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.

Lejac IRS School Narrative

This School Narrative provides an over-view of the history and administration of the school. This document will be provided to all parties.

NAME OF SCHOOL AND VARIANTS

• Stuart Lake Boarding School [Item # 00321] 1917-1922
Fraser Lake Boarding School [Item # 03857]
[At the request of the Roman Catholic Church, the name of the school was changed from Stuart Lake to Fraser Lake in 1920]
Fraser Lake Industrial School [Item # 03861]
[The school was classed as an "Industrial" school in 1921]

Opening of a new school:

- Fraser Lake Indian Boarding School [Item # 00995] 1922-1931 [During this period, the school was also referred to as Fraser Lake Indian Industrial School [Item # 00993] and Fraser Lake Indian School [Item # 02854A].

 Fraser Lake Indian Residential School [Item # 04210]
- Lejac Indian Residential School [Item # 01068] 1931-1976
 Lejac Student Residence [Item # 02325]

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY

- Stuart Lake Boarding School opened on February 2, 1917, initially only housing boys [Item # 00936]. In the same year, the school buildings were enlarged to provide accommodation for girls [Item # 03847].
- The school was classed as an "Industrial" school [Item # 03861].

In a resolution signed by the Council of the Fraser Lake Band on April 12, 1921, the Band agreed to have the East half of the No. 4 Seaspunkut reserve on Fraser Lake and approximately 260 acres be set aside for the purposes of the erection of an Indian school, farm, and grounds [Item # 00991].

- Fraser Lake Indian Boarding School opened on January 17, 1922, replacing the old boarding school [Item # 00995].
- The name of the school was changed to Lejac Indian Residential School [Item # 01068].
- The government constructed a three classroom day school block to accommodate 40 children on day school basis. The responsibility of its maintenance was turned

amalgamated with Lejac IRS in the same year [Item # 02682]. 1960 A boys' music band was formed [Item # 09865]. 1970-1972 Publication of "Lejac Carrier", a school news editorial on student and staff activities at the school. 1972 Effective September 1, 1972, grade 8 students residing at Lejac IRS were to enroll in the public school at Fraser Lake [Item # 08197E]. 1974 The Lakes District Council passed a resolution to transfer all pupils enrolled at Lejac to the Fraser Lake public school, effective September 1, 1975 [Item # 08352] As of January 1975, grade 6 and 7 students of Lejac IRS attended Fraser Lake and 1975 Fort Fraser schools [Item # 08217A]. As of September 1975, all students from Lejac IRS attended the Fraser Lake provincial school [Item # 08266A]. 1976 Closure of Lejac Student Residence on June 30, 1976 [Item # 08120]. In July 1976, youths from the Stellaguo and Fraser Lake Bands barricaded the gate into Lejac Residence to prevent the removal of any asset from the Residence [Item # 09414]. In a resolution signed on July 30, 1976, the Council of the Fraser Lake Band requested that the land and buildings held by the Crown for Lejac Student Residence be turned over to the Band [Item # 05759]. The land, buildings, and inventory at Lejac Student Residence were transferred to the Fraser Lake Band on

over to the Church [Item # 02681]. The Fraser Lake Indian Day School was

MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOL

Fraser Lake Indian Residential School / Lejac Indian Residential School was a government-owned Indian Residential School operated under the Roman Catholic auspices [Item # 02681].

December 16, 1976 [Item # 08391A].

Dates managed by Government

From its inception in 1917 until 1969, the Roman Catholic Church managed the Lejac Indian Residential School. After 1969, the Church continued to nominate the administrators and the administrators nominated child care workers for consideration and approval by the government [Item # 10203].

In 1962 there was an Agreement for the operation of the Lejac Indian Residential School, between Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada and Indianescom (a company controlled by the Oblate Order) [Item # 02416].

Dates managed by Crown

While from its inception in 1917 and until 1969, the Roman Catholic Church managed the Lejac Indian Residential School, the government provided the finances for the maintenance of the school.

In 1954, the government took over the employment of teachers at Lejac IRS [Item # 06687].

In 1958, under the new system of operating government-owned residential schools on a controlled cost basis, the government allowed for all operating costs in regard to the operation of Lejac. Allowance for food and clothing, however, varied in proportion to enrollment [Item # 06185].

On April 1, 1969, the government assumed responsibility for the management of the school [Item # 05815].

SCHOOL BUILDINGS

The building which comprised Stuart Lake Boarding School was owned by the Church [Item # 00941, 01008].

The buildings which comprised Fraser Lake and Lejac IRS were owned by the government. However, several "Outbuildings" were built at the expense of the Church [Item # 04339].

1917	Stuart Lake Boarding School opened on February 2, 1917 [Item # 00936]. In the same year the school building was enlarged [Item # 03847]. The addition to the building was described as 36 feet by 28 feet and two storeys high [Item # 00967]
1922	Fraser Lake Boarding School / Lejac IRS opened on January 17, 1922, replacing the old boarding school [Item # 00995].
1923	The new building was damaged by fire [Item # 03692]. A cottage was to be built for the school engineer [Item #03710].
1924	A water supply system was constructed [Item # 03017]. A cow and horse barn was constructed [Item # 04187].
1926	Completion of the blacksmith and carpenter shops, a new granary, and a new root cellar [Item # 04339]. Three small out buildings were erected: a post office, a recreation room, and an implement shed [Item # 04339].
1929	A silo was erected, the carpenter shop was completed, improvements were made to farmer's house, and electric light was installed in all outside buildings [Item # 01041].
1933	Installation of a lighting plant [Item # 04547].

1934	Renovations to the poultry house and the barn [Item # 00754].	
1935	A fire destroyed the piggery [Item # 04638A].	
1937	Repairs to the Septic Tank [Item # 00763].	
1939	A fire damaged the chimney [Item # 00091]. Two new Chimneys were constructed [Item # 02971].	
1940	Improvements to the sewage disposal plant [Item # 04044]. Fire destroyed the chicken house [Item # 00125]. New Ice House was built [Item # 03159].	
1942	A greenhouse was built [Item # 01116]. Fire destroyed the poultry houses [Item # 00814].	
1943	Repairs to the water tower were completed [Item # 00210]. The poultry house was rebuilt [Item # 01417].	
1944	New fences around the field were constructed and painted [Item # 05122].	
1947	The barn and silo burnt down [Item # 00451].	
1950	Revisions and additions to plumbing and heating system [Item # 06934].	
1951	List of buildings classed as "out buildings": carpenter's shop, farm manager's house, engineer's house, two family apartment buildings, feed store, piggery, chicken house, green house, Japanese gardener's house, farm worker's house, forge building, and tool house [Item # 06299B].	
1952	Flooding of the basement due to heavy rains [Item # 06407].	
1954	Electrical re-wiring of school buildings [Item # 06676] Installation of a new Diesel light plant [Item # 06785]. Dairy building was constructed [Item # 00052].	
1955	A three classroom day school block was constructed [Item # 02681].	
	A May 26, 1956 Newspaper article described the school buildings: In addition to the four¹ classrooms, the building had a fully modern four bedroom suite on the upper floor and on the lower floor a recreation room, rooms for manual training and domestic science and a boiler room. Grades one to three were taught in the new building. Grades four to eight were taught in the older building which contained living quarters, kitchen, dining rooms, the principal's office, dispensary, and the chapel [Item # 02674].	

 $^{^1\}mbox{All}$ of the other sources state that the building had three classrooms.

1957	Completion of teacher's residence [Item # 00875].
1959	Heating alterations [Item # 05560]. Relocation of Stores building to be used for a skating shack [Item # 05227]. Powerline extension to Lejac IRS [Item # 05255]. Construction of staff residences [Item # 09268B]. Installation of fire escapes [Item # 05514]. A memorandum on the sewage lagoon at Lejac described the buildings: besides the main dormitorythere was a day school, power house, bunkhouse, 5 residences, a barn and miscellaneous other buildings [Item # 05575A].
1960	Installation of a water tank and related equipment [Item # 05614]. Completion of a sewage lagoon [Item # 05665]. Alterations to electrical distribution centre [Item # 05650]. Improvement to heating system [Item # 05661]. Installation of laundry equipment, structural alterations and related work [Item # 05685].
1961	A memorandum provides the dimensions of the boys' and girls' dormitories: $30' \times 24'$ and $30' \times 30'$ [Item # 05159].
1962	Improvements to bathroom facilities [Item # 03223].
1963	New floor tiling [Item # 03250].
1964	Replacement of water distribution piping and associated work [Item #03309]. Re-roofing and repairs to the main building, however deficiencies were noted [Item # 10514] and more repairs were completed in 1966 [Item # 10289].
1966	Third floor bathroom renovations [Item # 09566]. New fire sprinkler system [Item # 09594].
	Description of the school property: a large central school and dormitory building, with adjoining services wing, a detached day school, two other detached groups of buildings, six residence buildings, and three service buildingsand former farm buildings were used for storage or had been abandoned [Item # 10306B].
1967	New kitchen and dining room facilities and heating plan alternations [Item # 09691A].
1969	Purchase of two mobile homes for staff accommodation [Item # 08381].
1970	Description of classroom facilities: seven classrooms, three in the classroom block and four in the residence [Item # 08326].
1971	Removal and disposal of the Bunkhouse at Lejac Student Residence [Item # 07486A].

Description of classroom facilities: four classrooms in the main building for grades 4-8, three classrooms in the annex for grades 1-3, and one extra classroom in the basement of the annex for the beginner class [Item # 07476A].

Space for student dormitory was reduced by the construction of six sleeping rooms for child care workers [Item # 07482].

- 1972-1973 Renovations to first floor washrooms serving classrooms and second floor washrooms in dormitories [Item # 04021B].
- Installation of fire alarm and emergency lighting system [Item # 08167A].
- Dismantling of the piggery and barn [Item # 08161A]. Fire in one of the staff dwellings [Item # 09443C].
- The land, buildings, and inventory at Lejac Student Residence were transferred to the Fraser Lake Band on December 16, 1976 [Item # 08391A].

LAND

- Stuart Lake Boarding School was constructed at Stuart Lake, 45 miles from Vanderhoof [Item # 01008]. There were 320 acres of land connected with the school [Item # 00976].
- In a resolution signed by the Council of the Fraser Lake Band on April 12, 1921, the Band agreed to have the East half of the reserve No. 4 Seaspunkut and approximately 260 acres set aside for the purposes of the erection of an Indian School, farm, and grounds [Item # 00991].
- The government constructs the Fraser Lake Boarding School/Lejac IRS on the Seaspunkut Indian Reserve No. 4, on the south side of Fraser Lake, about 100 miles west of Prince George [Item # 05575A]. It is noted that nearly 300 acres of land were set aside for school purposes [Item # 00995]. In addition to this land, 80 acres of land, owned by the Church authorities, was sometimes used by Lejac IRS for pasture. This land was situated outside the reserve boundaries on which the school buildings were located [Item # 10901].
- In a Resolution signed on January 31, 1958, the Council of the Fraser Lake Band agreed to alienate the required acreage for road purposes from the property used by the Lejac IRS [Item # 08801C].

Farm operation ceased at Lejac IRS around 1958 [Item # 05856, 05816].

On April 1, 1969 the Council of the Fraser Lake Band signed a resolution to take back for their own use all farm land and unimproved areas of the Seaspunket Indian Reserve No. 4 no longer used by the Lejac IRS for farm education and training of Indian Students. The Band also requested that any money received from crops after the farm ceased to be used for the school be returned and credited to Band

funds. The Band was to occupy the land for its own use as of May 1, 1969 [Item # 05847]. In its final decision, the government wrote that it could not retroactively pay the Band for crops sold by the Oblate Order and that it was an accepted practice at all the student residences that any farming operation carried out by the Order would be separate from the normal accounts of the residence and would accrue as revenue to the Order [Item # 05815].

In a resolution signed on September 9, 1974, the Fraser Lake Band forwarded a preliminary plan of the lands and easements used by the government for the operation of Lejac Student Residence. These lands were to revert to the Fraser Lake Band when they were no longer required for the operation of the school [Item

#05795A, 05795B].

In a resolution signed on July 30, 1976, the Council of the Fraser Lake Band requested that the land and buildings held by the Crown for Lejac Student Residence be turned over to the Band [Item # 05759]. The land, buildings, and inventory at Lejac Student Residence were transferred to the Fraser Lake Band on December 16, 1976 [Item # 08391A].

PHOTOS, PLANS AND OTHER MEDIA

Item # 06127	00/00/0000	Plan sl	howing dining rooms and kitchen. Circa 1960.
Item # 03418C	00/00/	0000	Photographs of school buildings, including barn, day school, and farm building. Circa 1964.
Item # 09252B	00/00/	0000	Plan of living quarters for teachers. Circa 1957.
Item # 04062	06/08/1948	buildir	plan of the main, second, and top floors of the school ng. The sketch shows the location of the classrooms, ditorium, the laundry room, and the dormitories.
Item # 10098	04/28/1955	Plan showing Lejac Residential school and other buildings on the property.	
Item # 05701A	07/00/1961	Plan sl	howing boys' and girls' cloakrooms in the basement.
Item # 10099	07/21/1964	Plan showing Lejac Residential school and the adjacent classroom block.	
Item # 05795B	07/00/1973		Preliminary plan showing the lands and easements used for the operation of Lejac Student Residence.

GENERAL ENROLLMENT STATISTICS OVER TIME

1917	Stuart Lake Indian Boarding School opened in February 1917 with 39 boys. By
	November, 21 girls had transferred to the school.
1919	73 students in residence

1922	Fraser Lake Indian Boarding School/Lejac IRS opened in January 1922. 130
	students in residence.
1927	153 students in residence
1930	160 students in residence
1932	163 students in residence
1934	147 students in residence
1937	147 students in residence
1938	157 students in residence
1939	178-180 students in residence
1940	184 students in residence
1941	157-165 students in residence
1942	157-160 students in residence
1943	143-163 students in residence
1944	161-180 students in residence
1945	178-192 students in residence
1946	183-192 students in residence
1947	167-183 students in residence
1948	165-184 students in residence
1949	172-180 students in residence
1950	176-184 students in residence
1951	166-180 students in residence
1952	157-178 students in residence
1953	169-187 students in residence
1954	177-183 students in residence
1955	169-180 students in residence, and up to 40 day pupils
1956	173 students in residence, and up to 40 day pupils
1957	180 students in residence, and up to 50 day pupils
1958	174-177 students in residence, and up to 52 day pupils
1959	171-184 students in residence, and up to 52 day pupils
1960	165-185 students in residence, and up to 29 day pupils
1961	167-171 students in residence, and up to 29 day pupils
1962	167-171 students in residence, and up to 30 day pupils
1963	162-184 students in residence, and up to 31 day pupils
1964	168-172 students in residence, and up to 30 day pupils
1965	174-178 students in residence, and up to 35 day pupils
1966	169-181 students in residence, and up to 36 day pupils
1967	167-176 students in residence
1968	178 students in residence, and up to 39 day pupils
1969	178 students in residence, and up to 41 day pupils
1970	146 students in residence
1971	163-167 students in residence, and up to 40 day pupils
1972	112-170 students in residence
1974	109 students in residence, and up to 35 day pupils
1975	49 students in residence

STUDENTS FROM OTHER RESERVES

Students from the following Bands attended Lejac IRS:

Atlin, Atlin-Teslin Lake, Babine, Bear Lake, Burns Lake, Carriers, Cheslatta, Dease Lake, Decker Lake, Findlay River, Finlay Forks, Finlay River, Forestdale/Forest Dale, Fort Connelly, Fort Babine, Fort Fraser, Fort George, Fort Grahame, Fort McLeod, Fort Nelson, Fort St. James, Fort Ware, Francis Lake, Francois Lake, Fraser Lake, Grand Rapids, Hagwilget, Hartley Bay, Hazelton, Houston, Hudson Hope, Ingenika, Kitselas, Kitwanga, Kluskus, Lake Babinell, Lake Babine, Lower Post, Manson Creek, Maxim Lake, McDame, McLeod, Moricetown, Mosim Lake, Nasko, Necosalie/Necoslie, North Takla, Old Fort, Omineca, Pinchi, Portage, Sekanis, Shelley/Shelly, Southbank, Squamish, Stella, Stellaquo/Stellaco, Stony Creek, Stuart Lake, Stuart-Trembleur Lake, Tache, Tachi, Tahltan, Takla Lake, Takla Landing, Tatcee, Telegraph Creek, Telkwa, Trembleur Lake, Trembly Lake, Tsitsk, Uncha Lake, Wistaria, Yacutcee.

Please note that there may be alternate ways of spelling these band names.

RELIGIOUS GROUPS

- Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate [Item # 04219].
- Sisters of The Instruction of the Child Jesus [SCJ #25].

WRITTEN AGREEMENTS

- Agreement for the operation of Lejac Indian Residential School, between Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada and Indianescom (a company controlled by the Oblate Order) [Item # 02416].
- 1970-1971 Chaplaincy Agreement between the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and John Hennessy, O.M.I., to provide chaplaincy services to the students and staff of Lejac Student Residence [Item # 02316].
- 1972-1973 Chaplaincy Agreement between the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and John Hennessy, O.M.I., to provide chaplaincy services to the students and staff of Lejac Student Residence [Item # 05862, 05862A].
- 1973 ? In a letter dated September 26, 1973, V.A. LaPlante, Administrator of Lejac Student Residence wrote, "although I have not received a copy of the current Chaplaincy Contract I presume that it will be the same as the one which expired at the end of June last" [Item # 02308].

DOCUMENTS REFERRING TO ABUSE

We are aware of the following convictions relating Lejac to IRS:

• In 1941, Mr. Hesse, a former Manual Training Instructor at Lejac Indian Residential School, was convicted and sentenced to nine months in prison for "causing grevious bodily harm" to another employee at the school [Item # 00801].

• In a letter dated March 6, 1942, the Indian Commissioner refers to the conviction of an unidentified man for "running amok and stabbing the Principal and another man" [Item # 00811]. The date of the incident is not stated.

Sexual Abuse

Several newspaper articles, dated April 2003, identify Edward Gerald Fitzgerald as being charged with sex offences allegedly committed between 1965 and 1973 while employed as a dormitory supervisor at Lejac IRS and at Cariboo/St. Joseph's IRS. To date, we have not been able to determine if he was convicted of these charges [Item # 08999].

Physical Abuse

- A report dated June 8, 1924, discussed the investigation into the death of a female student who had previously complained of injuries she had obtained as the result of a beating from a teacher. The report concluded that the student died of tuberculosis [IRC 41000].
- On January 7, 1937, a coroner's inquest was held into the death of four boys who had left Lejac on January 1st and were found frozen to death the next day. The verdict of the coroner's jury concluded that the "circumstances [of the deaths] were unavoidable", however, in their last conclusion they stated that "excessive corporal discipline, if practiced, should be limited and that better understanding would exist between pupils and disciplinarians if the latter were English speaking" [IRC 41033].

In March 1937, the government held its own investigation into this incident. On March 3rd, the Indian Commissioner conducted interviews with the parents and the staff at Lejac IRS. The transcript of the interviews contains references to the use and methods of corporal punishment at the school [IRC 41038]. In his conclusion, the Indian Commissioner wrote that there was no evidence to show that punishment had anything to do with the boys leaving the school [IRC 41039].

- In a report for Lejac Indian Residential School, dated September 30, 1938, the principal of the school wrote that "occasional use of the strap has to be made but in doing this care is taken to use only the methods approved by the Provincial regulations" [Item # 00770].
- In a letter dated May 18, 1944, the Indian Chief of Fraser Lake wrote to the department complaining about the treatment of the boys and the heavy work they were expected to do at the school. The Chief made references to a boy who was kicked to death by a former principal at the school and to another boy who, after unloading heavy sacks, got hurt and later died [Item # 00817]. In response, the government wrote that these incidences were fully investigated at the time and that no blame was placed on any of the school staff [Item # 00819].
- In a letter dated September 24, 1973, the Principal of Lejac IRS wrote that a staff member had administrated "two straps" to a group of girls after repeated incidents of truancy. The principal wrote that he reminded the staff member of the fact that corporal punishment was to be administered only with the approval of the Administrator and before a witness [IRC 41267].

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Health Issues

During the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s, several epidemics of influenza, chicken pox, whooping cough, and mumps were reported [Item # 01032, 01027, 00754, 00795, 00794, 05099, 01353, 05115, 00842, 05148]. On two occasions the school was placed under quarantine [Item # 05107, 05119].

Farm Operation

The school operated a farm beginning in 1923 [Item # 03623]. As part of their manual training instruction, the boys worked on the farm, helped in the seeding and planting of crops and learned proper care of horses and cattle [Item # 01063, 00771]. They also built and repaired a number of structures on the farm [Item # 01046]. Most of the farm production was used by the school for food and the surplus was sold for cash [Item # 11024].

In a Band Council Resolution signed by the Fraser Lake Band on April 1, 1969, the Band refers to the discontinuation of farm training of Indian students in 1955 [Item # 05847]. Elsewhere, it is noted that it was around 1958 when the farm ceased operation [Item #05856, 05816].

Admission Matters

Students with "minor" convictions were admitted to the school. In regards to the admission of two students to Lejac IRS in 1947, the government wrote: "when the offences charged are of a minor nature and the offenders have not previously appeared in court, there should be no harm in placing them in a residential school" [Item # 08021, 08025].

Criminal Convictions

Two juveniles were convicted of stealing money from an open safe in the Principal's office at Lejac Indian Residential School in 1941. One of the juveniles was identified as the child of an employee at the school [Item # 00807].

PRINCIPALS/ADMINISTRATORS

<u>Position</u>	<u>Dates</u>
Principal	November 1916 to August 1922
Principal	August 1922 to October 1922
Principal	October1922 to August 1933
Acting Principal	September 1924 to December 1924
Assistant to Principal	October1930
Principal	August 1933 to August 1936
	Principal Principal Principal Acting Principal Assistant to Principal

Reverend Patrick McGrath²
Reverend J. Murphy
Reverend William Byrne-Grant
Reverend A. Robertson Simpson
Reverend A. Royer
Father Callaly
Reverend James P. Mulvihill
Reverend G. Clenaghan

Reverend Gerald F. Kelly
Reverend Allison
Reverend John F. Ryan
Reverend William M. Sweeney
Father Pagnon
Sister Albertine Marie
Brother R. Bruce McCormick
Brother A.W. Johnston³
Reverend John Gerald Fitzgerald
Reverend Vincent A. LaPlante
Sister Anne Marie Nault
Mr. Brian Titlley
Mr. Archie Patrick
Mr. Vincent Worme

Acting Principal
Vice Principal
Principal
Principal
"In Charge"
Acting Principal
Principal
Assistant Principal

Principal
Assistant Principal
Principal
Principal/Administrator
Assistant Administrator
Acting Principal
Principal/Senior Teacher
Administrator
Administrator
Administrator
Acting Administrator
Principal/Senior Teacher
Administrator
Acting Administrator
Principal/Senior Teacher
Administrator

August 1936 to July 1937 January 1937 July 1937 to October 1938 October 1938 to August 1947 October 1943 to December 1943 February 1947 September 1947 to July 1952 July 1947 to July 1954, and June 1960 to February 1964 July 1952 to June 1961 March 1954 to June 1958 August 1961 to August 1965 October 1965 to August 1970 September 1968 to June 1969 November 1964 and June 1969 August 1969 to June 1972

September 1970 to September 1972 September 1972 to August 1974 September 1973 and March 1975 October 1972 to June 1974 July 1974 to May 1975 August 1975 to June 1976

² We have located a document which suggests that, prior to his tenure at the school in 1936, Father McGrath may have acted as an assistant to Rev. N. Coccolo at the school for two years.

³ We have located only one document, dated 1970, on which Brother A.W. Johnston is listed as administrator at Lejac IRS.

The original school narrative document produced by Canada been separated pending review.	a also contains a number of records that have
	National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation