

CIRCLE OF ALL NATIONS

HONOURING THE LEGACY OF WILLIAM COMMANDA



Special Report

Remembering, honouring, celebrating and animating the legacy of William Commanda, Founder of the Circle of All Nations - advancing his passion for Mother Earth, Racial Harmony, Social Justice and Peace Building during 2014 - the hundredth year of his birth Remembered with much love and respect

z Encore Vivant! z

William Commanda was born as the Morning Star lingered in the sky on November 11, 1913, on the eve of the First World War. So, his mother named him Ojigkwanong, and a hundred years later, he remains for many a beacon of light in an ever-darkening world.

GINAWAYDAGANUC

A most unique individual, William Commanda, Algonquin Elder, Keeper of the Sacred Wampum Belts, forged a remarkable path of resistance and inclusion, animating the land based heritage of his Indigenous ancestry of the American North East during a century of unprecedented global change, commencing with his birth at the beginning of the First World War, determinedly forging a trail of peace and love, and leaving a profound legacy of a global eco-community, the Circle of All Nations, entrenched in responsibility for Mother Earth

and respect for all, sustained by his constant prayer and reminder, Ginawaydaganuc - We Are All Connected. Loved by all - from the grass roots to environmentalists, intellectuals to government, he was honoured to be bestowed with many awards: Wolf Project, and Harmony, Bill Mason River Conservation, Canoe Builder, Bernard Assiniwi, National Aboriginal Achievement Lifetime Awards, two Honorary Doctorate Degrees, from Ontario and Quebec, a Key to the City of Ottawa, and appointment to Officer of the Order of Canada.

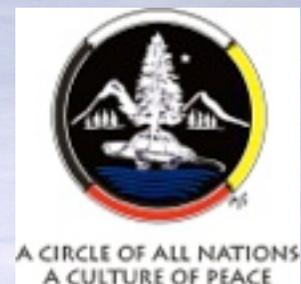


Highlights of this Year!

COMMUNICATIONS! with the production of several mini-reports documenting the life, environmental and peace building work of Grandfather Commanda

AND, a special effort to advance the Grandfather Legacy Vision for ASINABKA and the SACRED Chaudiere Site

PLUS, Photo Journal Reports on three Circle of All Nations events
March Equinox Gathering
Fall Equinox and Peace Gathering
Birthday 101 Celebration





A Few Special CAN Activities

Circle of All Nations honoured Spring and Fall Equinox - as it has since 1998. Today, It is great to see the celebration of the cosmic cycles on FB etc; but, many will acknowledge that GWC lit the fire for honouring of our indivisible relationship with the larger universe in the National Capital Region, consistent with the heritage of his ancient ancestors! In March, with help from Dan Gagne, Luc Anne Salm, Gaston Lavoie, Larry

Modernott and others, we celebrated GWC's 100th birthday and the 80th birthday of the world renowned Indigenous Architect Douglas J. Cardinal, and discussed the *GWC Legacy Vision for the Sacred Chaudiere Site* - participants were passionate about raising its profile, and committed us to work on this great dream. We were pleased to have the Mayor of Ottawa join us - and to introduce him to William Commanda in storyboard images -

he had received the Key to the City during Mayor Chairelli's lead.

In March we highlighted GWC's



efforts to advance *enviro-stewardship*, and in particular, his

passion for Water, Eels and the Undamming of the Sacred Chaudiere Falls, as expressed since 2003 - now, the 2014 documentary DamNation shows current thinking on this issue - how can we be so slow to get it here? Check it out (courtesy of our friends at ActCity), <http://www.solarmovie.ws/watch-damnation-2014-online.html>. Check this out too: <http://www.nytimes.com/.../restored-forests-are-making-inroad...>

NOV 11,
2013
GWC's 100th
Birthdate

MARCH
CAN Spring
Equinox
Gathering

SEPT 21
CAN Fall
Equinox
Gathering

NOV 9
GWC
Birthday 101
Celebration

AND
ASINABKA
CAN Focus on the
Sacred Chaudiere
Site

In Sept, we focussed on the *UN International Day of Peace*. Since our Millennium CAN Peace Gathering, we have consistently kept the racial harmony and peace work on the banner, and we are pleased to note that many CAN friends inspired by GWC keep the fire burning afresh at the UN. GWC organized his own opening



prayer for Peace Day - Dawn Ferguson, heading in from Hawaii, presented the Algonquin translation of her international project song, *Children Singing Peace Around*

the World - yes, this first translation was done by *You Know Who* years ago - he was always passionately concerned about the protection of *Indigenous languages*, as Serena



d'Agostino told us - he had discussed this with her at a CAN gathering! Indeed, the Official Languages Commissioner visited him in 2010. We also launched Wolf Project Director Ray Sunstrum's book on racism. In November, we launched *CAN Transform 101* - again, GWC arranged the prayer - a documentary on Native healing approaches by his young autistic

friend Adrian Espisito! espocinema@Rochester.rr.cu



We were also pleased that his daughter Evelyn, and also Tommy Dewache, Biola Smith and friend Daniel Laurent were able to join in the *101 birthday celebrations* in Ottawa!

CAN did presentations for *Black History Ottawa*, (for June Girwan and colleagues) in February, and the annual *Canadian Race Relations Conference* in Ottawa in

November: GWC had supported the work of both organizations in the past - he did the opening for the CRRF conference in Ottawa in 1999 - later its then president Hon Lincoln Alexander and writer June Callwood presented him with the Harmony Award for his efforts to advance racial harmony!

PS I also want to acknowledge much support from afar from Clayton Sandy and Paula Nicholas throughout the year.





UP the Gatineau and Other Public Moments

An old **Canoe** launched the GWC story of the past year. Late fall, I made a trip *up the Gatineau* with our friend Dean Jones, a history buff, to see this special canoe, described as a Commanda canoe, but which was built by GWC's maternal Uncle Andre Cayer, the mentor who taught him the *art* of canoe-making. I had been tracked down by Louise Schwartz of the Gatineau Historical Society publications and asked to write about William Commanda - so that

is what I did last Christmas - and In May, he was the lead story in the 40th issue of *Up the Gatineau*; for the first time, the original peoples of the area are part of the record. Next I went to Lac Simon - to the launch of Jean-Guy Paquin's second book on the Algonquin ancestors, with Big Bear Ron Goddard, his aunt Rejeanne Fournier and her son - her contributions to the historical account affirmed the inextinguishable presence of the Metis and Non-Status Algonquins

in the true history of the Ottawa River Watershed - Big Bear talked about the separation of the on-and-of reserve Algonquins as **genocidal** to his family - the revelation of the true story of their groundedness on the land was healing! Ancient ancestral energies also presented themselves at Jacques Cartier Park in Gatineau, in the presence of **artifacts** from distant locations like New York State and Lake Superior, dating back 6,000 and 2,500 years ago, affirming the National Capital

Region a significant gathering place from time immemorial. A special trip to Ouiseau Rock reaffirmed the presence of ancestral energies in the ancient rock art pictographs (now heavily desecrated by graffiti over the past five years). Finally, there was the trip to join Algonquins protesting clear cutting in La Verendrye Park - here is GWC's niece Daisy Mary Jacko offering food and support at the site.



Others Acknowledge His Work

In the fall, there was a series of celebrations of William Commanda initiated by others: a



presentation in Kingston by students who had taken GWC's message about Peace to the **New York** with Bryan Bowers; Mayor Watson declared A day of Reconciliation in honour of the work of *Nelson Mandela* and GWC; the First Nations, Metis and Inuit Education Association of

Ontario's conference with teachers and elders, opened by Annie St. Georges - this work was inspired by GWC years ago in a chance meeting with Marg Boyle! The September **Ottawa Peace Festival** had four separate activities honouring the GWC legacy, including the Peace Award from Ian Prattis and **Friends of Peace!** Inspired by



former GG Michaele Jean, the University of Ottawa installed

the William Commanda Pavillion;

and Friends of the Gatineau and the National Capital Commission installed the Dr Waddell **William Commanda canoe** in Gatineau Park, each affirming his official and public presence on both sides of the Ottawa River!

The Work Continues Evelyn Dewache stepped into her father's shoes at **Rideau**



Hall with the welcome of Princess Anne to Remembrance Day activities - GWC was there 2010 to greet Prince Charles!



Affirmation of Algonquin presence in the Ottawa River Watershed continues, thanks to GWC's years of hard work, constant outreach, his reconciliation and peace building work. and conviction that we could come together and be a *Circle of All Nations!*



Legacy Vision for the Sacred Chaudiere Site

The Sacred Chaudiere Site, which lies within the heart of Canada's capital city, was inscribed with a vision for shared public space by Late Algonquin Elder William Commanda. Indigenous Architect Douglas Cardinal has developed conceptual designs for this site.

historical and peace-building importance and power in Canada offers a fresh opportunity for reconciliation, cooperation and joint efforts to correct (colonial) mistakes of the past at multiple levels, and to ignite a true legacy for environmental stewardship and peace-building for the global family, in these times of great change.

It was Elder Commanda's belief that, consistent with its ancient significance as a gathering place of singular importance to his ancestors, this special place of incomparable sacred, heritage,

(PS. Caroline Marshall's died on dec 24, 2014: her son Donald Marshall Jr. was a big player inspiring this work for truth and justice at Asinabka with William Commanda, and many others).

KEY REPORTS

ASINABKA PROPOSAL FOR NATIONAL ABORIGINAL CENTRE

[2014-06-21 Circle Of All Nations Message Regarding William Commanda's Legacy Vision For The Sacred Chaudiere Site](#)

[2014-09-23 Asinabka Romola's Heritage_Note Letter to Domtar](#)

[2014-12-16 Asinabka Message for Reconciliationwww.circleofallnations.com](#)

MINI TEXT BIO OF WILLIAM COMMANDA



SACRED SITE

The Chaudiere site is a sacred meeting site of Indigenous Peoples from historical times and earlier, and during the last four decades of his life, William Commanda, with direct ancestral connection to the area, took prayer, ceremony and reconciliation there to reanimate the special space in the heart of the Nation's capital.



LEGACY VISION

He developed an all-inclusive and far-reaching Indigenous vision for a National Historical Centre at the Chaudiere Site, to be respected,

endorsed and advanced at multiple levels of leadership – in essence, it comprises an Indigenous centre, historical interpretive site, peace and eco conference centre think tank, hotel, eco-city park, and a freed Chaudiere Falls, and as such, is not without implications for significant employment and revenue



generation in the capital city in the context of tourism and training/development in this federal government city centre. Colleagues with FANCV have registered the work at the UN.

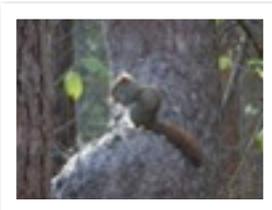
CHALLENGES

The Sacred Chaudiere Site is now vulnerable to other development interests, contrary to William Commanda's vision for shared public space in his ancestral lands within the heart of the National Capital Region. We exhort the federal government to seize responsibility for the heart of the

National Capital Region and to establish of a multi-disciplinary task force to develop the implementation plan for the Sacred Chaudiere Site. Such a project will constitute the true legacy project to reorient Canada to embrace its potential for celebrating hope, inclusion and integration for its 150th birthday in a fragile and increasingly challenged global reality.

The reports identified in the sidebar describes the rationale for the *Circle of All Nations* challenge of the development plans being proposed for this special area. Please contact us discuss further. GWC was a seed planter, like his Squirrel friend here, and he counts on the right seeds to mature as was prophesied.

www.asinabka.com





A Few More Thoughts, Heading Into 2015

I dreamed of GWC one night and he was quite alive - *You are dead, I said - we waked you three days! No, I'm alive!* he said. I woke up to a message from Bob Bourdon, requesting a message from CAN - GWC was being honoured at an event organized by an old CAN Gathering participant Patrick Dacquay from France; Marc Velo, the French piano man d'Amour, who had arrived to give him the August 6, 2011 send off concert, was there too! Yes, we may have been sleeping in Canada during the

first two years after his death, but he was *Encore Vivant* some place else! I had committed to sharing what he had told or taught me throughout fourteen years of our non-stop work - and during his 100th year, I started this work in earnest. It has been a challenging year at personal, local, national and global levels, but I remain convinced that William Commanda offers profound wisdom to continue to support us all in an uncertain future. We engaged in a very concerted communications effort this past year, one that can only be strengthened immeasurably

with the contribution of your stories about GWC and his influence on your lives and work. GWC will be tweeting and blogging this upcoming year - please join the conversation! William Commanda was inspired by his ancient sacred Wampum Belt Legacy as he worked so tirelessly over the last years of his life. Who would have believed the transformations the Elders talked about during the CAN Gatherings in the 90s and the 2000s would arrive so swiftly? Now we see environmental challenges and climate change of tremendous

proportion transform the globe and snuff out life for so many species - including the iconic polar bear (I remember we highlighted its plight during GWC's 95th birthday, in the memory of his bear from 50 years earlier); And 9/11 has become 10/22 with bloodshed here at the Peace Tower. Even more urgently rings his exhortation:

We must come together with one heart and one mind, One love and one determination,, To create a Circle of All Nations, A Culture of Peace!

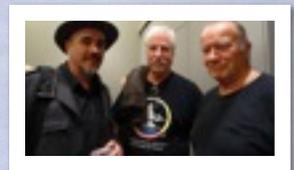


8. Reports on the Sacred Chaudiere site are listed separately

Reports now available at

www.asinabka.com

www.circleofallnations.ca



CAN TRANSFORM 101!

Email us at circleofallnations@sympatico.ca

Romola V. Thumbadoo
Coordinator

Circle of All Nations

Communications 2014

1. Our *Circle of All Nations* website was finally updated
2. Our ASINABKA site was reorganized and kept updated thanks to Karen Bisson's tireless and generous efforts!
3. Annotated Biography
4. French Annotated Mini-Biography - translation

5. *Up the Gatineau* - William Commanda featured as the lead article in the annual production of the Gatineau Historical Society
6. 2014 Water: CAN Reflection on William Commanda and the Spirit of Water

7. 2014 CAN "Portal to Peace" Commemorative Note



Communications 2015

Our Techo Elder goes really techno with CAN Blogs, Twitter and more!

Join us and be a part of:

