

This narrative history of a Residential School was researched and produced by the Government of Canada as part of its response to litigation and the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement. The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation has not verified the content of this document. It is provided here for reference purposes only. Documented incidents of sexual and physical abuse are based on the documentary record and do not take into account survivor testimony.



You are welcome to contact the NCTR if you wish to add, comment on, or challenge any versions of the history presented herein.

# Christie IRS School Narrative

January 19, 2005

**This School Narrative summarizes documents that provide an over-view of the history and administration of the school.**

## NAME OF SCHOOL AND VARIANTS

- Kakawis Indian School [# 04454]
- Kakawis School [# 04611]
- Kakawis IRS [# 01718]
- Christie Industrial School [# 00862A]
- Clayoquoy School [# 00481]
- Clayoquot Industrial School [# 01686]
- Clayoquot (Bishop Christie) School [# 00485]
- Clayquot Christie Boarding School [# 08224]
- Clayoquot Boarding School [# 08207]
- Clayoquot School [# 08248]
- Indian Boarding School at Clayoquot [# 08201]
- Clayoquot Indian Boarding School [# 08226]
- Roman Catholic Christie Indian Boarding School [# 08229]
- Bishop Christie Roman Catholic Boarding School [# 08231]
- Christie Indian Industrial School [# 07639]
- Christie's Boarding School [# 08202]
- Christie School [# 00602]
- Christie Indian School [# 00591]
- Christie Residential School [# 00601]
- Christie Indian Residential School [# 00674]
- Christie Student Residence [# 03806]
- Tofino Hostel [# 05126]
- Tofino Student Residence [# 05126, # 04049]
- Tofino School [# 05125]
- Christie Indian Student Residence [#04022A]

## CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY

- 1900            May 20, Christie Industrial School opened. [# 08202, 08201]
- 1922            Gymnasium constructed, including a bowling alley, and room for basketball and handball. [# 00862A]
- 1924            Additions over three to four years include a recreation hall for boys, a recreation hall for girls, additional accommodation, three bathtubs, a classroom, and a house for Indian people who come to visit their children and often remain over night. [# 08371]

- 1946 A discussion was held regarding using a R.C.A.F hospital at Tofino as a replacement for the existing Christie Indian School. It was eventually decided not to relocate to this new location. [# 08188]
- 1969 Four classrooms in operation, grades 1 to 8. [# 00029] This document comments that the school is “church-owned”
- 1971 June, “old” Christie IRS closed. [# 04062, # CIS-00090<sup>1</sup>]
- 1971 October 30, official opening of Tofino/Christie Student Residence. [# 05126, # 04052]
- 1973 June 23, official opening of the new gymnasium. [# 04031, # CIS-00092]
- 1974 September, Christie Student Residence handed over to the West Coast District Council of Indian Chiefs to continue to operate as a student residence. [# 00842, # 00992]
- 1975 August, Christie Student Residence handed back to the government to operate for the 1975-76 school year. [# 01000]
- 1983 June 30, Christie Student Residence closed. [# 05284]

## **MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOL**

### Dates managed by Church

- 1899 - 1938 Order of St. Benedict [# 00848B, # 00892B, # 08202, # 08026, # 08024]
- 1938 Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate [# 00892B, # 01683, # CIS-000105, # OB-000451<sup>2</sup>]

### Dates managed by Government

From April 1, 1969 until its handover to the West Coast District Council of Indian Chiefs in September 1974, the school was administered by the government. [# 00992]

The government also administered the school for the 1975-76 school year. [# 01000]

### Dates managed by Band or other aboriginal group

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<sup>1</sup>Documents with the prefix “CIS” are from the Oblates for Christie collection. These are not Crown-sourced documents.

<sup>2</sup>Documents with the prefix “OB” are from the Oblates General List collection. These are not Crown-sourced documents.

In September 1974 the Christie Student Residence handed over to the West Coast District Council of Indian Chiefs to continue to operate as a student residence. [# 00842, # 00992] The school was returned to the administration of the government for the 1975-76 school year. [# 01000]

## **SCHOOL BUILDINGS**

- 1899 School buildings constructed and owned by the St. Order of Benedict. [# 00848B, # 00874B, # 04978]
- 1915 Circa this year a laundry building was constructed, one storey with attic. In addition, a carpenter shop was built, one storey. [# 01418]
- 1922 Gymnasium constructed, including a bowling alley, and room for basketball and handball. [# 00862A]
- 1924 Additions over three to four years include a recreation hall for boys, a recreation hall for girls, additional accommodation, three bathtubs, a classroom, and a house for Indian people who come to visit their children and often remain over night. [# 08371]
- 1928 A pavilion/bandstand was erected. [# 00852]
- 1938 A trail was built from the boat landing to the school, and a reservoir to hold 90,000 gallons of water was completed. [# 08026]
- 1939 A Manual Training Shop was constructed, 50 feet by 26 feet. [# 00892D]
- 1943 New classrooms and dormitory completed. [# 08072]
- 1959 It was noted that the Christie IRS was not departmental property. [# 01201]
- 1965 In this year buildings were described as "...a basement, three storey residence...a detached carpenter shop, laundry, power house and gym. This [sic] is also a dock and boathouse about one half-mile detached." It was further noted that there was a chapel on the second floor. [# 01418]
- As a result of a fire commissioner's report stating that if the dormitories were to remain on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floors sprinklers would have to be installed; a suggestion was made to reduce enrolment so all dormitories could be on the main floor and the classroom moved upstairs, this eventually happened. [# 01418, # 00832, # 01029, # 04266, # CIS-00603]
- 1967 A severe storm destroyed a bridge and wharf at the school. [# 01468]
- 1968 While a new hostel was being discussed, there was extensive correspondence regarding the dangerous state of the school buildings. [# 01029, # 01518A]

- 1971 New student residence constructed at new location. [# 03807]. This residence was comprised of 2-two storey dormitories, a 2 storey administration building and a 1 storey cafeteria. [# 04060B]
- 1973 May, A Fire Protection Engineering Survey describes the school buildings as “...owned and maintained by the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs...[they] are in excellent condition and well maintained...The standard of fire protection provided for the Student Residence property is exceptionally good.” [# 04022A]  
June 23, official opening of the new gymnasium. [# 04031]
- 1976 “Old” Christie developed into the Kakawis Family Development Centre. [# CIS-00096]
- 1983 Appraisal completed of buildings. Describes administration building, dormitories, gymnasium and other structures. [# 08485A]
- 1984 The government leased the Christie Student Residence to members of the Clayoquot Band in trust for the members of the same Band for a three year lease. [# 08482]
- 1985 It was proposed that the Clayoquot Band enter into a long term lease of the former Christie residential school. [# 07690] There is no indication if this took place.

## **LAND**

- 1918 It was noted in this year that there were 175 acres in connection with the “Clayoquot Industrial School”, 7 of which were cleared. [# 01686]
- 1934 A football field was constructed. [# 00874B]
- 1947 The first road was constructed from the nearby Opitsat Village (1.25 miles from the school) to the school. [# 01665, # 01658]
- 1969 Government purchased Lot Two, District Lot 126, Clayoquot District, on which to construct the new residential school. [# 01474, # 01799B, # 01798B]
- 1973 May, A Fire Protection Engineering Survey describes the land as “...owned and maintained by the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs.” [# 04022A]

## **PHOTOS, PLANS AND OTHER MEDIA**

|           |         |             |
|-----------|---------|-------------|
| 08263     | undated | Plans       |
| CIS-00004 | undated | Photographs |
| CIS-00005 | undated | Photographs |

|           |                      |                   |
|-----------|----------------------|-------------------|
| CIS-00007 | October 29, 1905     | Newspaper Article |
| CIS-00639 | December, 1925       | Excerpt from Book |
| 04434C    | March 5, 1928        | Plan              |
| 08102     | May 1944             | Newspaper Article |
| 00317A    | c. 1949              | Handwritten plan  |
| 00317B    | c. 1949              | Handwritten plan  |
| CIS-00013 | 1950                 | Newspaper Article |
| CIS-00014 | September 1950       | Journal Article   |
| CIS-00015 | September 1950       | Photographs       |
| CIS-00054 | May 22, 1960         | Newspaper Article |
| CIS-00056 | September 1960       | Newspaper Article |
| CIS-00083 | May 8, 1966          | Newspaper Article |
| 01622B    | c. 1967              | Map               |
| 01574A    | c. 1967              | Handwritten plan  |
| 01579A    | c. 1967              | Handwritten plan  |
| CIS-00086 | October 11, 1967     | Newspaper Article |
| 01564A    | c. 1968              | Handwritten plan  |
| 01510     | February 22, 1968    | Plan              |
| 00009     | April 4, 1968        | Newspaper article |
| 01765B    | November 13, 1968    | Newspaper article |
| 01765C    | c. November 13, 1968 | Design plan       |
| 09398     | January 1969         | Floor plan        |
| 01835     | January 1969         | Floor plan        |
| 04227     | c. 1970              | Newspaper Article |
| 09508D    | February 17, 1970    | Plan              |
| CIS-00090 | June 15, 1971        | Newspaper Article |
| 01781C    | c. 1972              | Handwritten plan  |
| 04047A    | c. 1972              | Handwritten Map   |
| CIS-00091 | 1972                 | Photographs       |
| 04022B    | June 1973            | Photographs       |

|           |                |                   |
|-----------|----------------|-------------------|
| CIS-00092 | June 1973      | Newspaper Article |
| CIS-00094 | August 8, 1973 | Newspaper Article |
| CIS-00096 | May 28, 1976   | Newspaper Article |

**GENERAL ENROLLMENT STATISTICS OVER TIME**

| Year | Number of Students |
|------|--------------------|
| 1900 | 27                 |
| 1919 | 34                 |
| 1920 | 53                 |
| 1921 | 61                 |
| 1922 | 65                 |
| 1923 | 78                 |
| 1925 | 76                 |
| 1926 | 84                 |
| 1928 | 82                 |
| 1931 | 111                |
| 1934 | 111                |
| 1936 | 110                |
| 1937 | 99                 |
| 1938 | 101                |
| 1939 | 123                |
| 1948 | 100                |
| 1949 | 127                |
| 1952 | 131                |
| 1953 | 145                |
| 1954 | 139                |
| 1955 | 144                |
| 1956 | 158                |
| 1957 | 149                |
| 1958 | 146                |
| 1959 | 136                |

|      |     |
|------|-----|
| 1960 | 142 |
| 1961 | 136 |
| 1962 | 147 |
| 1963 | 141 |
| 1964 | 145 |
| 1965 | 144 |
| 1966 | 147 |
| 1967 | 142 |
| 1968 | 134 |
| 1969 | 133 |
| 1970 | 145 |
| 1972 | 99  |
| 1976 | 94  |
| 1978 | 75  |
| 1980 | 82  |

**STUDENTS FROM OTHER RESERVES**

Students from at least the following bands attended Christie IRS:

Ahousaht, Chielisat, Clayoquot, Cowichan, Ehattisaht, Hesquiaht, Keltsemet, Kyoquot, Moachat, Muchalat, Nitinat, Nootka, Nuchatlitz, Nuchatlaht, Opitsat, Pacheenaht, Pauquachin, Penelakut, Saanish, Sechelt, Sheshaht, Songhees, Squamish, Toquaht, Uchucklisaht, Ucluelet.

There may be alternate ways of spelling these band names.

**RELIGIOUS GROUPS**

Order of St. Benedict [# 00848B]

Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate [# 00892B, # 01683, # CIS-000105, # OB-000451]

**WRITTEN AGREEMENTS**

1971            December, Chaplaincy Service Agreement between the Oblate Provincial and the Government. [no #] This agreement provided that the Holy Family Parish would provide Chaplaincy services to the resident students and staff of Christie Student Residence.

1972            September, Chaplaincy Service Agreement between the Oblate Provincial and the Government. [# 01920, 01920A] This agreement provided that the Holy Family



Parish would provide Chaplaincy services to the resident students and staff of Christie Student Residence.

1973 June, Service Agreement between Oblates and the Government. [# OB-002905]  
This agreement provided that the Oblates would, among other things, continue to recruit and nominate administrators and child care workers for student residences and provide chaplaincy services for the residences.

1974 June, Agreement between Oblates and the Government. [# OB-002919]  
This agreement provided that the Oblates would, among other things, coordinate chaplaincy services when such services are requested by parents of children in residence.

### **DOCUMENTS REFERRING TO SCHOOL INCIDENTS**

To date, we are unaware of any convictions for abuse at Christie IRS or of any convicted abusers present at the school.

The following suggestions of abuse, listed chronologically, comprise all known identifiable complaints and/or allegations received by government officials and all available information regarding the follow-up and outcome.

#### **Incidents (Sexual)**

Two documents, dated February 5<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> 1963, discuss a male student at Christie IRS who was discharged “For an act of immorality - rape”. The documents do not indicate if the female involved was a student at the school or not. [# CIS-00642, # CIS-00643]

#### **Incidents (Physical)**

In 1924, it was reported that the Principal of the school was “...too severe in his punishment of the boys...the boy’s shirt was stripped from his back and the boy punished on the bare back.” [# 00860A]

In 1937 it was reported that “It has been suggested...that [a staff member] may be rather rough in his treatment of the boys.” [# 00877] There is no further mention of this report.

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

The Oblate Order also produced a booklet commemorating the Golden Jubilee of Christie IRS in 1950. [# CIS-00006]

In the mid-late 1960s there was extensive discussion about building a new hostel to replace the existing residential school. [# 01117, # 01029, # 01765B, # 01836, # 01836A, # 01766A, # 00774, # 01861, # 00770, # 01788] Land was purchased in 1969 to advance this project. [# 01474, # 01799B] and Treasury Board approval was received to construct this hostel. [# 01826]. The resolution of these discussions was the construction of a new student residence which opened on October 30, 1971. [# 03807, # 05126, # 04052]

### **Children running away from the school**

There are two documented incidents of children running away from Christie IRS. In 1960, 3 boys ran away, 2 did not return to the school and 1 was returned. [# 03571] All 3 were officially discharged within 3 months. [# 08555, # 09387]

In 1964, 2 boys ran away from the school. They left in a dugout canoe and were missing for a day and a half before being returned to the school. They were described as being homesick. [# CIS-00593, # CIS-00638]

### **Health at the school**

There were outbreaks of measles at Christie IRS throughout its history. In particular in 1948, 80 cases of measles were reports. [# 00885, # CIS-000309, # CIS-000572] In addition to measles, tubercular meningitis was present at the school. In 1939 and 1940, five children died of this disease. [# CIS-000156, # 06500] One child died at the school in 1941. [# 8089]

There were also some reports of children having Tuberculosis and influenza at the school. [# 06794, # 08099, # 08090, # 08089]

In 1944, a child died of Peritonitis at the school. [# 08110]

### **Farm at the school**

It appears that a farm was in operation on and off again at the school from approximately 1918 until approximately 1966. Hay, fruits and vegetables were grown, live stock were maintained and milk and butter produced by the students. [# 08200, # 08290, # 00868, # 00862A, # 00848B, # CIS-00083] However, the farm's operation was sporadic as food was difficult to grown in this location. [# CIS-00160]

### **PRINCIPALS/ADMINISTRATORS**

| Name                       | Position            | Tenure Dates   |
|----------------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Father Maurus Snyder       | Principal           | 1900 - 1911    |
| Frowin Epper               | Principal           | 1911 - 1916    |
| Reverend Joseph Schindler  | Principal           | 1916 - 1919    |
| Reverend Ildephonse Calmus | Principal           | 1919 - 1929    |
| Reverend Victor Rassier    | Principal           | 1929 - 12/1934 |
| Francis Burger             | Assistant Principal | 1931 - 1934    |
| Leo Walsh                  | Assistant Principal | 1934 - 1938    |

|                                      |                           |                         |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| Reverend Bertrand McLaughlin, O.S.B. | Principal                 | 12/1934 - 05/1937       |
| Reverend Hildebrand Melchior, O.S.B. | Principal                 | 05/1937 - 08/1938       |
| Reverend Geo. Forbes, O.M.I.         | Principal                 | 08/1938 - 03/1941       |
| Reverend James Philip Mulvihill      | Principal                 | 03/1941 - 1947          |
| Father Patrick J. Sheahan            | Principal                 | 10/1947 - 1953          |
| Reverend Michael D. Kearney          | Principal                 | 07/1953 - 08/1960       |
| Reverend Allan F. Noonan             | Principal                 | 09/1960 - 07/31/1964    |
| Reverend Thomas Lorne Mackey         | Principal                 | 08/01/1964 - 12/31/1968 |
| Reverend Harold G. O'Connor          | Principal / Administrator | 01/01/1969 - 06/30/1975 |
| Pat Little                           | Administrator             | 1975 -1983              |

Narrative completed: January 19, 2005

The original school narrative document produced by Canada also contains a number of records that have been separated pending review.



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