



Word from the Chief

Kwai fellow band members,

In this unprecedented battle of our lifetime we scramble as people to regroup and rethink about our values and the course of our actions. As this virus drives through life as we know it, we are called upon to reflect on the many changes we have to face in its wake. Mother earth continues to fight for her survival as we are paused to think about our role.

At a time where our best weapon as Abenaki people, that of collaboration we need to be aware of the outcome of living with colonial constructs resulting in competition, jealousy, judgement and hate and the importance of leaving these dangerous traits little place in the mix. We must keep our minds connected to our biggest strength. UNITY, if we want to make it through.

As our wampum belt teaches us, we are to walk beside our allies throughout our journey and respect the ways in which each choose to meet it. Ensuring we maintain our right to make decisions for our families well-being and our elders safety while trying to maintain what little quality of life we can, is important to the peace of mind of all concerned. Making a plan rooted in our cultural values and reality is crucial to our respective survival as individuals and as nations. Remembering the importance of maintaining our sovereignty, including how we help our people make it through, remains a very important element in this crisis. We cannot give up the little bit of progress, which took so long to build as first nations. As it was then it is now "WE know what is best for us as a people!"

Many of the issues that were on our agendas at the onset of 2020 remain just as important. Know that your leaders are continuing negotiations at the provincial and national levels on very important issues pertaining to fiscal relations such as child protection and registration issues. We continue to redefine our evolving relationship and partnership in our nations' restorative process. Reclaiming our rights to determine our needs has also brought up the importance of exploring important issues such as jurisdictional laws. Through the collaboration of other governments with first nations we continue to co exist while attempting to heal the impact history's authoritarian stance has had on our people.

Through this we must continue to live according to our own cultural values and continue to nurture the threads that will bring us back to the heart of a healthier community. Our family services have recommended that we incorporate cultural projects such as the making of regalia and learning our songs and language through these times of confinement. All of these little actions contribute to building stronger community by reviving ties to our ancestors through our symbols and teachings.

Stay safe, In peace and friendship,
Your Chief, Rick O'Bomsawin



CLAIRE O'BOMSAWIN
Concillor

Kwai,

I hope you are doing well despite the COVID-19 pandemic.

Given the exceptional circumstances we are all experiencing, you may understand that the Council put most of its activities on hold.

Yet, rest assured that the community member's health and well-being are the Band Council's priority and that all our efforts are focused on this situation, which means continuing to provide essential services to elders and vulnerable people, nurses and orderlies continuing to provide home care, providing financial support to workers now unemployed and self-employed workers.

A meals-on-wheels service for people aged 65 and over is also offered in collaboration with the Centre d'action bénévole du Bas-St-François.

I would like to remind our elders and community members as well those who experience some difficulty with being socially isolated due to the mandatory confinement that the Health Center and the staff are fully available to assist you.

Good news does still come in, and I am glad to announce that a few members of our community have

started to receive compensations for attending the Day School. For those who have not completed a claim yet, you can still call 450-568-2810 to get a form or apply online using the following link: www.indiandayschools.com/fr/.

I encourage you to follow instructions and guidance from our governments. This is the best way to quickly get back to our activities.

Stay safe! We will get through this!



Word from Councilors



FLORENCE BENEDICT
Concillor

Kwaï,

I hope that as you read these lines the pandemic is just a bad memory.

You may already know that the Band Council had to put all its activities on hold to focus almost exclusively on the community's and especially our elders' safety. Emergency measures were deployed with all the departments concerned, including Public Works and police services.

As movements and travels are very limited for all of us, the Odanak Health Center takes on its duty to provide home care for our vulnerable people.

A meals-on-wheels service is also available for people aged 65 and over and an emergency fund was created to help those who temporarily or permanently lost their job as well as for small and medium-sized businesses in the community. Food baskets were also regularly distributed to those in need in the community via FNCFS.

Nevertheless, I would like to mention three wonderful events that took place respectively in January and February, before the pandemic started:

First, workshops corn husk mask making with sweetgrass and ash wood were held over a 15-week session, as previously mentioned last fall. The workshops started before the holidays and ended last January. Given the complexity and the meticulous work required to make a mask, only four people could participate.

These workshops would not have been possible without the precious participation from Nicole Bibeau, instructor, who herself has learned her traditional skills from her grandmother Yvonne Robert O'Bomsawin and other artisans from the community, including Marguerite Panadis, Marianne Gill also known as "Marie-Jeanne", Gertrude Robert O'Bomsawin and Marie-Blanche M'Sadoques, all four of them have passed away.

Let's highlight that the last time such an event was held was 20 years ago. Thank you, Nicole!

Basket making workshops also took place from January 18 to March 7 and seven people participated. Many objects were created during these workshops, from the bookmark to the pin cushion, and also the letter holder and baskets of all shapes and sizes.

Many thanks to our instructors, Annette and Diane Nolett, for their patience and dedication to pass on their traditional knowledge.



Last February, the population was invited to our beautiful library Awhikiganigamikok for the book launch of Kyle Dufresne's first novel Mutoxia. The first novel by this young and talented writer and member of our Nation is a fiction

drawn from his overflowing imagination. Despite adulthood, Dufresne has a way to transpose his childhood's imaginary world into this science-fiction novel. Close to 40 people attended the book launch and I can now break the news—Dufresne penned a second novel and it will be published soon. Mutoxia is now available for loan at our library. You can also support the young author by buying one of the copies of his book on sale at the same place. Congratulations, Kyle!



My heart goes out to the people who are affected in any way by this virus. I hope that everyone is healthy and that your respective families stay safe from the virus.

By following government instructions and social distancing, we will quickly get back to our normal lives and then to our loved ones!

Stay safe and take care! We will get through this.

Wli wni



ALAIN O'BOMSAWIN
Concillor

Kwai,

I would first like to thank all our employees and workers currently on duty during this pandemic. Many thanks to band members for

applying the necessary measures and complying with government instructions, despite all the efforts and adaptation it may have taken. Remember that these are only temporary measures and together we will get through this crisis. In other words, "It's going to be okay"!

As all sectors are currently on hold, projects will be making slow progress. Renovating the church's roof is one of our objectives for the near future. Then, projects pertaining to the cemetery will carry on.

Finally, on a positive note, we learned that one of our band members, Vanessa Turcotte,

daughter of Doris Thibeault and granddaughter of late Isabelle Robert O'Bomsawin, recently became president of the Association québécoise des chevaux canadiens and featured in the L'Hebdo du St-Maurice. To read the article click on the following link:—
<https://www.lhebdodustmaurice.com/pour-lamour-des-chevaux-canadiens>.

Stay safe and take care of your health. Remember that we are available if you need us and that you can get in touch with us through the Abenaki Council of Odanak.

Wli Wni



Word from Councilors



JACQUES T. WATSO
Concillor

Kwai,

It's hard to write an article about life in Odanak on May 27, 2020 during the Covid-19 pandemic. The decisions of the various levels of government make the task difficult for Odanak's public health. Despite all the difficulties that we

have to face, I assure you that the Odanak Band has been taken care of since the first days of this pandemic by a team that has shown itself to be more than up to the task. Together with the program directors, your director general manages this crisis with unparalleled calm and professionalism. The crisis is far from over and the uncertainty of the next few months or even years, that nothing will be as before and that we will have to change the way we do things.

Life continues. Odanak is in the hands of a professional who cares about the best for the community. At council, there is a dedicated team that ensures that all programs and financial management continue so that no one is left behind.

The health sector makes sure to offer the best possible services within the limits of public health directives. Thanks to the center to all the employees of the health center for your exceptional and even remarkable work. Thank you.

The Home Care Team for our elders lives up to the task assigned to you. Without forgetting the FNCFS team, which helps families get through this ordeal. Without forgetting the volunteers who help the community as well as the caregivers.

To the public works team and the Land and Environment office, who are working to prepare us for the deconfinement, don't give up, we are proud of you.

To all members of the Abenaki

police force, thank you for ensuring the safety of our community.

In this context, no use politics, for the moment. However, more than doubtful political decision will be addressed during the final debriefing of this pandemic. Far be it from me to pretend to be a blameless virtuous being, just ask my brother, but come a time when you can't let certain things go by.

Follow the rules established by your Council, the Government of Canada and Quebec and everything will be fine.

To stay informed visit the following sites: <https://caodanak.com>
canada.ca quebec.ca

Word from Management



DANIEL G. NOLETT
Executive Director
Abenaki Council of Odanak

Kwaï mziwi!

T8ni kd'al8wziba kwani COVID-19 pandemic kwigw8mw8lek? How are you doing at home during the COVID-19 pandemic? As these lines are being written, we are in the fourth week of the pandemic in the province and still working, although slowly, at the Council. All the personnel is telecommuting to the administrative office, the Odanak Health Center and to the Environment and Land Office. All other employees, such as the Public Works staff, are doing what they are allowed to as far as essential services are concerned. The Abenaki Police Force is operating normally since it has been tasked to enforce public health instructions during the pandemic. It should be said that it is not exactly easy for patrollers to ask people not to gather together, to comply to social distancing (avoiding being 2 metres from each other), and to keep from visiting friends or relatives in their homes, etc.

After four weeks of confinement, a sense of unease can be felt in our community, especially among elders aged 70 and over who cannot go to public spaces such as the post office, the grocery store,

or even church (no mass have been celebrated since mid-March). The worst part is that they cannot get any visitors at home either, they are the most isolated of us in this situation. And what can be said about elderly people with decreasing independence who cannot even take a walk. As you may know, we celebrated Easter individually in our homes, without being able to get together with our families as usual. It has been difficult! However, all these measures our governments have taken had but one purpose: to protect the population and vulnerable people, thus our elders. We must stop this virus from propagating, so that we come through this pandemic as quickly as possible and can get together with our loved ones.

We all wish for our lives to get back to normal very soon. To do so, we will need everyone's collaboration and to follow public health instructions. Stay home, and when it becomes too much, go outside enjoy the weather, all the while complying with social distancing instructions. Avoid going out in public places, e.g. grocery stores, as much as possible.

The Abenaki Council of Odanak maintains all essential services to the population. Home care services are maintained for those who have necessary follow-ups. Assisted living support is also in service providing help to do the grocery, prepare meals, and help for bathing. Other services from the Health Center are provided by phone, even consultations with the psychologist. Social workers are calling vulnerable people every week to see how they handle the situation. First Nations Children and Family Services

(FNCFS) also calls families of Odanak with whom they follow up on a weekly basis.

The Health Center and FNCFS set up emergency food baskets, which are available for community members in need during the pandemic. We will also work in collaboration with other localities in the Bas-Saint-François and with the Centre d'action bénévole (CAB) du Lac St-Pierre in Saint-François-du-Lac. We are collaborating to provide the meals-on-wheels service for people aged 65 and over. The CAB distributes cold meals prepared by Claire de Baie-du-Febvre's catering services. Eligible people can receive up to 10 meals per week (deliveries are made on a weekly basis). CAB's food bank services are also overseeing the distribution of food hampers every two weeks to people and families in need.

The Council set up an emergency support of \$500 for the community members of Odanak. The Council wanted to make sure that members who became unemployed or had to shut down their business activities because of the pandemic would receive financial help for groceries while waiting for the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) introduced by the Trudeau government.

We think that the support that has been concerted, supplemented with all the services provided by our community organizations like the CAB, addresses and meets the basic needs of our members. We regularly receive positive feedback in this regard. All the Council's staff members (administration office, Health Center, Environment and Land, Public Works, and the

Abenaki Police Force) are also doing all they can to serve you so that we can all get through this pandemic in the best possible conditions. You are invited to check our Web site or Facebook page to stay informed on the different available services, on what is happening, or on what you should know about the pandemic.

On another note, the proposed viabilization of 25 lots for a residential development, on parcels of land where the CN property was formerly located until 1989, was completed during the months of January and February. Pakesso Street has been extended to meet Waban-Aki Street. The contract was awarded to Boisvert construction for nearly \$1.5 million. However, the construction site has been closed due to the pandemic. If the situation allows, the construction could restart in June to complete the works. This includes connecting the Pakesso Street storm sewer line to the Sibosis Street line at the Waban-Aki Street intersection near the community centre. This means we will need to excavate Waban-Aki Street from 5 Waban-Aki to the community centre. So we can expect being cluttered part of the summer!

As for the class action brought by the victims of the federal Indian Day Schools, elders from the community who attended St. Joseph Academy before it closed in 1959 have already received the compensation amount. For more information about this class action, I invite you to consult the following link:

<https://indiandayschools.com/en/>

Wli sigwan! Enjoy spring!



Word from Management Health Center



JEAN VOLLANT
Directeur

I am speaking to you today. We are going through extremely difficult times together. We know that COVID-19 is changing our lives, but also our habits. As Prime Minister Legault said, we are fighting this battle together. This is probably the battle of our lives; the fight to protect our society so that we can go back to our regular activities.

The Health Center team is currently working to organize transition services and to ensure that services to members in Odanak are up to standard and, above all, to ensure that everyone receives appropriate care.

We must meet this challenge collectively.

Despite the pandemic, the Odanak Health Center wishes to maintain, improve and restore the health and well-being of all the Abenaki members of Odanak by providing access to a set of quality, integrated health and psychosocial services, thus contributing to the development of the collective well-being of the community.

Care and service accessibility means providing the required care and services where and when they are needed, but also making sure a fair access is provided to people based solely on their needs, regardless of personal information such as income, education, place of residence, etc.

The quality of the care and services provided implies that they be efficient, in other words, they should be reliable—and safe—means to improve people’s health and well-being. Care and services should be adaptable to adjust to users’ expectations, values, and rights (responsiveness) and provided in a coordinated and integrated manner (continuity).

Optimizing resources requires the knowledge on how to use available

resources effectively, but also in a way that ensures sustainability over time (viability).

Since we are experiencing this extraordinary situation, everything is done by teleworking. Yet, the personnel is entirely available at all times thanks to technological development, which helps us to remain proactive and facilitates our community-based approach.

We are aware that we must do certain things differently.

I would like to acknowledge the contribution of my staff and their daily investment in transforming transitional practices as they carry out their tasks on a daily basis.

In a nutshell, let’s keep the good work people! And most importantly: it’s going to be okay!

Jean Vollant
Director
Odanak Health Center



Technical Services



MARIO DIAMOND
Technical Services
Director

Kwaï N’nid8ba,

The year 2020 started out unexpectedly! As those of us who follow closely the natural world’s design can tell, from experience now, the greatest danger does not

come from the larger mammals, but from the tiniest of invisible viruses. For these reasons, the Grand Conseil will take all the necessary measures to protect community members and all employees as operations go on. The technical services department is helping an EMAP program, which provides a wide range of solutions to stop the spread.

The Pakesso project is on hold for now, accordingly, but will resume by the end of May or early in June. The end of the thawing season for the transportation of materials by truck and the lowering of the ground water table, to name only two factors, will facilitate the works’ execution. As you may

know, this project will result in over 25 additional lots with all services. However, as operations resume, we will also need to build and refurbish the storm sewer line on Waban-Aki Street, between Route 132 and the post office. Works on sanitary sewers will also be required in targeted areas. We will try to keep the complete closure of the street to a minimum and maintain access to the residents. Then, the street will be entirely paved all the way to Amisk Street.

Another major project to start soon is the construction of a two-story building right besides the building on 102 Sibosis Street. This modern building will allow FNCFS to improve the

services provided to community members and improve its collaboration with other organizations such as the Health Center and Aw8ssisak childcare centre, to name just a few.

In this confinement period, the Grand Conseil continues to work with the Abenaki Council of Odanak to ensure the completion of all these projects. If you have ideas or questions, get in touch with me. In the meantime, feel free to consult our Web site or posts on social media.

Wli nanawalmezi,
Adio



Short Column on the Abenaki Language

In this issue, I will discuss nouns.

NOUNS¹.

In Abenaki, there are two types of nouns:

- **ANIMATE** nouns (ending with “k” in the plural form)

and

- **INANIMATE** nouns (ending with “l” in the plural form)

Examples:	Singular	Plural
Child (animate noun)	Aw8ssis	Aw8ssisak
Table (inanimate noun)	Tawipodi	Tawipodial

Animate nouns comprise the nouns for all living beings, including trees and celestial bodies.

As for **natural phenomena**, plants and fruits, some are considered **animate**, others **inanimate**.

Some **objects** can also fall in the **animate** noun category.

Inanimate nouns include all **abstract** nouns (such as *kindness*, *intelligence*, *work*) and all **objects**, with the rare exceptions mentioned above.

¹ Excerpt from the book *INITIATION À LA GRAMMAIRE ABÉNAKISE*, Monique Nolett-Ille, Odanak, 2006.

Environment and Land Odanak is currently working on upgrading the hiking trails on the territory. In fall 2019, the Tolba Trail was extended to meet Koak Trail. The trail, which now starts right beside the Musée des Abénakis, is easily reached by stairs specifically built for this purpose leading to the St. Francis's riverside. Hikers can now enjoy a 4.5 km loop while walking in an exceptional natural environment that is culturally significant.

A few amenities were built, such as small wooden boardwalks and an observation tower with a full view of the 2nd Marsh.

We also upgraded the trail by adding interpretive signs about nature and Abenaki culture. The trail is now equipped with seats and tables, parking spaces, washrooms, nature observation stations, a fishing area, shelters, a number of wildlife conservation measures, and much more!

We would also like to remind the population that the Koak Trail section has been fully adapted for people with reduced mobility.

Keep a lookout, the official opening will be announced to invite you to enjoy Odanak's amazing nature!

Samuel Dufour

ODANAK ECOCENTRE NEWS

OPENING MAY 5TH, 2020

THUESDAY, WEDNESDAY and SATURDAY :

9 to 12 am and 12:30 to 4:30 pm

THURSDAY and FRIDAY :

12 to 4:30 and 5 à 7:30 pm

Business hours till Oct. 17th, 2020



Access to the ecocentre at the intersection of Skamonal and Managuan Streets is permanently **CLOSED** at all times.

To access the ecocentre:

1. On route 132 East, take junction of Asban St. (rang Saint-Joseph) on the left between **Marché 132** and **Dépan-O-Gaz Nimôwôn**.
2. Then follow the indications to the ecocentre

Phragmite



Japanese knotweed

PLANTS AND GREEN MATERIAL :

FOR ODANAK and PIERREVILLE RESIDENTS

Phragmite and Japanese knotweed must not, under any circumstances, be taken to the ecocentre. These plants should be packed in airtight bags, ideally before being cut, and the bags should be thrown away at home in the **black bin**.

Conseil des Abénakis d'Odanak and Bureau Environnement et Terre d'Odanak.
450-568-2810 ext. 3103 <https://caodanak.com/ecocentre/>

MUSÉE DES
Abénakis

Unleash your creativity!

THE MUSÉE DES
ABÉNAKIS IS LOOKING FOR
INDIGENOUS CRAFTS TO DECORATE
THE KIZ8BAK BOUTIQUE.

DO YOU HAVE CRAFTS TO
OFFER US? CONTACT US WITHOUT
FURTHER DELAY.

info@museeabenakis.ca or via the Musée
des Abénakis Facebook page.

ODANAK ECOCENTRE

OPENING ON MAY 5, 2020

Schedule:

Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday:

9:00 a.m. to noon and

12:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Thursday and Friday:

Noon to 4:30 p.m. and

5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Since September 2019, the access point from Skamonal and Managuan Streets is permanently closed, at all times, to reduce traffic in the residential area of Odanak. From now on, you can access the ecocentre only via **Route 132**. To get there, turn off Route 132 on Asban Street (rang Saint-Joseph) between Marché 132 and Dépan-O-Gaz Nimôwôn. Then, follow indications to the ecocentre.



Dépan-O-Gaz
Nimôwôn



Marché 132

PLEASE NOTE:

For plant materials, **DO NOT** bring common reeds (phragmites) and Japanese knot-weed to the ecocentre. These plants should be placed in a tightly sealed bag and thrown in the black bin.



Common reed or invasive phragmites
(https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/invasive_phragmites_australis_what_is_it_and_why_is_it_a_problem)

To get the latest information, follow Environment and Land or the Abenaki Council of Odanak on Facebook. To learn more on how it works and accepted materials visit <https://caodanak.com/ecocentre>.

If you have any question, call 450 568-2810 extension 3103.



Japanese knotweed
(<https://rawdon.ca/citoyen/environnement/especes-exotiques-envahissantes-eee/renouee-du-japon>)

Odanak Environment and Land Office / Ndakina Office

Research Project on the Impact of Climate Change on the Medicinal Plants' Availability and the Proliferation of Invasive Alien Species.

Kwaï mziwi,

In 2019–2020, we conducted a research project on medicinal plants' availability and on the proliferation of invasive alien species. This project was funded by Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) as part of the Climate Change and Health Adaptation Program for First Nations South of 60°N.

Throughout this project, several research activities were carried out. First, medicinal plants inventories were conducted by Environment and Land Odanak, in collaboration with Michel Durand-Nolett. Île Ronde and the Commune areas were surveyed; close to thirty medicinal plant species were found during the visits. Approximately 1 200 observations were collected over five inventories. These results will be available to community members who express their interest. How this information will be disseminated and in which format remains to be determined. We are aware that some issues are sensitive and should be handled with care.

The Environment and Land Office also partnered with the Conseil québécois des espèces exotiques envahissantes (CQEEE) to survey the community's territory and identify areas where invasive alien species (IAS) are located. IAS are mostly propagated by men and machinery. Although propagation is difficult to control in large areas, it can be limited in smaller areas, for example by avoiding to pick

IAS and bringing them home. Some IAS are esthetically appealing and trendy (e.g. phragmites). However, it is advised to avoid using them for ornamental, decorative or practical purposes (e.g. hunting blind). If these plants grow on your property and that you wish to cut them, before getting your shears ready, the flower heads (feathery pompoms on phragmites) should be wrapped in a sealed plastic bag to carry them and throw them in the garbage bin. These plants should NEVER EVER be thrown on the compost pile, brought to the ecocentre, thrown in the ditch or the woods! If you would like to know more on how to take care of IAS, please refer to the CQEEE's Web site: <http://cqeee.org/>.

Four different IAS were observed through our surveys on Odanak's territory, i.e. common reed, Japanese knotweed, European frogbit and flowering rush. According to the observations made, there is currently no IAS that poses a serious threat to the medicinal plants found.



Figure . . Common reed (MELCC, 2014)

In addition to the biological inventories, the project was an opportunity to offer workshops on medicinal plants during the 2019 forum Rejoin the Circle and to redesign the medicinal garden on the Odanak Health Center's grounds.



Figure 2. Japanese knotweed (MELCC, 2014)

The project also made it possible to produce two video vignettes on stinging nettle and common yarrow. These vignettes were produced by Michel Durand-Nolett and the Niona team. How to harvest and prepare the plants is explained in the videos, how to differentiate them from other species, their properties and so on. The vignettes should be available this summer or fall. The project was also supported

by a community initiative called Kinaw8la, which means "take care of yourself"; this initiative's purpose is to reconnect with ancestral knowledge while learning the healing properties of plants.



Figure 3. Filming of the vignettes on medicinal plants directed by Niona



Figure 2. Medicinal garden at the Odanak Health Center

If you would like to know more about this project, feel free to get in touch with us:

Joannie Beaupré, Environment and Land Odanak

Jean-François Provencher, Grand Conseil de la Nation Waban-Aki

Ndakina Office, GCNWA

Virus, Bacteria, Diseases and Archeology

Archeology is one of the ways to retrace the history of the people who came before us. The archeological field attempts to answer questions such as: How did people live? What did they eat? What kinds of tools did they use to hunt, fish and grow crops? How did they build their houses? How did they bury their dead? And so much more! Specialized studies and analysis can sometimes reveal a specimen's or even a whole population's health, whether human or animal. We can learn about a person's hygiene by studying lice, flees and intestinal worms still present in a tomb or in petrified feces. Similarly, the hygiene level of a whole group can be evaluated by finding different insects in food reserves, house structures or in the latrines. Digging further into health, archeology enables us to identify the presence of diseases on a specimen or an outbreak spreading within an animal or human population.

Studying Human Remains

Studying human remains and burial sites teaches us about the different aspects of life of a specific society or community. Research gives us a better understanding of the direct causes (e.g. the cause of death, illness or injury) and indirect causes (e.g. demography, kinship, food or the health state of a population). Bioarcheology, biological anthropology or paleoanthropology are the fields of science that peer into human past and ways of life.

We can see a community's evolution in numbers over time by analyzing bodies discovered in burial sites or communal graves. By examining specific bones, such as pelvic bones, we can differentiate men from women. Age is determined using growth rate, bone suture closure and tooth development. With an analysis based on dental records and joints, we can learn about malnutrition or nutrient deficiencies affecting healthy bone development, hence assessing a population's health. The study of skeletal remains also offers information on pathologies.

They range from abnormal protrusions, to scars and dents that should not be seen on the bones of a healthy person. These pathologies could have been caused by a genetic or congenital disorder, by infectious diseases, e.g. syphilis or tuberculosis, or by a dietary deficiency as would be the case with scurvy.

Studying Faunal Remains

On faunal remains, bone pathologies yield information on both common illnesses and animal husbandry practices. These pathologies tell us more on the animals' life conditions,



Figure : Bones of a human arm showing pathological signs of the syphilis bacteria (Source: Carlos Jacome H. [Online] <https://www.acfas.ca/publications/magazine/2012/05/syphilis-en-amerique-precolombienne>)

breeding methods, physical stress incurred from being used for field work. They are also a source of information on cultural attitudes a population could have towards specific animals that were regarded as representation of deities on earth.

These pieces of information help us differentiate domesticated and wild populations. For example, the bridle bit used to control a horse is placed in the mouth, as it rubs against the animal's molars, the bit leaves permanent marks on the bigger teeth at the back of the mouth, which serves as identification and proof of domestication. Livestock rearing practices have sometimes resulted in inbreeding within a herd causing deformities and skeletal disorders as well as an increased juvenile mortality rate. A broken bone that healed because the animal received care can also be observed for time to time. This type of evidence is quite common on bones from dogs and other farm animals. The occurrence of a pathology on several animals from

the same herd can also be the physical result of a disease outbreak spreading to a herd. An excessive number of animals for a given space is often what causes these epidemics.

The Archeologist's Toolbox

In addition to dental and skeletal microscopy and X-ray tomography using CT scans, archeologists now use biochemical and molecular analysis to collect data on the genetics of human and animal populations or their dietary habits.

ancient populations. Microbes or viruses responsible for infectious diseases can regroup and be preserved inside teeth for several years after the death of the host. Archeologists can then conduct a DNA analysis on a tooth and compare results with a database on modern bacteria and viruses. This is how it has been possible to identify a source of salmonella, *Salmonella enterica paratyphi C*, called *cocolitzli* by the Aztecs. Brought by the Europeans in the 16th century, this strain of salmonella caused an epidemic, along with other diseases, that killed, millions of Aztecs over a mere five years¹ VAGENE Ashild J. et al., 2018, *Salmonella enterica* genomes from victims of a major sixteenth-century epidemic in Mexico, *Nature Ecology & Evolution*, vol. 2, 520–528, <https://www.nature.com/natecolevol/>.

. Between 1729 and 1733 and again between 1755 and 1758, W8banaki populations were hit by a smallpox or variola outbreak. Similar epidemic waves were common for most Aboriginal populations of the North-East throughout the entire colonization period. These events are historically known, but can also be documented by DNA studies in the field of archeology.

For example, analyzing bone collagen can reveal the level of a dietary dependence to a specific animal or plant species like corn. Results will show whether a population's food system relied on fishing or hunting. As for animals, results can show if an animal fed on fodder, implying the extent of its domestication.



Figure : Evidence left by a bridle bit on a horse's teeth revealing this was a domesticated animal (Source: William Taylor, CC BY-ND [Online] <https://www.gizmodo.com.au/2020/03/new-tech-could-help-archaeologists-figure-out-when-re-and-when-humans-domesticated-horses/>)

When diseases leave no evidence on bones, DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid) analysis is currently the best tool to better comprehend illness and epidemics that devastated

¹ VAGENE Ashild J. et al., 2018, *Salmonella enterica* genomes from victims of a major sixteenth-century epidemic in Mexico, *Nature Ecology & Evolution*, vol. 2, 520–528, <https://www.nature.com/natecolevol/>.

News from Your Museum



As you probably already know, the situation with COVID-19 has a tremendous impact on the museum, on attendance and events to be held. However, we intend to strictly follow the instructions from all levels of government.

Attendance

While spring season was shaping up to be promising as far as group visits were concerned, 25 elementary and high school groups

had to cancel their visits to the museum (from the end of March to June). These 25 school groups represented a total of 1 175 students. Nine organized group tours were cancelled as well, or in the best of cases, postponed to a later date, which remains undetermined. These nine groups represented 311 visitors.

Benefit Dinner

Sadly, the annual benefit dinner also had to be cancelled; it will be postponed to a later date. Those who already had their tickets and our valued sponsors have all been informed about the event's postponement. Over 95 tickets were purchased by the

museum's friends and partners.

Cultural Program

All the events scheduled for this spring were also cancelled. Fear not, the museum team makes the most of this shutdown period to pause and develop entirely new events that a broad audience is sure to enjoy. These events will be presented next fall.

Archeology Exhibit

The current exhibit "Pemighassi 8jmow8gan—Digging into history", which is on the first floor, will be modified by next summer. We are working on a new exhibit that will allow us to showcase new artifacts found in recent

archeological digs. Did you know that our archeological collection comprises over 28 000 artifacts?

Kiz8bak Store

We are looking for new products to replenish the museum's store. Artisans wishing to use the museum to display and sell their craft, contact us at 450-568-2600 or by email at

Vicky Desfossés-Bégin,
Coordonnatrice projets et
communications
Musée des Abénakis

NEW INDIGENOUS CINEMA PROGRAM OFFERED AT KIUNA!

It is with great pride that Kiuna, the only First Nations in Quebec launches its new program in Indigenous Cinema offered in the fall of 2020. This program is made possible thanks to a decisive association with the Wapikoni Mobile, who has been working for more than 15 years to promote the rich cultures of First Nations through the production and distribution of films.

By joining their efforts, Kiuna and Wapikoni Mobile wish to actively participate in the emergence of a new generation of Indigenous creators, who will contribute in portraying a more accurate image of our nations.

As expressed by Angie Pepper O'Bomsawin and Julie O'Bomsawin, this unique program is part of our collective approach to cultural affirmation: "I couldn't be more excited that Kiuna is introducing a film program. We, Indigenous people are storytellers by nature and for far too long, outsiders have told our narrative stories resulting in us having been greatly misrepresented on screen.

It is crucial that we take control of our image, write our own narratives, write our characters as we know ourselves and we can change the image of First Nations on screen.

It is also important for the sensitivity of our history and our communities that our productions are stacked with as many First Nations crew members as possible, it is integral to the outcome of our work.

The foundation has been set, many of us have worked hard to create a

space for indigenous film making and storytelling. Programs like this are the building blocks we need to bring the indigenous film industry to the forefront. We have so much talent within our communities and this program is going to unfold so many great creative minds." - Angie Pepper O'Bomsawin, producer and owner of Peppered Films

"Today, cinema, television and digital media are extremely powerful and influent because they are accessible in most households. They allow to tell our stories, to share and develop new perceptions, but also to move the audience. Furthermore, they change the notion of geographic distance and open a world of possibilities.

As president and producer of the indigenous production company Kassiwi Média, I am extremely optimistic for the DEC in Arts, Literature and Communication – Indigenous Cinema Option to begin at Kiuna. I look forward to possible collaborations with you, future artists and indigenous writers. It is important that you, the next generation, develop your own worldview and master media language.

One thing remains important, creating works that respect indigenous values, both in the operating mode of the productions and in the way subjects are portrayed on screen. This program bodes well for the future because, the more competent and passionate First Nations people in the production field, the better we will be represented through our own realities, and members of the different Nations will be able to recognize themselves on screen.

We, in the film industry look forward to you joining our future teams."

-Julie O'Bomsawin, president and producer at Kassiwi Média

This new DEC is in addition to the 4 culturally adapted to First Nations programs already in place.

So, if you're looking for stimulating environment, a dedicated team and outstanding student

services, the Kiuna Institution is for you!

For more information about our programs, contact us at: 1 866 568-6464 or visit our website at www.kiuna-college.com.

For more information about Wapikoni Mobile, visit: www.wapikoni.ca

