



### Membertou engages community on the development of Membership Code



Engagement session with Elders on March 2, 2015. In photo: (L to R Sister Dorothy Moore, Katy McEwan, and Gloria Nicholas).

### Membership Engagement Sessions a Success

On March 2 and 3, 2015, the Governance Committee hosted a series of engagement sessions with elders, youth, women, the committee and key staff in Membertou. The purpose of the sessions was to give an update on the Citizenship/Membership code. The Governance committee was given the mandate from the Chief and Council to develop a Membertou citizenship/membership code.

### Partnership with Ryerson University

In 2013, Membertou signed an MOU with Ryerson University. Dr. Pam Palmater agreed to share her research on Band Membership Codes, the history of Indian Status, and legal considerations for communities to be aware of in developing their own membership codes. Membertou has since held many information sessions.

### Dr. Pam Palmater assists Membertou



Governance Committee Session on March 2 (L to R: Cheryl Knockwood, Janine Christmas, Steve Augustine and Dr. Pam Palmater).

### Feedback on Membership to Date

The community feedback we have received to date on the development of the Membertou membership code identified:

- 1) that we must focus on Mi'kmaw cultural identity (language, culture, values, and traditions);
- 2) we must focus on Membertou community identity (connection to land, community and history);
- 3) we must focus on inclusivity and that fairness must be a core value of any code;
- 4) Membertou wanted to ensure that we avoid harms done by Indian Act and so we must balance inclusivity with maintaining core of what it means to be Mi'kmaw; and
- 5) we need a more formal decision-making process.

Membership surveys were mailed out last week where we hope to get more in depth response.



*Door Prize Winners at Community Session on Membership.*

**Background on Membership in Membertou**

In 1987 Membertou held a plebiscite on Membership. It stated, “We the electors of the Membertou band hereby vote whether we will assume control of our band membership or leave it under the control of the department of Indian Affairs.

“Are you in favour of taking control of our band membership?” The options were Yes or No. The result of the vote was “Yes.”

**Current Membertou Band Transfer Policy (Under Review)**

Membertou Chief and Council will only accept transfer requests for:

- Children legally adopted by Membertou Band members;
- Children of Membertou Band Members (Including adult children);
- Former band members adopted out or apprehended as children;
- Married spouse of Membertou band member (JOP, clergy or traditional Mi'kmaw marriage) – 1 year from date of application.

Written applications to Indian registry administrator; Chief and Council decide on applications (criminal record check requested); Approvals evidenced by way of BCR.

**Give Input on Membership Code In Your Own Home!**

If you want to learn more about the Membership Code or wish to give further input, please contact Cheryl Knockwood, Governance Coordinator at 902-564-6466 (ext. 2520). We are happy to schedule a visit to your home to share information and SEEK YOUR INPUT. The next Community Engagement Sessions targeted for youth, elders, women, staff and the general community on the Membership Code are on May 25 and 26, 2015. At those sessions, a detailed presentation on the responses received on the membership surveys will be shared.

**FAQS on Membership**

**Why does Membertou want to create a membership code?** The status provisions of the Indian Act currently determine Membertou/Maupeltu’s membership; its purpose was to eliminate and assimilate Indians. Membertou can take control of its membership and put in place a system that reflects Mi'kmaw values.

**Is there already a Code drafted?** No, the Code will be drafted as Community Engagement Sessions are carried out over the year.

**Upcoming Events**

**Governance Committee Meetings**

10:00-1:00 P.M.

Entrepreneurship Boardroom

- April 23, 2015
- May 28, 2015
- June 18, 2015
- July 30, 2015
- September 24, 2015
- October 29, 2015
- November 26, 2015
- December 17, 2015

**April 25, 2015**

**4th Annual Wi'kipaltimk Spring Gathering**

Location to be determined

Please note above dates are subject to change. Confirm details prior to event.

*“Kisitutesnu piley kelu'lk nstuita'suaqn ta'n knijannaq ksite'ttaqq.”*

*“Creating new memories in the minds of our children.”*

Video recorded training sessions available at:

[www.maupeltutantsutekek.webs.com](http://www.maupeltutantsutekek.webs.com)

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