

Learn and Act: Protocol and Powwow

by Annapolis Valley Monthly Meeting of the Religions Society of Friends: Truth and Reconciliation Committee

June, 2017

Welcome to the second edition of “Learn and Act,” the newsletter of [Annapolis Valley Quakers’ Truth and Reconciliation Committee](#). Each quarter, we plan to share ideas about how we can learn and take action together toward true reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples. Please join us in opening ourselves to the journey of reconciliation. Any questions or suggestions? Please [submit your suggestions](#) on our Committee’s page, or [email](#) the committee.

Learn: Native Protocol, by Cathy Grant Gerrior

How can good intentions go wrong, when settlers try to enter into right relationship with Indigenous people? Have you ever been in a group that tried to be supportive, yet somehow ended up with an even more strained relationship than you had before?

Cathy Grant Gerrior, a Mi’kmaq Ceremony Keeper, shared an essay with specific guidance on approaching [Native Protocol](#):

“My hope is to create some ... opportunities for discussions to happen between yourselves before you even invite a native person in. I have learned that assuming everyone is on the same page can lead to disaster and then to cultures colliding rather than collaborating.”

She goes on to share concrete ideas and approaches that non-Indigenous people can consider. For example:

Many of us do not consider ourselves Canadian so please don't assume that we do. Canada was created through racist, violent European imperialism by the dominant society/settlers. We belong to Turtle Island and there are many different territories that are recognized by our people. I believe it is a matter of truth and respect that this be stated one way or another.

As a committee, we’ve been reflecting on this document, especially the section about not introducing ourselves by asking for something, nor expecting that an offered gift will be accepted. “Many ‘gifts’ in the past, well-intentioned or not, did much harm.” You can read the full text of her essay [online](#).

Act: Attend a Powwow This Summer

A Powwow is coming-together of the nation-to-nation relationships that Indigenous Peoples have with each other and with Canada. Non-Indigenous Canadians have a role to play, rather than being spectators, of living into the peace and friendship to which our treaties pledge us. Meeting people, learning about the Indigenous People whose guests we are in Mi'kmaki, and engaging respectfully with Indigenous traditions ... all are good reasons to attend a Powwow this summer. Why not choose one and mark it in your calendar now?

Many of the Mi'kmaq communities in Nova Scotia will have powwows this summer; wherever your summer plans take you, there is bound to be one nearby.

Note that, from August 10-13, Grand-Pré National Historic site will host a "celebration of peace and friendship" between the Mi'kmaq & Acadian people. This will include both Mi'kmaq and Acadian performances and cultural demonstrations, a lecture series, artisan vendor marketplace, etc. While overall this is not a traditional annual Powwow hosted by a First Nations community, the day of August 12 is set aside for powwow activities.



Details for powwows around NS that are announced so far are below. You can also find updates as well as dates for NB, PEI, Maine, and NL online, listed by the group [Powwow Listings – Eastern Canada](#). You can prepare by reading a couple of different perspectives on protocol: [How To Be An Ally During Powwow Season](#) may be helpful, as well as Millbrook First Nation's [Powwow Protocol](#).

TBD.....Sipekne'katik Traditional Powwow, Indian Brook, NS

For locations of First Nations communities in Nova Scotia, see the above [map from the NS Office of Aboriginal Affairs](#).

	<i>Name and website</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Contact Information</i>
June 21	Mawita'jik: Let Us Gather	Halifax Commons Halifax, NS	Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre Event poster
June 30 – July 2	Eskasoni 26th Annual Powwow	Eskasoni, NS	Michael R Denny (902) 574-5624 mrdenny@eskasonihealth.ca Event facebook page

July 22-23	Potlotek Traditional Powwow	Chapel Island, NS	website
August 12	Grand Pré 2017 Traditional Powwow	Grand Pre, NS	Note: takes place during Grand Pré 2017 Peace and Friendship Gathering (Aug 10-13) Michael R Denny mrdenny@eskasonihealth.ca website
September 1-3	Millbrook First Nation Powwow	Millbrook, NS	website
Sept 9-10	Membertou Traditional Powwow	Membertou, NS	website
Sept 9-10	Gold River Traditional Powwow	Gold River, NS (Acadia First Nation)	Details not available – check Acadia First Nation website closer to the date
Sept 16-17	We'koqma'q Traditional Powwow	Whycocomagh, NS	website or call 902-756-2337 for details
Sept 23-24	Paqtnkek Traditional Powwow	Paqtnkek, NS	website