greta Baetz

Greta Baetz has worked for the N.W.T. since 1978 when she was the first employee hired to co-ordinate a foster care program. Since then she has "worn many hats" in the Association including her present position of General Manager of the Arts & Crafts Program. Greta also served on the NWA Board for many years and on the Board of the Native Women's Association of Canada for a year.

Born on a trapline in the Mackenzie Delta, Greta was a resident of Inuvik for many years until moving to the Yellowknife/Rae-Edzo area in 1968 with her husband and four children.

Greta was chosen Native Woman of the Year at the NWA 1980 Annual Assembly in honour of her dedication and loyalty to the Association as well as her hard work in getting the Arts & Crafts Program started.



In September, 1978, Margaret Vandell of Fort Providence won a prize of \$100 for designing the emblem of the NWA/NWT. Dora Minoza of Fort Providence also produced two quillwork designs of the same emblem.

Also, in September, 1978, Bertha Allen, Eliza Lawrence and Nancy Heron (Austin), representing the NWA/NWT, went before the Territorial Council at the suggestion of Dave Nickerson to request funding for the Association. They got a good response from the Council and were granted Core funds of \$25,000/year for two years.

In the fall of 1978, the Yellowknife Native Women's Group used the portable near Akaitcho Hall for evening classes in native language and handicrafts. This was followed by the NWA/NWT takeover of the Home Management portable in 1979.

Annual Assembly, Fort Smith

The Second Native Women's Annual Meeting was held in Fort Smith, July 26-28 with the theme "Working in Unity to Help Ourselves". Sixty delegates attended from 29 communities.

The new Executive elected were:

- Bertha Allen, President
- Nancy Heron (Austin), Vice-President
- Sylvia Haslem, Secretary
- Esther Lazore, Treasurer

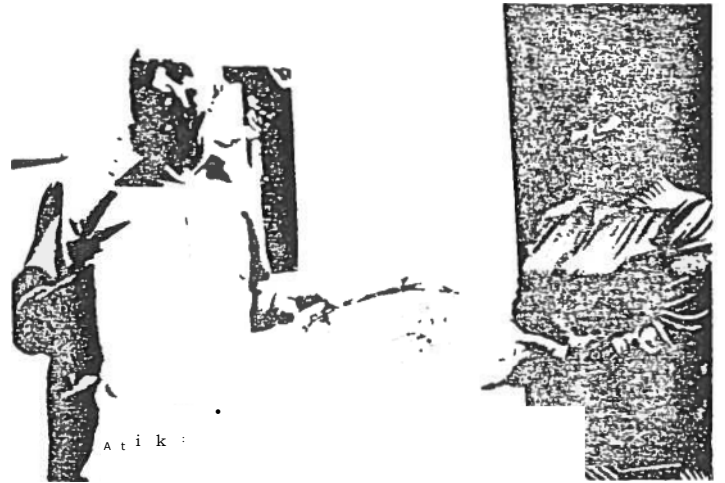
Again, arts and crafts were of major importance and an Arts and Crafts Executive was formed. (This Executive was eliminated at the 1979 Meeting when a resolution was passed to keep the Arts & Crafts Program under the NWA/NWT.)

Nancy Austin (Heron)

Nancy Austin was first elected to the NWA Executive as Vice-President in 1978 and has held various positions on the NWA Board since that time.

Nancy was born in Fort Smith in 1954 and attended school in Fort Smith, Fort Simpson and Yellowknife. She is married with one child and has lived in Yellowknife since 1972.

In addition to her work with the NWA/NWT Nancy has been involved on the T.H.I.S. Board, Canada Council and the Board of N.C.S.



The first Native Woman of the Year award was presented to Bertha Allen at the 1978 Assembly by Paul Kaeser, Mayor of Fort Smith.

- Maggie Kurszewski, President--
- Mavis Michaud, Vice-President
- Mary Alice Hamilton, Secretary
- Greta Baetz, Treasurer.

Of particular interest to the delegates was the business aspect and marketing of crafts and an interest in joining with NIACC (National Indian Arts & Crafts Corporation).

Bertha Allen stated in her opening remarks to the delegates: "It is my sincere hope that we will continue to work in harmony towards the betterment of all native people. We cannot afford to be divided; you realize that only through unity we gain strength to meet our goals."





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The first Arts & Crafts Board.

Bertha Allen was elected by the delegates as the first Native Woman of the Year, an award which has been presented to outstanding native women yearly since that time.

Vivian Koe was also presented with a plaque by the Mayor of Fort Smith, Paul Kaeser, for her outstanding dedication to the NWA/NWT.

Esther Lazore from Fort Providence gave a report which described several projects undertaken by the 15 native women on the Fort Providence Committee of Native Women including: events for senior citizens; takeover of the handicraft shop and renaming it Red Willow Crafts; a successful foster program; a six-woman Education Committee (now the Local Education Authority) which acts as an advisory committee; and a proposed cultural inclusion program for the schools in Providence.

1979 Highlights

- NWA/NWT takes over Home Management Program from the Department of Education
- New offices in the Native Communications Building
- Assembly theme: "Working Together for Tomorrow"

International Year of the Child Programs and Activities

At an Executive meeting in January, 1979, it was announced that the Department of Indian & Inuit Affairs had provided a grant of \$15,000 as a start-up fund for arts and crafts with Bertha Allen as coordinator. The NWA/NWT moved their offices in June, 1979, to the Native Communications Building.



Renda Coe, Director of Finance with her brother Mike Paulette.



The NWA's International Year of the Child Float won first prize at the 1979 Canada Day parade.

Bertha Clarke was the NWA's first Executive Director and worked in that position for a short period in 1979 before returning to Alberta. Bertha had previously been President of the Voice of Alberta Native Women's Society as well as first President of the NWAC in 1974. She once stated that "working with people is like being a housewife in that your work is never done."

When Bertha Clarke resigned, Greta Baetz took over the position of Executive Director. Renda Coe was hired in the fall as financial controller, a position she still holds in the NWA.

At the end of 1979, some observations were made by Greta Baetz: "more native women are becoming interested in community affairs and personal development...Several women have sought to further their education. With the new awareness of self-worth comes the need of additional employment opportunities near the home and the need for financing for cottage industries."

Home Management

The Native Women's Association of the N.W.T. took over the Home Management Program from the Territorial Government's Department of Education in February, 1979, to provide programs to the Yellowknife area. In April, a lease was signed with the Department of Education for the Home Management portable near Akaitcho Hall for a one-year term.

Activities undertaken by the new Home Management Program in 1979 included:

- grooming, nutrition and budgeting programs for young working people;
- community services visits;
- International Year of the Child Float, July 1, which won first prize; 12 children, each representing one month of the year, wore beaded sashes. Margaret Minoza did almost all the headwork;
- Summer Student Gardening Project (funded by Employment & Immigration Canada "Young Canada Works") for four student gardeners;
- Program in Detah and Old Town Yellowknife on planning and operating rummage sales including how to alter second-hand clothes;
- Recreational summer program, "Plots for Tots" for students in Rae Lakes, Sachs Harbour, Rae and Lac La Martre; Flory Lawrence and Alizette Tatsiechele were the co-ordinators for this program;



Marie-Alice Hamilton, First Home Management Co-ordinator.

- luncheons throughout the year for various community groups with guests speakers; also prepared trays for Joe Clark and 80 other people on his plane, using native foods;
- Christmas dinner for the elders in the Yellowknife/Detah area;
- parka-making classes and native crafts as well as crocheting and knitting.

Annual Assembly, Rae-Edzo

The 1979 Annual Assembly took place September 21-24 at Jimmy Bruneau School in Rae-Edzo. Its theme was "Working Together for Tomorrow".

The new Executive and Board and their alternates for 1979/80 were elected:

- Bertha Allen, President (Inuvik)
- Margaret Cook, Vice-President (Grande Prairie/Yellowknife)
- Sylvia Haslem, Secretary (Fort Smith)
- Greta Baetz, Treasurer (Yellowknife)
- North Mackenzie, Muriel Betsina (Yellowknife) and Bernice Neyellie (Fort Franklin)
- Delta, Annie Gordon (Aklavik) and Agnes Felix (Tuktoyaktuk)
- Simpson-Liard, Albertine Rodh (Fort Simpson)
- North Slave, Vicky Desjarlais (Snowdrift) and Vitaline Lafferty (Yellowknife)
- South Slave, Berna Mandeville (Hay River) and Christine Balsillie (Fort Resolution)



A relaxing way to campaign during the 1979 Annual Assembly, in Rae.

Topics covered at 1979 conference included health, education, juvenile offenders and arts and crafts.

Violet Camsell, President of the Rae native women's group welcomed delegates on behalf of the native women of the community. Several communities gave reports on the activities of their local native women's groups:

Margaret Cook started the annual tradition of giving funny awards to the delegates. This became a popular part of NWA Assemblies.



Alizette Tatsiechele and Florie Lawrence, co-ordinators of the 1979 Home Management Gardening



(from left to right) Eliza Lawrence, Mary Firth, Sr. and Bertha Allen.

Other awards presented at this meeting:

- Valerie Conrad received an Outstanding Sports Award by the NWA/NWT in co-operation with world organizations in recognizing children during International Year of the Child.
- Bertha Gruben of Paulatuk was presented with the Woman of the Year Award. She had won the Good Woman award for five years in a row at the Northern Games.
- Mary Firth, Sr. was presented with a plaque for being the first native policewoman of the NWT.

- Eliza Lawrence was presented with a plaque for her support and joviality.

Important resolutions made at the 1979 Assembly included:

- That Arts & Crafts remain under the NWA/NWT and that membership stay the same for both; also that the NWA use the same regional representatives for Arts & Crafts as for the Association Board.
- That the Department of Indian & Inuit Affairs be asked for funding for arts and crafts because of NIACC's restrictions on membership for status Indian people.
- That the Association central office be located in Yellowknife.

1980

Highlights

- NWA/NWT takes over Inuvik Home Management Program from the Territorial Government's Department of Education
- Arts & Crafts program began, funded by NIACC
- NWA/NWT moves to the Laurentian Building, Yellowknife
- Assembly theme: "Preserving Our Culture"

Programs and Activities

Bertha Allen made an address on April 18, 1980, to the Canadian Consultative Council on Multiculturalism, on behalf of the NWA/NWT, to help the CCCM become



Board members elected at the 1979 Assembly included: (from left to right) Berna Mandeville, Bernice Neyallie, Annie Gordon, Vickie Desjarlais, Vitaline Lafferty (front) Muriel Betsina and Agnes Felix.

re knowledgeable and sensitive to native peoples. In at address. Bertha stated: "We are a sharing people. ow we want to share legally and in a recognized way r culture and the benefits that the resources of our ntry have brought to others...to you.

"There is little recognition for the traditional values f the native culture...(we want) more control over the ings that affect us"

n annual Board members workshop was held April 20-25, 1980, funded by the Department of Indian & In-uit Affairs. Its purpose was to strengthen participation in e NWA/NWT by Board members representing their ommunities. A first Life Skills workshop was also in-cluded for three days and covered areas such as effec-ive listening/questioning; describing and responding to elings: giving constructive criticism; and helpful and rmful group beha\ lours. This kind of workshop has en given to Board and staff of the NWA/NWT on a arly basis.

1980 was the second year of the Yellowknife ome Management Program. Their activities in that ear icluded:

A spring program to teach native crafts and cooking to native foster children, after which the foster parents of these children expressed deep appreciation.

In October, TV Ontario did some filming of nati\ e cooking with two ladies and five school girls giving a cooking demonstration. Marie Alice Hamilton explai-ened why the NWiN stressed native foods o\ er store-bought foods.



innock-making time in the Inuvik Home Management 'then.

Inuvik Home Management

The first programs of the Inuvik Home Managemen staffed by Agnes Jones and Esther McLeod, included

- teaching the Northern content of high school horn economics classes including sewing and cooking;
- night classes in
- six-week prenatal ment building b
- soup and banno To the end o Management



Elizabeth Dr% geese repairs a m'ocassin — one of the ser- vices offered he the Arts & Craft q-\ ing center.

Arts and Crafts

In November, 1979, Lutra Associates prepared a proposal for a feasibility study for arts and crafts. The purpose of the arts and crafts development was:

- to create more job opportunities that are meaningful to native women;
- to involve the producer in the ownership of a business;
- to encourage the preservation and development of traditional native skills, and;
- hopefully, to provide an equitable return for goods pro-duced, both from a monetary and a personal perspective.



Beaded, furred and tassled mitts are some of the many fine-quality products marketed through the Arts & Crafts retail store.

The Arts & Crafts Program began in 1980 with initial contacts with the communities to look at their special needs. A meeting was held July 10, 1980, with representatives of the Department of Indian & Inuit Affairs and NIACC, after which the NW AINWT Executive decided to apply for admission to the National Indian Arts & Crafts Corporation (NIACC).

In November, 1980, there was a one-week meeting with Regional Co-ordinators which covered several areas including a review of the arts and crafts industry in Canada and the NWT and organizing training programs.

The first few months were also spent developing management systems and working closely with the auditors, developing a LEAP Program for training, and planning a retail outlet in Yellowknife.

Annual Assembly, Yellowknife

The theme of the 4th Annual Assembly held September 19-21, 1980 in Yellowknife was "Preserving Our Culture".

Mary Firth, Sr. gave the opening prayer in Loucheux.

Bertha Allen was the last person to welcome the delegates and explained the theme of the Assembly: "It means having pride in what you are. Restore your culture for your children and grandchildren. Respect yourself, respect other people's values. Treat others as you would like to be treated. Share 'sith one another your values in life. It's up to us to keep the culture and teach our children." Bertha also encouraged the delegates to get involved in the schools.

Workshop discussion topics included housing, public health, rights for Indian women and land claims, cultural awareness, NWT Courtworkers Association and South African arts and crafts.

Greta Baetz was chosen by the delegates as 1980 Native Woman of the Year.



Sarah Gardlund of Aklavik hams it up with some of the South African crafts displayed at the 1980 Annual Assembly.



Mary Firth, Sr.

Mary Firth, Sr. was born in the Yukon in 1916 and moved to Fort MacPherson after her marriage to William Firth in 1933. Mary has raised 14 children — four girls and 10 boys, and has many grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She is the mother of the first native MP in the NWT — Beverly Firth.

As well as being a very supportive NWA/NWT elder, Mary is also an elder to the Native Women's Association of Canada. Lack of formal education has never deterred Mary from working for the betterment of her community and NWT native people.

1981

Highlights

- 4-day health conference in Rae-Edzo
- 3-day meeting on alcohol abuse in Inuvik
- Move to new premises on Franklin Avenue and 52nd Street, Yellowknife
- NWA Newsletter began
- First Arts & Crafts standardization workshop and tailor-ing kit
- Annual Assembly theme: "Exploring Economic Development Options for Native Women"
- First Native Student of the Year award



Agnes Semmler

Agnes Semmler, long-time resident of Inuvik, has been an outspoken and energetic advocate of native rights and culture in the N.W.T.

Agnes personally educated her children through Alberta correspondence courses and taught them to respect the ways of native people. Some of her own achievements have been:

- founding member of C.O.P.E.
- president of N.W.T. Trappers Association
- first Northern native woman to be appointed Justice of the Peace in 1975
- manager of Inuvil, Regional Craft Shop from 1968 to 1972
- Governor General's "Person's Case Award" in 1980
- Deputy Commissioner of the N.W.T.

Agnes was honoured in June, 1981, by the Native Women's Association of Canada with two major achievement awards for her outstanding contribution to community development in the North.

Programs and Activities

A three-day meeting on alcohol abuse was held by the NWA/NWT March 13-15, 1981, at the Inuvik Home Management portable. Twenty women attended from seven communities and they unanimously agreed that alcohol must be controlled in order to save their culture, traditional way of life, integrity and their families, particularly the children. They also agreed that there should be more native counsellors in the schools.

Bertha Allen expressed the feelings of the delegates: "the native people want to step out on their own and take control of their people, their problems and their future".

From March 23-26, 1981, a four-day health conference was held in Rae-Edzo and attended by 30 Dene chiefs, women and children. The conference, coordinated by Carol Roberts, then Executive Director of the NWA, was held in response to recommendations made by Mr. Justice Thomas Berger in his report of 1977 to evaluate the effectiveness of health service delivery to native people in the NWT.

Several problems were brought up including: lack of sanitation in communities; some lack of doctors and other medical personnel including CHR's; the deterioration of nutrition leading to poor teeth in children; and the lack of mental health counsellors.

Fourteen recommendations were made as a result of the conference which were given to the National Indian Brotherhood to be considered with other national health concerns.

In June, 1981, nine NWT women attended the 7th Annual National Native Women's Conference in Regina.

Bertha Allen was honored for her long service to the national organization and Agnes Semmler, then 70 years old, of Inuvik, received two major achievement awards for her outstanding contribution to community development in the North.

The Arts and Crafts Program of the NWA/NWT moved to new premises in July, 1981, on Franklin Avenue at 52nd Street in Yellowknife. The Association offices and resource centre also made their home in the new location which offered a better main-street location and opportunities for expansion of the Arts & Crafts Program.

One of these opportunities was a standardization workshop held in Yellowknife August 13 and 14 and sponsored by the Arts & Crafts Program. New finishing techniques and standard-size patterns were introduced to women from NWT communities who had been chosen as participants for their abilities in sewing and handicrafts. Some old-style garments were re-introduced. After the workshop, Mary Anne Rabesca, its instructor, produced Tailoring Kits for the communities.

In October, 1981, the Home Management Program managed to make over 800 hannock for the Arts Festival Tea & Bannock Revue in Yellowknife and Bertha Allen, Greta Baetz and Margaret Cook of the Arts & Crafts Program participated in the National Christmas Sale of Arts & Crafts in Edmonton.

By December, 1981, there were eight staff at the Yellowknife NWA/NWT headquarters office, and the first Native Women's Newsletter was produced by Marie Blackduck. Funding for the Newsletter was provided by

the Secretary of State. Its purpose was to provide up-to-date information about, by and for native women and to encourage and promote the development of the NWA/NWT.

Also in December, Mrs. Mary Samide of Edmonton conducted a three-day seminar on developing effective leadership skills in Yellowknife, sponsored by the NWA/NWT. About 14 women from Mackenzie Valley communities and NWA staff attended. Mrs. Samide stated after the workshop: "I don't think I've ever been in an area of work with a group of people who are as politically aware and as interested in the entire community environment."



Marie Blackduck, first NWA Newsletter Editor.

Annual Assembly Fort Simpson

Theme: "Exploring Economic Development Options for Native Women."

Mrs. Clara Neyendo of Fort McPherson said the opening prayer in Loucheux. Bertha Allen, in her opening address, mentioned the responsibilities and pressures of being President of an organization like the NWA. "Being a president is not a glory position; there's a lot of stress and hard work. You will always be negotiating for funds and thinking a lot. Make sure the person you choose to run has a record of hard work and can get along with people; that's very important."

Chief Jim Antoine of Fort Simpson also welcomed the delegates and stressed the importance of being a Dene: he was proud of the people who were trying to improve the lives of the Dene and of the native women who are the backbone of the Indian Nation.

The new Board and Executive were elected for a two year term:

- Bertha Allen, President
- Margaret Cook, Vice-President
- Hilda Antoine, Secretary
- Greta Baetz, Treasurer
- North Mackenzie, Esther Charney
- Delta, Agnes Jones

- Simpson-Liard, Ethel Lamothe
- North Slave, Elsie Casaway
- South Slave, Stella Waslyshyn

On the second day of the Assembly, Adele Hardisty of Wrigley said the opening prayer. Health issues were discussed and Anne Enge, then a Fort Smith social worker, expressed concern about the number of battered women in the N.W.T. The delegates recommended birth control for women but were very much against abortion at that time.

A resolution was passed unanimously that the 5th Annual Assembly support other native organizations in the development of a northern native broadcasting system.

Herb Norwegian, then Vice-president of the Dene Nation, praised the native women of the N.W.T.: "native women have always been the key players within Dene society and will continue to do so". He also commended the NWA in providing strong leadership and setting an example for other younger women who want to get involved.

Later in the day, dinner was provided for delegates and guests by the Fort Simpson local women's group and awards were presented. Alice Hardy won first prize in the arts and crafts contest for a pair of beaded slippers. Second prize was awarded to Elizabeth MacDonald for a pair of mitts and third prize was shared by Christine Cleary of Fort Franklin and Celine Lafferty of Fort Simpson.

Margaret Cook was honoured as Native Women of the Year.



Esther Charney's daughter of Fort Good Hope visits with the Fort Simpson Assembly bus driver

On the last day of the Assembly, Judith Bug-gins said the opening prayer. Much of the discus-sion centred around Indian women's and children's rights. Grace Menard, Vice-President of the Native Women's Association of Canada, spoke on the ef-fects of Section 12 (1) (b) of the Indian Act under which Indian women lose their status when they marry non-natives and non-native women gain status when they marry a Treaty Indian. The NWAC felt this was unjust and was working to have these sections removed.

A motion was made by the NWA/NWT to give support to their southern sisters in their struggle to

retain their status if they desire and to remove the discrimination from the Indian Act. A new award was initiated at this Workshop — Native Student of the Year. Nineteen-year old Beatrice Oslund of Hay River was the first student to be presented with this award which included a cheque for \$500 and a plaque. The purpose of the award was to provide encouragement for native students to further their education. Beatrice had all of her schooling in the N.W.T. in Fort Norman, Norman Wells and Hay River.



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Bertha Allen congratulates Alice Hardy, winner of the Arts & Crafts competition.

1982

Highlights

- Yellowknife PEETT Program began and NWA/NWT was given Qualified Training Institute status by the Government of the N.W.T.
- 1st Native Fashion Show & Sale put on by Arts & Crafts Program
- Dene Arts Resource Centre began under the Arts & Crafts Program
- 1982 Assem bly theme: "Speaking Together"

Programs and Activities

In 1982, the NWA/NWT had representatives on the following committees in Yellowknife: Family Life Educa-tion; Yellowknife Hospital Board, Social Serl, ices Com-mittee, Nutrition Liaison Committee, Science Advisory Board and Territorial Hospital Insurance Services (T.H.I.S.).

In February, 1982, the Legislative Assembly passed a motion to provide funding to the NWA/NWT for the coming year. In Bertha Allen's speech to the Assembly she stated: "we would like to be recognized by this government as a legitimate agency providing necessary services and we would like to be compensated for it."

Margaret Cook

Margaret Cook, from Grande Prairie, Alberta, sened as Vice-President of the NWA/NWT from 1979 to 1983 and made many contributions to the developing Associa-tion during that time.

Margaret felt that the NWA didn't like to be looked at as a feminist organization. "We are constantly being referred to as the backbone of Dene society. That's because we are the teachers and the supporters of our people." She was particularly concerned with the im-pact of economic development on northern native people.

Margaret Cook was chosen Native Woman of the Year in 1981.





Don Stewart sports one of the five stoles decorated with moosehair tufting made for the Legislative Assembly by the NWA/NWT.

At the February Legislative Assembly, a Motion was proposed by Linda Sorensen and carried by the Assembly that the Minister of the Status of Women work with the NWA to develop a means by which the Association could receive stable and ongoing CORE funding from the Territorial Government.

Two NWT elders were honored in 1982. From June 1 to 3, 1982, Mrs. Sarah Simon and Mrs. Annie Robert of Fort McPherson participated in celebrations marking the 10th Anniversary of the Federal Government's New Horizons program and honoring Canada's senior citizens. Mrs. Simon and Mrs. Robert were active in the organization of the Helping Hands project which provided meals-on-wheels to the elderly in Fort McPherson. In 1982, Sarah Simon also received the Commissioner's Award for public service at the highest level for her work in strengthening the role of the church in the community, her service to the people of the Western NWT and her work in furthering the use of the Loucheux language.

The NWA/NWT sponsored a three-week course in Food & Nutrition in Fort Smith in co-operation with Mount Saint Vincent University, Halifax, Nova Scotia. This was the first course of its kind in the N.W.T. Mary



An embroidered moosehide jacket made by Desjarlais.

Anne Rabesca of the NWA/NWT attended with six other N.W.T. native women.

From August until September, 1982, the NWA/NWT worked on a Nutrition Project funded by Employment & Immigration Canada. This project provided employment for a co-ordinator, Barbara Smith, and three students and resulted in the Native Women's Picture Cookbook and two tape and slide presentations on nutrition. This cookbook is available for \$5 plus postage costs from the NWA Office.

In September, 1982, the NWA/NWT Training Centre was given "Qualified Training Institute Status" by the Government of the N.W.T.

In November, 1982, the Yellowknife Home Management staff made five stoles and forty stroud vests for the Legislative Assembly of the N.W.T. This work was an attempt by the Legislative Assembly to appear more representative of the people of the N.W.T.

Mary Anne Rabesca of the Arts & Crafts Program co-ordinated the 1st Native Fashion Show in Yellowknife December 9-11, 1982 which featured clothing and crafts from N.W.T. communities. It was considered a great success.

Dene/Metis Art Resource Centre (DARC)

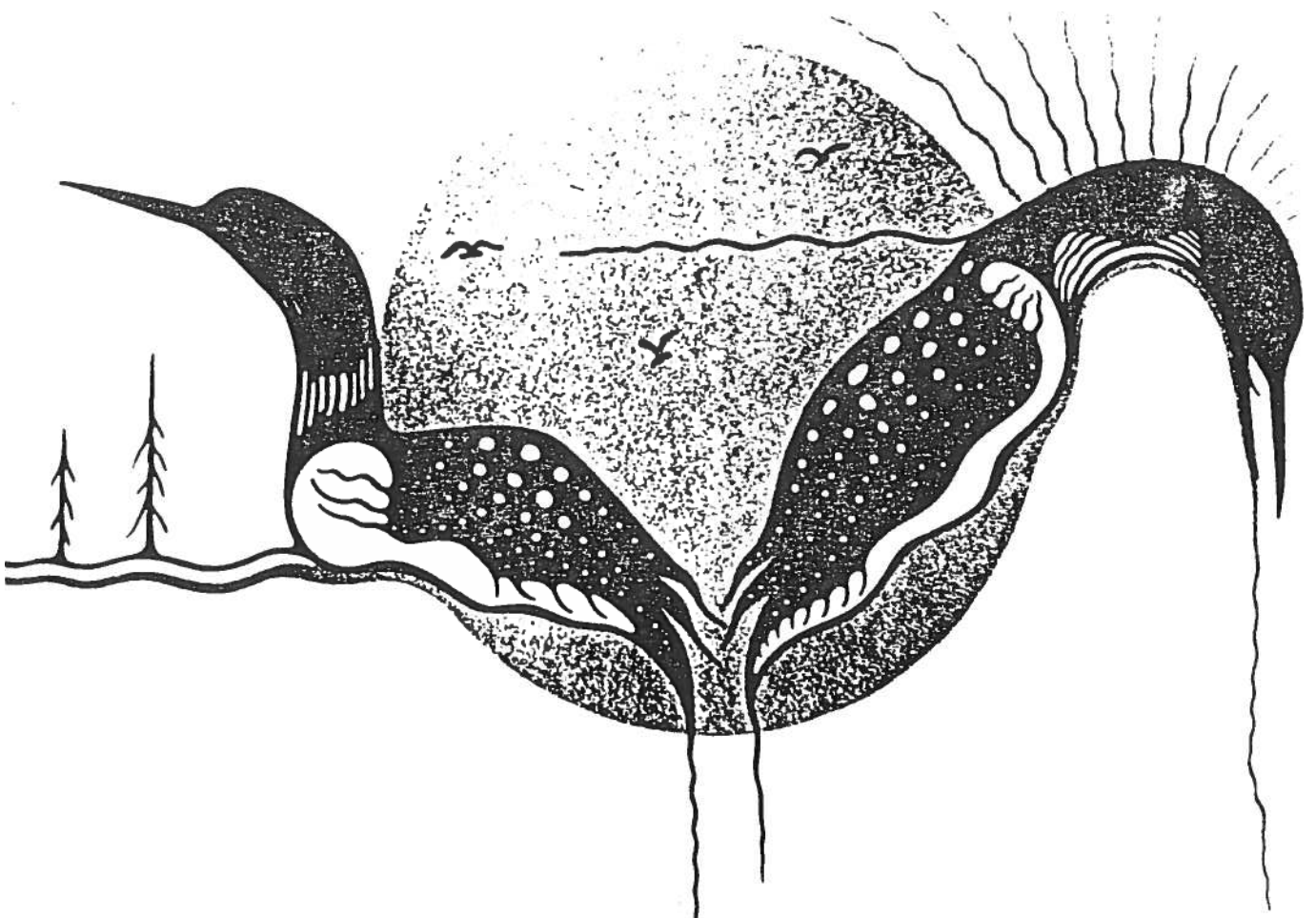
The focus of the Arts & Crafts Program was the development of a strong cottage industry based on the production of traditional N.W.T. crafts; however, it became apparent that there were talented carvers and artists who had needs not being met by this Program. In many cases they lacked the proper artist's materials, were given little or no encouragement and generally either gave their work away or sold it for very little to speculators who resold it at enormous profits.

The Arts & Crafts Program was then requested to develop a program which could advise and support these people in taking a serious approach to their work. Hence the creation of the Dene/Metis Arts Resource Centre (DARC).

In January, 1982, Linda Cardinal and Tessa Macintosh were hired to co-ordinate the DARC Program, assist Dene artists and to provide resources for the development of art in the Mackenzie Valley including an art supply depot to sell material at wholesale prices to artists. These two women displayed and sold NWT native arts for the first time in February at the National Indian Arts & Crafts Sale in Ottawa; they were accompanied by Don Cardinal and Archie Beaulieu of Rae, whose works were included in the sale.



Linda Cardinal, DARC Co-ordinator.



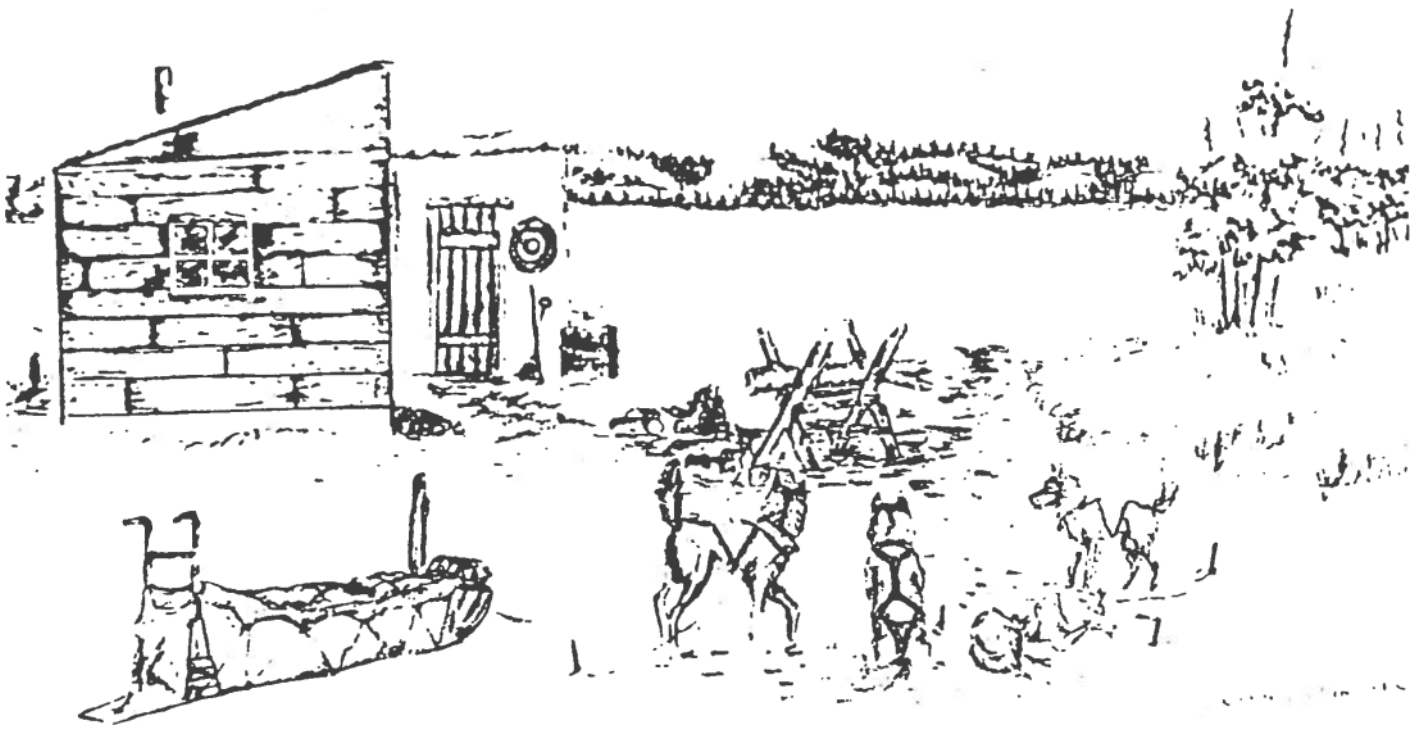
Archie Beaulieu of Rae uses loons as subjects in many of his works. 22



"Going Visiting" by Don Cardinal.



Young William Cockney from the Delta has produced many fine drawings of NWT wildlife.



Young Dene artist Colinda Cardinal shows a lot of potential in her work.

Pre-Employment, Employer and Trades Training Project (PEETT)

Before the PEETT Program (funded by the Department of Employment & Immigration) the NWA/NWT felt that the new and important role of native women in economic development was not being fulfilled. Statistics indicated that more than 50% of native women with children were sole supporters and that as many as four out of six native women live in poverty.

In desiring full participation in economic development, the NWA/NWT recognized a need to remove a number of obstacles including lack of training, education, vocational guidance and counselling.

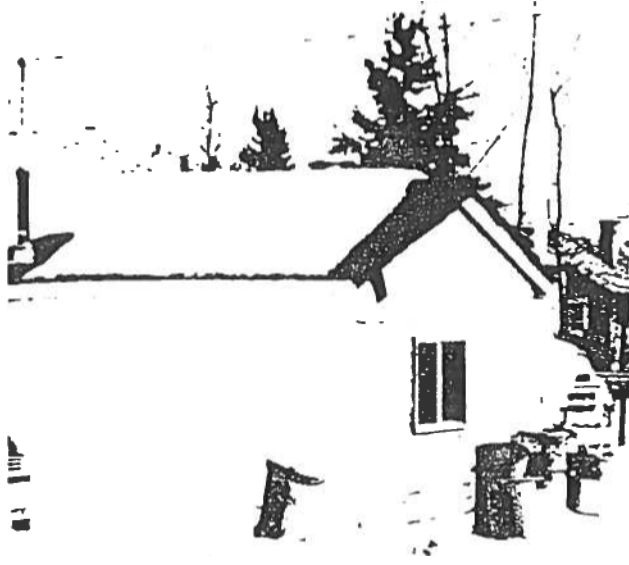
The initial focus for training was to be arts and crafts. The women in the communities themselves developed the PEETT Program to prepare for traditional, non-traditional and self-employment opportunities arising from economic development in the North.

The Program was divided into three phases: Phase I, Pre-Employment Orientation and Work Experience, was meant for native women who lacked work experience and/or basic job readiness skills. Phase II, Pre-Trades Orientation and Training was to introduce native women into non-traditional trades jobs and careers. Phase III, Pre-Employer Training, was for women who were or who wished to be self-employed. In the second year, the PEETT program was expanded to include native men.

Donna Laing was the first co-ordinator: "My experience tells me that too many women don't realize how much they know and can do if they give themselves a chance to try". The PEETT Program started in March, 1982, in Yellowknife and in March, 1983, in Inuvik.



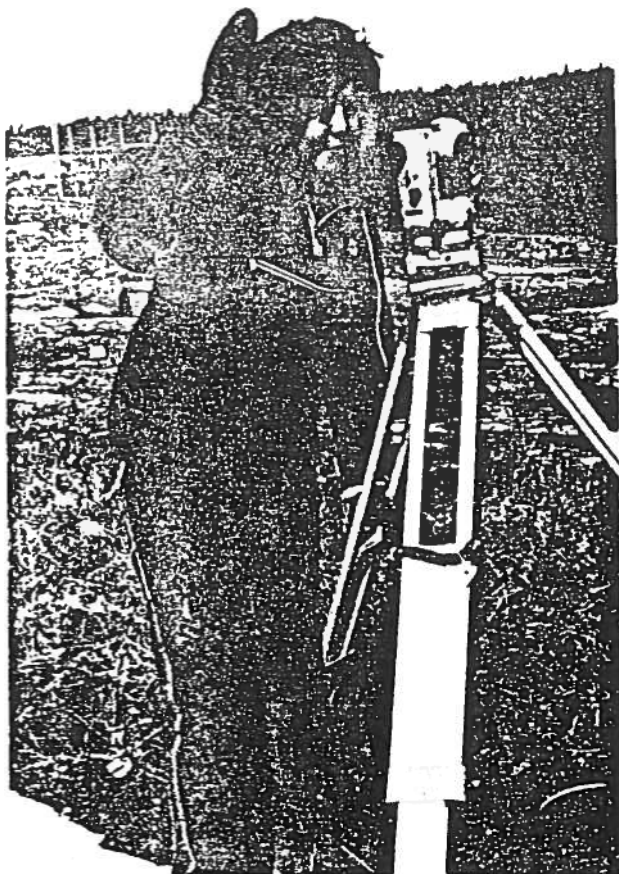
Donna Laing, first Co-ordinator of the PEETT Program.



Humble first home of the PEETT Program was a garage next to the NWA offices.



Gail Cyr has held many responsible positions in NWT native organizations and was second Co-ordinator of the PEETT Program.



Pam Lennie preferred outdoor work for the job-exposure part of her PEETT training.



Violet Greenland has continued her apprenticeship as a welder since completing her Pre-Trades training.

Annual Assembly, Inuvik

The 6th Annual Assembly was held October 1-3, 1982, at Ingamo Hall, Inuvik with 80 delegates attending. Its theme was "Speaking Together" and emphasized the role of effective communications in helping native women achieve their goals. An alcohol and drug workshop was given by Rebecca Martel of the Alberta Indian Health Care Commission in which she included a talk on the role of Indian women, looking at life and understanding through faith, honesty, kindness and sharing.

Other topics discussed included Indian rights for In-dian women, battered women and families and other health concerns. Mrs. Jean Dube of Fort Smith gave a workshop on preserving and canning of native foods, which was very well received by the delegates.

Alice Hardy of Fort Norman won both first and third prizes in the arts and crafts competition for a pair of beaded moosehide mitts and a beaded baby belt. An accomplished craftswoman, Alice also won the first prize at the 1981 NWA Assembly and at several Metis Association Assemblies. Second prize was awarded to Christine Balsillie of Fort Resolution.

The 1982 Native Student of the Year award was given to Vivian Edgi, Fort Good Hope, whose advice to the students was to "work hard to get what you want".

1982 Native Woman of the Year award was given to Nellie Cournoyea who has contributed greatly to the economic and political development of NWT native peoples.



Cec McCauley, *Chief of the Inuvik Band*, welcomes delegates to the 1982 Assembly. Seated is Linda Rodgers.

Nellie Cournoyea

Nellie Cournoyea, born in the Mackenzie Delta and mother of two children, was elected Native Woman of the Year at the 1982 NWA Annual Assembly.

During the 1970's, Nellie worked hard for the ITC and was a founding member of C.O.P.E. She was first elected to the NWT Legislative Assembly in 1979 because she felt that the representation for her area had not been supportive of long-term development and native claims. One of her main concerns has always been education.

Nellie never felt that being a woman was a disadvantage: "In our society a woman is treasured. A good woman is of high value."



1983

Highlights

- PEETT Program began in Inuvik
- NWA/NWT produced "We Are One" poster
- NWA/NWT produced a battered women's handbook
- NWA/NWT takes stand against pornography
- Assembly theme: "Native women in Action"

Programs and Activities

In January, 1983, Margaret Cook, NWA Vice-President, resigned and moved to Alberta. Jane Dragon of Fort Smith was appointed by the Board of Directors to act as Vice-President until new elections were held at the Annual Assembly.

Also, in January, Violet Mackenzie of Rae-Edzo, was hired on contract to research Indian Band Membership and discrimination against women under the Indian Act Section 12 (1) (b) as it affected N.W.T. native women. As there were no reserves in the N.W.T. until 1977, the Indian Act has not affected the lives of NWT native people to the same extent as it has in the south. Since 1981,

the three Dene bands in Fort Liard, Snowdrift and Fort Franklin, have opted out of Section 1 (12) (b) but this action does not apply to women who voluntarily enfranchised or who married non-Treaty men prior to this date.

Violet completed her research with the statement that "it is no longer acceptable in a time when everyone supports equal rights and treatment for everyone regardless of sex or race."

Cindy Gilday, Dene Nation representative at a Conference on the Aboriginal Rights of Native Women in Quebec, also dealt with this Section of the Indian Act. "There is still a chance the Dene women will not have to suffer the severe penalties if the Canadian Government is serious about resolving this grave injustice to the Indian women of Canada."

In January, 1983, the NWA/NWT published a poster entitled "We Are One" which depicts three generations of native women symbolizing the strength and commitment of all generations of native women in the N.W.T. Copies of this poster are available for \$1.00 from the Native Women's Association office in Yellowknife.

In the Spring of 1983, the NWA/NWT took a strong public stand against the introduction of Playboy T.V. programs by the Yellowknife Cable company, Mackenzie Media. A public forum was held and a letter and petition were sent to the Federal Minister of Communications. He was requested to introduce into Parliament

amendments to the Canadian Broadcasting Act which would guarantee women the same protection from pornography as ethnic and religious groups are given from hate literature. Sheila Keet, then Director of Human Resource Development for the NWA/NWT and later appointed to the position of Co-ordinator of Status of Women for the Territorial Government, was instrumental in this lobbying action.

In May, Sheila Keet, completed a pamphlet for the NWA/NWT on the subject of battered women's legal rights entitled "Does Your Husband or Boyfriend Beat You?". Copies of this publication are available from the NWA office, for the cost of postage.



Delma Inglangasuk, Assistant Co-ordinator of the Inuvik PEETT Program, has also been training as a Life Skills coach.

In March, 1983, the Inuvik PEETT Program began and followed the same three phases as the Yellowknife Program. By the end of 1983, there were approximately 100 graduates from the Yellowknife and Inuvik PEETT Programs.





Mania Chabun, first Co-ordinator of the Inuvik PEETT Program.

Bertha Allen made a presentation in September, 1983, to the Federal Task Force on Pension Reform. Several recommendations were made:

- that N.W.T. pensioners be guaranteed an income at least equal to the poverty level and that they not be penalized for any additional income they may earn up to the average industrial wage of Canadians for that year;
- that native men and women be given tax credits for the years they lived off the land and that native women be given a share of these credits upon the death of their husbands;

- there should be a mechanism whereby non-profit organization employees can plug into the funding government's pension plan at a subsidized rate;
- that the supporting spouse be pensioned at age 60 and the dependent spouse be eligible for a pension at age 55.

In the fall of 1983, Bertha Allen was appointed to the Status of Women Advisory Council and later was elected its President.

Bertha Allen made another presentation in November, 1983, this time to the BEARP Hearings in Inuvik. She stressed the social impact on native peoples of the industrial economy and the need for joint involvement in dealing with these changes. Bertha also stressed the need for more trained people to be funded to work at the community level in life-skills and health areas and discrimination by oil companies against young native people with minor police records. "Providing we are given the training...I can guarantee that we can be of more help to ourselves and our people and strengthen our self-worth. And we can plan our destiny — our own political future."

In November, 1983, the Arts & Crafts Program put on their Second Annual NWA Arts & Crafts show and sale at the Yellowknife Inn, where women from across the N.W.T. displayed their wares. After the show another craft sale was put on at the Ptarmigan Inn in Hay River — the first time that the NWA had ever had a sale in that area.

Also, in 1983, the NWAINWT was given representation on the NWT Health Education Curriculum Committee.



Anne Crosstete and Rita Cli of Fort Simpson display some of their products at the 1983 Arts & Crafts sale.



Executive and Board elected at the 1983 Assembly: (from left to right — standing) Florence Catholique, Linda Loutit, Nancy Austin, Shirley Lamalice, Shirley Harley, Hilda Antoine. (seated) Louise Kalinek, Bertha Allen, Rita Cli, Mary-Jane Goulet and Ethel Lamothe.

Annual Assembly, Yellowknife

The NWA 7th Annual Assembly was held October 21-23, 1983, in Yellowknife with the theme "Native Women in Action". Mary Firth, Sr. of Fort McPherson and Mary Louise Sanguéz of Jean Marie River gave the opening prayers.

Maggie Hodgson of Nechi Institute in Edmonton gave a workshop on mental health including suicide and stress. She mentioned that out of 10 people who commit suicide, eight have given definite clues to their intentions such as threats, previous suicide attempts, sudden changes in behaviour and becoming isolated from friends and family. She suggested community resources to get help with mental health problems including suicide attempts: Social Services, church, nursing station, Help Lines (Inuvik and Yellowknife), Mental Health Association and doctors.

This was an area of particular concern to **many** delegates as the incidence of suicide in young people in the N.W.T. had risen dramatically over the past few years.

At the 7th Annual Assembly, several amendments were made to the NWA Bylaws including adding a 2nd Vice-President position in charge of Arts & Crafts and changing the names of some Regions and increasing them to six to better reflect the political regions.

The new Executive and Board elected were:

- Bertha Allen, President (by acclamation)
- Ethel Lamothe, 1st Vice-President
- Rita Cli, 2nd Vice-President
- Linda Loutit, Treasurer
- Nancy Austin, Secretary
- Louisa Kalinek, Delta
- Shirley Harley, Sahtu
- Florence Catholique, South Slave
- Hilda Antoine, Deh Cho Gha
- Shirley Lamalice, Deh Cho
- Mary-Jane Goulet, North Slave

The second major resource speaker was Jerry Mander from the U.S.A. who came to speak at the NWA Workshop at the suggestion of Cindy Gilday of the Dene Nation. He spoke on the negative effects of television and mentioned several contributing factors including:

- in 1970 the average child under 12 watched T.V. for six hours a day;
- 90% of American T.V. is paid for by one hundred of the largest corporations in the world so that people will buy their products;
- many children watching television are less creative than other children as they don't have time to think and are no longer coming up with their own ideas.

Mr. Mander was particularly concerned with the effects of television on native people and their culture and values.

The first-prize winner in the arts and crafts competition at the 7th Assembly was Mary Louise Norwegian of Fort Simpson for a pair of moosehide wraparound mocassins with quill uppers: Agnes Berrault of Fort Liard won second prize for a birch bark basket with quill decoration, and Jane Grossette of Fort Simpson won third prize for a pair of embroidered moosehide mitts.

It was mentioned in the Arts & Crafts report that they attended a sale in Penticton, B.C. and people were amazed at the amount of beadwork and high quality of workmanship in the N.W.T. products.

Awards were presented for the Native Student of the Year to Dennis Boyer of Pine Point, the first male student to receive the award, and to Rita Cli as Native Women of the Year for her involvement in the development of arts and crafts in the Fort Simpson area and for her community participation.

A banquet was held Saturday night and Anne Enge, N.W.T. representative on the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women (CACSOW) was guest speaker. Anne reaffirmed Maggie Hodgson's talk that we often underestimate the value of help that the ordinary lay person can give and that we need to utilize our own resources. "The 1980's should be the decade we produce some positive results for women. It should be the decade we strive to put eager women back into the wage economy, stress the importance of educating ourselves and our children."

After the banquet, the staff and Board of the NWA put on an "outrageous" fashion show for delegates and the film, "Summer of the Loucheux" was shown. This film depicted the four generations of the Andre family of Arctic Red River returning every summer to their fish camp at the mouth of the Tree River and was the first film ever made with a Loucheux language version.

On Sunday, the delegates passed a Motion that the NWA/NWT support the Hunters' and Trappers' Federation in their efforts to change the anti-trapping movement and to emphasize the importance of the continuation of the fur industry to the people of the N.W.T.



Rita Cli

Born and raised in Fort Simpson, Rita Cli was chosen Native Woman of the Year at the 1983 NWA Annual Assembly. She was also elected to the position of 2nd Vice-President of Arts & Crafts for the Association.

In addition to managing the Fort Simpson craft store and representing the NWA/NWT on the National Native Women's Association Board of Directors, Rita has been very active politically in Fort Simpson. She has recently accepted a position with the Territorial Government there.

Rita believes that "If I can do it, other women can too."



NWA staff and Board entertained delegates with an "outrageous" fashion show. (left to right) Linda Cardinal, Barbara Mackenzie, Nancy Austin, Sheila Keet, Ethel Lamothe, Hilda Antoine, Gail Cyr and Mary-Anne Rabesca.

Organizational Development



Introduction

When people get together for a common purpose (goal) an organizational structure begins to develop. People are delegated, or take it upon themselves, to assume more specialized responsibilities so that all the work can get done. People have to figure out how decisions can be made and how to utilize the special skills, interests and talents of each other. On top of all that, the personal needs of individuals have to be looked after or resentment, conflict and confusion may result and even the original goals may be forgotten.

This is why it is important to look for the best ways to work together in an organization to achieve common goals. One way to see how an organization works is with an organization chart which indicates lines of authority, communication and responsibility.

Many non-native organizations have structures with decision-making in the hands of a few at the top and those at the bottom having no power. The tendency in native society, and also in more modern non-native organizations, has been to involve as many people as possible in making decisions. Although this may slow down decision-making, usually the resulting decision is better and has the support of everyone who contributed to it.

Because of regulations such as the Societies Ordinance (regulations for incorporation) and because we have to deal regularly with organizations that emphasize fast decision-making, the NWA/NWT has had to use a mixture of these systems. Another factor is the large geographical area represented by the NWA/NWT head office in Yellowknife so that it is very difficult to involve more than regional representatives (Board and Executive) at decision-making meetings.

- MEMBERSHIP (General Assembly)
 - sets direction
 - elects Executive and Board
- EXECUTIVE: and BOARD
 - liaison
 - representation
 - planning
 - hiring management
 - evaluation
- MANAGEMENT and STAFF
 - implements programs
 - day-to-day operations
 - information centre



MacIntosh/NCS

Traditional native society has involved as many people as possible in making decisions.

is a descendant of the original inhabitants of this country and who belongs to one or more of the groups known as Indians (Status and Treaty), non-Status Indians, Metis and Inuit. There are three categories of members:

- a. full members: native women who are resident in the N.W.T., are 18 years of age or over and who have paid their membership dues in full;
- b. associate members: non-native women who are resident in the N.W.T., are 18 years of age or over and who have paid their membership dues in full;
- c. honorary members: any persons chosen by the NWA/NWT and appointed by the Board of Directors in honour and recognition of service to native women.

Only full members have voting privileges at the Annual Workshops and may hold elected office.

At the Annual Workshops, and through the elected Board and Executive, the membership gives direction to the whole organization. It is the individual women and women's groups that can make important and lasting contributions to the wholesome development of themselves, their families and their communities. The NWA/NWT is a resource belonging to the native women of the N.W.T. The membership OK's and creates policy. However, it has no direct management role in the Association.

Membership

The most important part of the NWA is its membership. That is why it is first on the organization chart. Any native woman may become a member upon payment of the membership fee (currently \$1.00). A woman is defined to include any woman who



The most important part of the NWA is its membership who give direction to the whole organization.

Board

Although the staff of the NWA/NWT has increased since it started in 1977, the jobs of Executive and Board Member have remained almost completely the same (although in 1983, the number of Regions was increased to six from five and a second vice-president of Arts & Crafts was added).

It is the Executive and Board, representing the membership, that sets the direction of the management and staff of the NWA/NWT. Along with the other Board Members, each plays an important part in contributing the ideas and wishes of the native women of their regions to the objectives of the NWA/NWT.

At the present time the NWA/NWT has the following Executive and Board positions: President, 1st Vice-President, 2nd Vice-President (Arts & Crafts), Secretary, Treasurer, and six Regional Board Members for Delta, Sahtu, North Slave, South Slave, Deh Cho Gha and Deh Cho.

Heading the Executive is the President who represents the Association in many outside activities and chairs all meetings of the Board. The two most important qualities of a president are leadership ability and good judgement. In the President's absence, the two Vice-Presidents take over the role of President — one for Association business and one for Arts & Crafts business.

The Secretary is responsible for conducting Board correspondence and taking minutes of meetings. The Treasurer is responsible for financial matters and fiscal (money) accountability.

Executive positions are elected by all the voting delegates at the Annual Workshops.

Board Members are nominated and elected at Annual Workshops by delegates from their Regions.

At the present time all elected positions are for a period of two years. In 1983, NWA By-laws were amended so that one half of the Executive and Board would be elected each year to avoid the possibility of a completely new Board at each election.

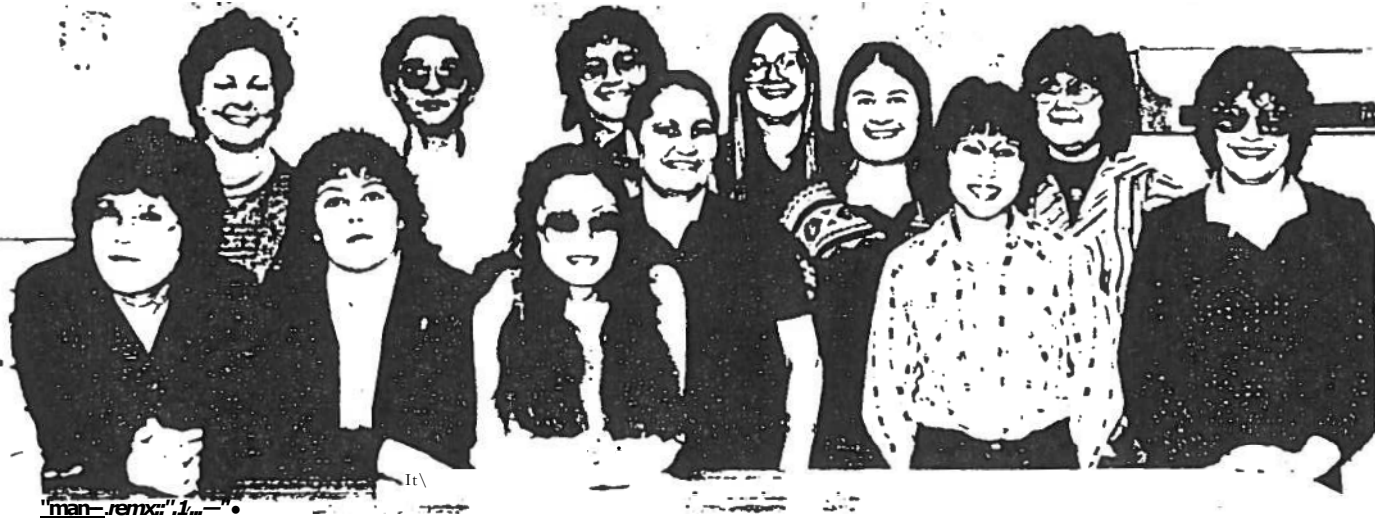
Because of the size of the Board, the distances separating members and the difficulties in meeting on a regular basis (costs, other work) the Executive has the authority to make decisions between Board meetings as long as they do not involve changes in policy.

Some Board Responsibilities

1. **DEFINING** the real purpose and goals of the organization such as those stated in the NWA Constitution and reviewing these from time to time.
2. **PLANNING** ahead for such things as programs, financial and staff resources and office/store space.
3. **MONEY MANAGEMENT:** understanding, evaluating and approving budgets, balancing need for programs and the available funding; support of requests to obtain funding; and assuring the credibility of financial records and budgets.
4. **HIRING** and evaluation of management and determining their salaries.
5. **PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY:** (balance of management skills and representation of members) including:
 - sense of responsibility/honesty
 - skills to contribute
 - keeping informed about history/goals of the organization
 - representing the organization to the communities as well as the communities to the organization.



An evening meeting for some of the 1983-84 Board and Executive.



NWA Yellowknife staff at the end of 1982 (from left to right — back) Sheila Keet, Renda Coe, Laurie Gitzell, Linda Rodgers, Fran Hurcomb, Bertha Allen. (front) Nancy Austin, Linda Cardinal, Mary Anne Rabesca, Mary McPherson, Marie Blackduck and Greta Baetz.

Staff

The major changes to the NWA/NWT organizational structure have been with the programs. When it began, the NWA had only one employee but new programs were developed where more specialized skills were needed and the staff increased to over 20 employees by 1984.

With this increase of staff, internal organizational development also became more complicated — keeping everyone informed of what was going on; effective record-keeping and accounting procedures; written policies for staff; and things as basic as how to keep the kitchen cleaned up.

The NWA/NWT holds staff/Board workshops once a year to help deal with these areas and to help in staff development and training.

The Board identifies a need for a program with the Executive Director who, in turn, consults with the management and staff to see where and how it can be achieved by the organization. Sometimes additional people have to be hired. If these new staff will fill a management role and be personally responsible for a new program, the Board takes an active part in the hiring to ensure that they will best fulfill the objects of the NWA. Management, in turn, has the responsibility to hire staff to do the jobs.

Important Considerations When Hiring Staff

- that all native women in the N.W.T. are represented in the overall staff makeup;
- that the new employee has the specific and general skills needed for the particular job;
- that the new employee is willing to work towards the objectives of the NWA/NWT.

Both Board and staff have a right to assume that they are working toward the same goals for the same purposes and that this applies to every member of both groups.

Those who do not hold these goals and purposes should not be hired as staff or elected as Board Members.

NWA/NWT Staff Responsibilities

Association:

Executive Director:

- acts as link between Board and staff;
- co-ordinates and ensures that programs are developed and implemented in accordance with Board directives.



Violet Erasmus began as NWA Executive Director in the fall of 1983.

Executive Secretary/Office Manager:

- develops information systems;
- develops office manuals and other internal office procedures;
- information co-ordinator.

Director of Finance:

- oversees day-to-day financial matters/accounting;
- developing financial systems in accordance with accepted accounting procedures;
- input into budgets/funding proposals.

Communications Co-ordinator:

- publishes NWA/NWT newsletter.

Training Centre**Co-ordinator:**

- responsible for scheduling and implementing training programs.

Assistant Co-ordinator:

- assists in training courses, student counselling, contracting resource people and follow-up of students.

Receptionist/Bookkeeper:

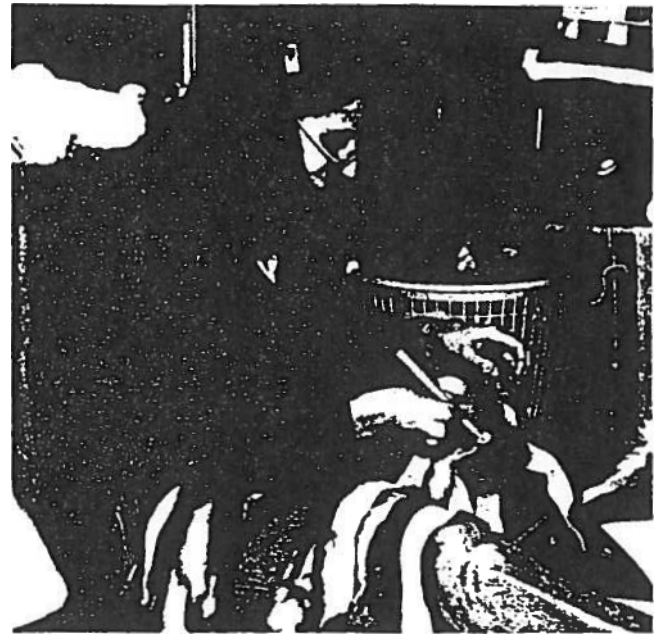
- routine training correspondence, filing, telephone reception
- bookkeeping for training programs.

Home Management**Co-ordinator:**

- planning, implementing home-management programs.

Educator(s):

- assists in providing home management programs.



Penny Baetz taking inventory at the Arts & Crafts retail store.

Arts & Crafts**General Manager:**

- responsible for organizing and management of all arts and crafts programs.

Marketing and Raw Materials Manager:

- responsible to General Manager for identifying and developing markets for arts and crafts produced in the Western NWT;
- co-ordinates and attends trade shows.



Hazel Skookum (left) and Ruby McLeod of Inuvik attending a Yellowknife staff/Board workshop.

JAR: Co-ordinator:

- responsible to General Manager for helping N.W.T. native artists and for promoting and developing markets for their work;
- co-ordinates and attends trade shows.

Sewing Centre Manager:

- repairs, designs and sews native crafts.

Financial Controller:

- looks after Arts & Crafts day-to-day financial matters/accounting;
- develops Arts & Crafts financial systems in accordance with accepted accounting procedures;
- input into budgets/funding proposals.

Store/Inventory Clerk(s):

- sell/inventory goods in the Arts & Crafts retail store.

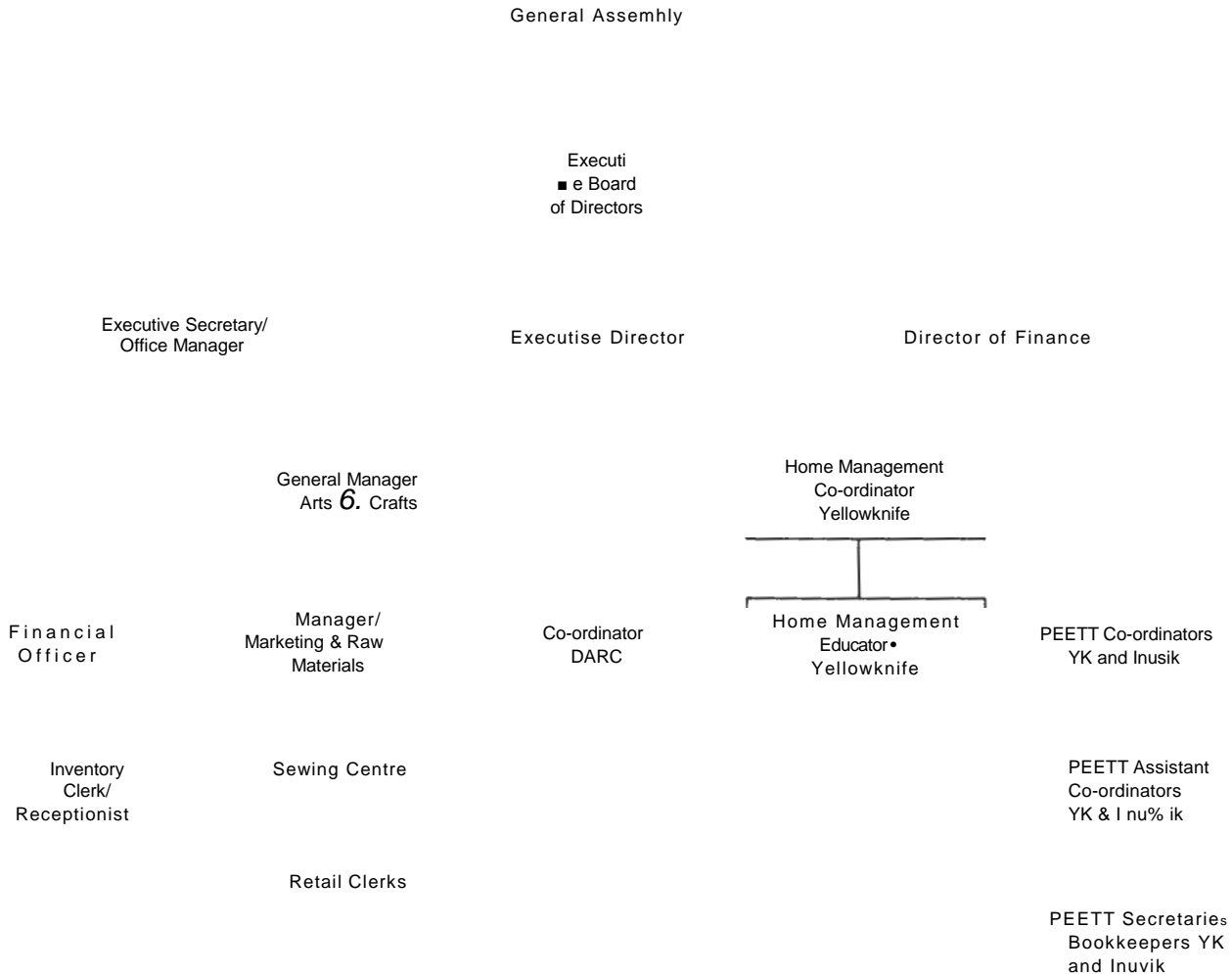
Administration

The administration of a community organization may be thought of as the direction, control and management of the policies that have been accepted by the members. For good administration the best thinking and efforts of many members working together is necessary.

Some Principles of Administration

1. people carry out plans best when they have been involved at some stage in the planning;
2. people work better when there is a way for them to let their leaders know what they think and feel;
3. often workers can offer better solutions than the boss because they have better knowledge of the problems of the job;

Organization Chart Native Women's Association of the N.W.T.



- 4 each job should **be** described fully:
 - qualifications required
 - amount of time needed to do it;
 - what the job entails, why it is important and how it relates to other people's work and the purposes of the organization;
 - who the person doing the job is responsible to;
- 5 group assessment and evaluation to see how jobs are going, reduce confusion and provide encouragement;
- 6 policies and purposes should be reviewed at regular intervals.

Locals/Incorporation

The NWA/NWT was incorporated under the Societies Ordinance in 1978.

At the present time the Native Women's Association By-laws do not include a formal relationship between locals and the Association, only with individual members. If formal structure is desired, by-laws must be passed by the membership at the Annual General Assembly and local wishing to affiliate.

If a group decides that they would like to form an independent local, a copy of the NWA/NWT document, "Registering a Local Native Women's Group under the Societies Ordinance of the N.W.T." can be obtained through the NWA/NWT Yellowknife office. A copy of the Societies Ordinance may be obtained from the Registrar of Societies, Department of Justice & Public Services, Government of the N.W.T., Yellowknife, N.W.T., X1A 2L9.

All the following points must be covered in order for the application for incorporation to be accepted under the Societies Ordinance. These are covered in more detail in the documents mentioned above.

- there must be five or more persons;
- the society must be given a name;
- the objectives (purpose) of the society must be stated;
- by-laws must be drawn up which satisfy the requirements of the Societies Ordinance including:
 - how any member can leave or get thrown out of the Society;
 - meetings;
 - appointing and removing directors and other officers;
 - borrowing powers (getting and using money for your Society);
 - audit of accounts;
 - seal of the Society;
 - making, changing or cancelling by-laws;
 - preparing and keeping the minutes and other records of the Society;
 - members access to financial records;
 - fiscal year.

Once the local is registered as a Society, it can:

- buy or accept property:
- sell, trade, mortgage, rent or build as long as the purpose for doing so is within its stated purpose and by-laws;

- deal with banks and funding agencies; it can borrow money but it cannot:
 - divide its money into shares;
 - declare dividends (profits);
 - divide its property among its members;
- an individual member is not personally liable for the Society's debts.

Some Principles of Belonging to an Organization or Local:

1. Work as a team. If each of your fingers always went a separate way you would never be able to use your hand. But each finger gains power when it acts as part of a team — a team called a hand.
2. The wish of the majority must be followed.
3. The rights of the minority must be protected. All members must have a chance to express their opinions. Often it is the role of bravery to be in the minority.
4. Respect for the dignity and equal rights of all members must be assured. You gain dignity and respect by respecting others. When you respect the rights of others you protect your own rights.
5. An order of business must be established. Watch that these orders are not so rigid that they end up preventing and/or complicating communication.

Meeting Procedures

Many groups have found that the following rules of Parliamentary procedure help to run meetings effectively and smoothly:

1. Call meeting to order. This is done by the Chairman (usually the President) or, in her absence, the Vice-President.
2. Hear minutes of previous meeting. Minutes are the accurate record of what happened at a previous meeting and include:
 - a. the name of the local;
 - b. the kind of meeting;
 - c. the place, date and time of the meeting;
 - d. the name of the presiding officer;
 - e. the approval of the minutes of the previous meeting;
- 1) a list of the motions introduced, who proposed them and what finally happened — whether the proposal passed or failed.
- g) the time of adjournment (end) of the meeting.
3. Hear reports of officers, Boards, Committees. Such reports may be changed, approved or rejected.
4. Hear announcements.
5. Go on with unfinished business of last meeting. Finish one thing before starting another.
6. Go on to new business.
7. End meeting (adjourn). Summarize results, set date and time of next meeting.

A good discussion leader or Chairman:

- encourages a friendly, courteous and frank climate for the group;



bomar

1 A good discussion leader (here, Dr. Ross Wheeler) encourages a friendly, polite and frank climate for the group.

- is encourages group harmony;
- encourages members to understand clearly the problem they are trying to solve;
 - keeps discussion on track;
 - encourages everyone to express opinions and join in discussion and tries to keep dominant talkers from taking over;

- makes sure subject is summarized and reviewed frequently. A good secretary/recorder:
 - is able to summarize clearly and to express ideas well in written form;
 - has both experience and technical knowledge of the process of group discussion;
 - has a good general knowledge of the subject under discussion.

The final version of the minutes should include any strong minority points of view that have been expressed.

Writing Proposals

After the local has been incorporated, meetings held and motions recorded in the minutes, it is time to look at developing and implementing specific programs. There is still one big hurdle: gathering resources (people/information) and writing proposals that will assure funding agencies that you can do the job so that you can obtain funding from these agencies.

The last chapter of this manual gives some leads on information resources.

A publication is available from the NWA/NWT entitled "Writing Proposals for the NWA/NWT" that is available to local women's groups in the N.W.T. This publication may help overcome some of the current problems that people in communities have in writing proposals. It explains, with examples:

1. Purpose of a proposal.
 - need for program;
 - how program will be carried out;
 - how administrative duties will be carried out.
2. Where to start.
 - brainstorming (listening, discussing):
 - checking out the bureaucrats (positive attitudes and involving them as resource people).
3. Stages of development.
 - background;
 - stating the problem;
 - being realistic, using statistics;
 - defining the problem in the terms of the government program to which it is submitted.
4. Letters of support.
 1. Defending your proposal (duplication of services).
 2. Objectives of project.
 3. Target group.
 4. Program implementation (what, who, how).
 5. Evaluation — determined before program begins.
 6. BUDGET: make it realistic; make it accurate.
 7. Format (including covering letter).