

The Purdy Crawford Chair

In Aboriginal Business Studies

Case Studies in Aboriginal Business

Indian Maiden Maple Syrup B

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The Purdy Crawford Chair in Aboriginal Business Studies was established at Cape Breton University in 2010 in response to Aboriginal community leaders' expression of the need for entrepreneurship, business investment, and corporate skills training for the purpose of creating a model of self-reliance.

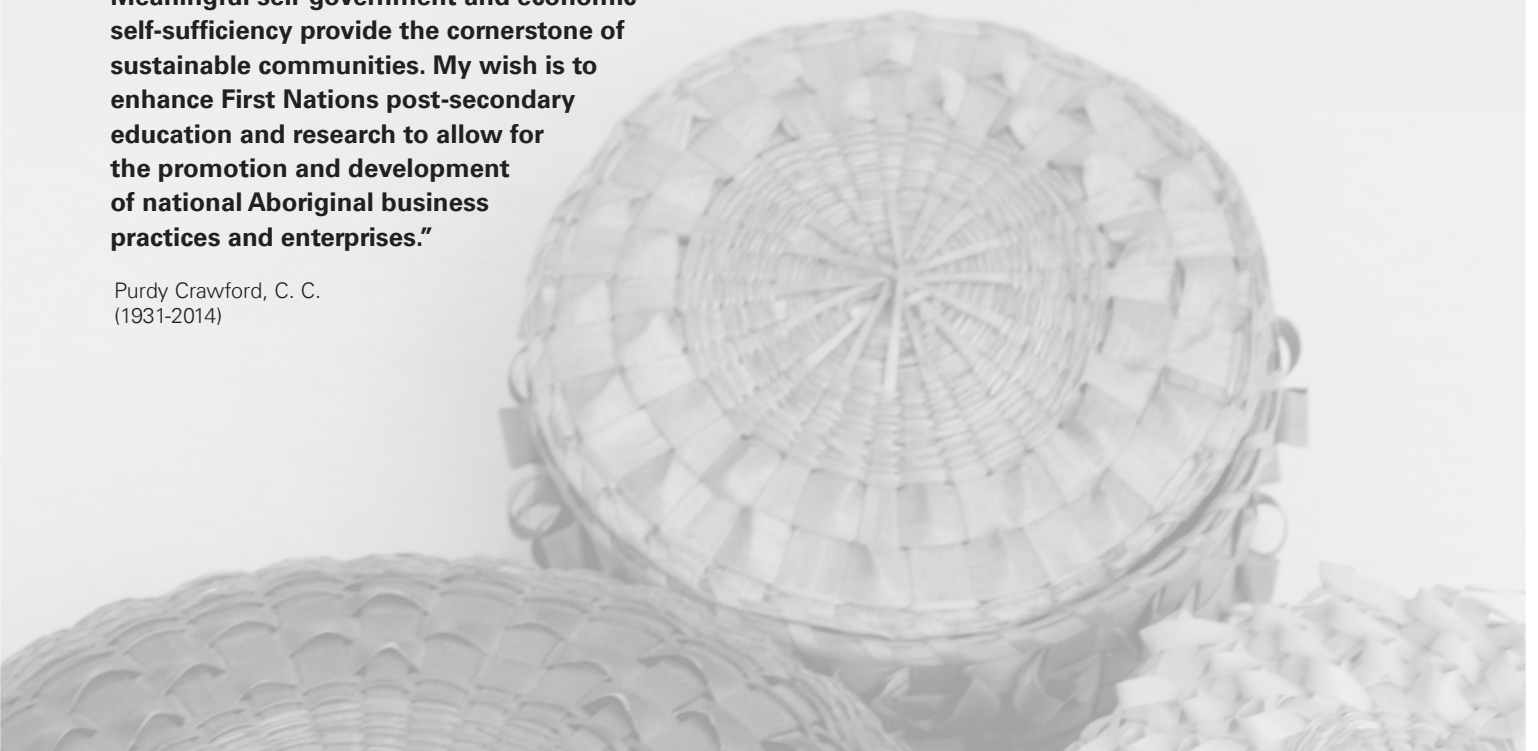
Named in honour of Canadian lawyer and corporate boardroom leader, the late Mr. Purdy Crawford, the Chair aims to promote interest among Canada's Aboriginal people in the study of business at the post-secondary level.

The Purdy Crawford Chair in Aboriginal Business Studies focuses its work in four areas:

- Research on what "drives" success in Aboriginal Business
- National student recruitment in the area of post-secondary Aboriginal business education
- Enhancement of the post-secondary Aboriginal business curriculum
- Mentorship at high school and post-secondary levels

"Meaningful self-government and economic self-sufficiency provide the cornerstone of sustainable communities. My wish is to enhance First Nations post-secondary education and research to allow for the promotion and development of national Aboriginal business practices and enterprises."

Purdy Crawford, C. C.
(1931-2014)



INDIAN MAIDEN MAPLE SYRUP B

In 2012, Mary Louise Bernard was planning to publish the Mi'kmaw legend of how maple syrup was discovered as a companion to her Indian Maiden Maple Syrup product when she learned that the publisher would have control over the images used to illustrate the story. She wondered how to accomplish her goal while maintaining the integrity of the product.

BACKGROUND

Mary Louise Bernard had been thinking about developing a Mi'kmaw brand of maple syrup for many years, both while serving as the chief for Wagmatcook First Nation and while operating her Native Trail Tours business. As a child, she was often told the legend of the Indian Maiden who discovered maple syrup by her mother. She in turn shared this story with tourists while they were travelling around Cape Breton and visiting Mi'kmaw communities. In the summer of 2005, when a tourist from Ontario asked her where she could purchase the Indian Maiden maple syrup referenced in the legend, Mary Louise decided the time was right to act on her idea. She told the tourist that the maple syrup wasn't immediately available, but that she would have it for her in four weeks.

Mary Louise then sprang into action, locating a Cape Breton-based maple syrup producer from whom she could purchase the product for \$5/bottle. She borrowed a camera and photographed her daughter dressed in her regalia to serve as the "Indian Maiden." She then brought the idea and the photograph of her daughter to a local consulting company, Vibe Creative Group, which designed labels and a product tag for the bottles of maple syrup. Mary Louise then applied the labels to the bottles herself and tied the tags on with ribbon. She filled her first order to the tourist from Ontario and then began selling Indian Maiden Maple Syrup locally. Priced at \$10/bottle, her product was available at trade shows, craft fairs, and farmers' markets, as well as from her home in Wagmatcook and later in Middle River (on the Cabot Trail) where she relocated in 2006. Mary Louise also approached band councils to purchase it as gifts for Elders.

THE INDIAN MAIDEN LEGEND

The legend of the Indian Maiden discovering maple syrup was told to Mary Louise Bernard by her mother during her childhood. Mary Louise often shared it with her family and friends, as well as tourists. After her mother passed away, she was telling one of her mother's stories to her partner and he suggested that Mary Louise should start writing them down. Mary Louise took the suggestion and began typing her

mother's stories on a computer. As she grieved her mother, the writing process was therapeutic, but she didn't share the written versions of the stories at that time.

As Mary Louise continued selling her Indian Maiden Maple Syrup product and sharing the story of the Indian Maiden with tourists through her Native Trail Tours company, she realized that tourists didn't just want to take the maple syrup home with them, but also the story of the Indian Maiden. Due to time constraints and limited space on the label and tag, her mother's story could not be reproduced in full. In the interim, Mary Louise attached a similar story about maple syrup that she found on the internet to her Indian Maiden Maple Syrup bottles.

When Mary Louise entered the Dreamcatcher Foundation's The Big Idea 2 in 2010, she located the original story she had typed back in 2003, edited it, and included it in the competition. She, along with her daughter Michelle dressed as the Indian Maiden, won second place. That's when Mary Louise came up with the idea of a book. While reading a bedtime story to her granddaughter one night, Mary Louise realized that the Indian Maiden story should be an illustrated children's storybook. She envisioned that the two complementary items would be purchased together by tourists wanting to bring home the syrup and the story.

MI'KMAW BOOKS

While Mary Louise was primarily targeting tourists with her storybook, a secondary market existed. Increasingly, books in Mi'kmaq were being published throughout the Atlantic Provinces as part of language revitalization initiatives. Most of these books were bilingual (Mi'kmaq and English) or trilingual (Mi'kmaq, English, and French) presentations of Mi'kmaq stories and legends. They were published by several different presses and organizations, including Bouton d'or Acadie, Cape Breton University Press, the Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources, and Atlantic Canada's First Nation Help Desk, among others. Revitalization of Mi'kmaq was also a priority for Mi'kmaq Kina'matnewey, a Mi'kmaq education authority in Nova Scotia.

Initially, Mary Louise contacted two local publishers; however, they were not able to take on her project for another year or more due to a publishing backlog. The extended timeline didn't suit Mary Louise's needs. She also spoke with published authors about their experiences. One expressed dissatisfaction with his most recent publication, because he did not like the cover. Until that conversation, Mary Louise hadn't realized that publishers often have final say on cover art and illustrations, and she became concerned that she would lose control of her story and product.

CONCLUSION

While planning to publish the Mi'kmaw legend of how maple syrup was discovered as a companion to her Indian Maiden Maple Syrup product in 2012, Mary Louise Bernard learned that the publisher would have control over the images used to illustrate the story. She wondered how to accomplish her goal while maintaining the integrity of the product.

EXHIBIT 1
Indian Maiden Maple Syrup



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