

The Story of Buffalo Child Stone

By Barry Ahenakew

Editor's Note: We are very honoured to have permission to publish this sacred story of how Buffalo Child Stone came to be near Elbow (a small portion of the stone remains at Elbow at the Harbour Golf Course). Barry is the Elders Coordinator with the Saskatchewan Indian Cultural Centre in Saskatoon, and is a man who is very knowledgeable about the history and traditions of the Cree people. Following is the transcription of Barry's oral story:

A long time ago our people lived on the east side of the Saskatchewan River here, all along the river from where Fort a la Corne is now (James Smith reserve is there now), all Prince Albert, all the way up, St. Louis, Saskatoon area here, where the Dakota Dunes Casino is, all the way up to The Elbow and then from The Elbow south, that was Cree country a long time ago. But as our people aided one time the Blackfeet, the Bloods and the Piegans that sent them tobacco and they aided them, they helped them. As they were trying to move on to the plains, there's hills over here called the *mikisiw achciya*, the Bald Eagle Hills, west of Saskatoon, over here on to Battleford; big, big hills that's where these Blackfeet were cornered, into these big hills, the wooded hills there, by the Shoshone.

Now, you don't see anything about Shoshone Indians being on the, in Saskatchewan but there was, and there must have been a lot of them to be able to corner and chase the Bloods and the Blackfeet and the Piegan into those Eagle Hills. But they had some Arapaho and we have *Kinepik Iyiniwak* is the name for the Snake People, for the Shoshone, and for the Arapaho, it's *Assaso Iyiniwak*, the Tattoo People, so there must have been a lot of them there to be able to corner the Blackfeet, the Bloods and the Piegan at that point in time that were trying to make it out on the prairies. But they sent, they chased them back into these hills. And they were pressing them; they were giving these Blackfeet a hard time, the Bloods and the Piegans. So their wiser people sent tobacco to the Crees runners, they gave the tobacco across the river, and the other runners went out to the other tribes that lived all along the river and all interior to the east. And they smoked, they smoked the tobacco and they had let the runners know that they were going to help the Blackfeet and the Bloods and the Piegans. And the Crees came across in swarms, all across there, all from north to south, came across in swarms to help the Blackfeet, the Bloods and the Piegans. And they did.

They got to the Eagle Hills and their numbers were so many that they did chase those Shoshone and they kept chasing them and they kept chasing them. Now the nearest Shoshone tribe is probably, I think, Bannock, Idaho, and the nearest one is further west, some other Shoshone tribes. That's how far the Shoshones ran. That's how far they chased them.

And we have names for, place names for places all along into the states, what's now the United States. But, it just gives you an indication of, from our oral history that the Shoshone were once on the prairies here and some Arapahos.

Of course, those Gros Ventres, what people call Gros Ventres, we call them *Pawistiko Iyiniwak*, Rapids people, sort of allied with the Blackfeet, and they might have been in that bunch there with the Blackfeet in the Eagle Hills.

But I guess the point is, that I'm making is, that when you look at the archaeology in Saskatchewan, yes there's Crees; there's Plains Cree, there's Woods Cree and there's Swampy Cree, and yes there was Blackfeet, there was Bloods, and there was Piegan, and there was the Gros Ventres that were allied with them. There were Assiniboines that were allied with the Cree and there was some Saukteaux people beginning to mix in with the Cree as well.

After they chased the Shoshone down south they came back. Many Crees stayed with the Piegans and the Blackfeet, not so much the Bloods. Not so much, but today, to this day at where their reservations are in Alberta, southern Alberta, there's a lot of Cree blood mixed in with the Piegans and with the Blackfeet because of that helping them at that time. Now I can't say what date, what the dates were but it's a while back, quite a while back; those dates would have been, when that happened would have been before white people were around, especially on the prairies, when they had that altercation with the Shoshone. I guess that's why it wouldn't be written down. And it's sort of hard to believe the Shoshone were over here when they're so far south now today to this day, but that was the help that the Crees gave the Blackfeet, and the Bloods and the Piegans. They got on good terms for a long time. And they moved out onto the prairies.

They stayed out on the prairies over there now.

It wasn't for a long time before they started again to have altercations between the Blackfeet, the Bloods and the Piegan, with the Crees and the Assiniboines. Time moved on. The Crees never left the western country after that. The Eagle Hills, past the Eagle Hills, towards where into Alberta, where you get Frog Lake and Saddle Lake, the bands at Hobbema, *Maskwacisihk*, Bear Hills, they just kept moving west, and loving the territory and loving the country.

Well, as time went on they were on the prairies a lot too now, there's like Rosetown area, the Bad Hills, you get to the Elk River, which is what's now called the South Saskatchewan River; they used to call it *wawaskesiw sipi*, the Elk River, and the place names along there, like one place just to the right hand side of Sask. Landing on the north side, there's a place there where when you people went close there the water would shoot out of the ground, along the river, on the bank. So there was some kind of spring there but it seemed when people were there it would geyser up. *Nipi ka kwaskwekotēk*, was what that was called. And then the Hills just north of Leader on the north side of the river where they have that medicine wheel there along the South Saskatchewan Elk River, big medicine wheel and then they have other stone things that have been put up on the hillsides there, like there's a human figure there as well.

Anyway those hills the name *Kinepik oskiwanisa* the Snake Nose Hills, place names for all of these places, but it wasn't just the Crees that called some of those places those names. The Blackfeet and the Bloods and the Piegans knew those hills as the Snake Nose Hills as well, they shared the landscape. As you get further west to the Hand Hills, *michichi achciŋya*, they have the same name for the vocabulary for the locations. The hills were all the same.

But as time went by the Crees began to gather at a place called *otōskwanihk*, The Elbow of the Saskatchewan River, the South Saskatchewan River, the Elk River, and the river that went out of there at the time of the beginning of the Fort Qu'Appelle valley, *tawatinow*, the beginning of it out of the South Saskatchewan Elk River, Elk River valley or the South Saskatchewan River valley, the river was known as the *katitipīchiwak*, *katitipīchiwak*, rolling, turning river, the river that turns, long ago. And over there especially a lot, a lot of people would gather there, a lot of buffalo, a lot of buffalo all over the place on the plains, the prairies, south, west, east, north, lots of buffalo. And I know our chief, our original chief of our band, Atakakōp, that was one of his favourite camping areas for his people, the *kaskiskawan atinaw*, the Buffalo Hump Hill and that's on the southeast side of the lake that's there now, Diefenbaker Lake, because of the dam. It's on the southeast side where that's located.

But now our reservation is, when he chose reserve land, I don't know what he was trying to do, we're a part of the Battleford bands but when it was time for him to lead his people he chose a place that's about 90 miles straight north of here, a place called *yekawiskaw kamaw*, Sandy Lake it's true translation, Sandy Lake, *yekawiskaw kamaw*. But what he, there was settlers there in the Battleford area. There was beginning to be settlers, the fort was there, there were settlers towards P.A. (*okistapi nanihk*). The fort at Fort Carlton, they did a lot of trading there. They were called *Waskahikan Iyiniwak*. Chief Mistawasis and Chief Atakakōp, were major chiefs and they were called *Waskahikan Iyiniwak* and the translation for that was Fort People, fort. Today there's a word for a house, *waskahikan*, but in those days there was no *waskahikan*, no houses, all there was, was the fort, and if you use the word *wasakahikan* it means you're putting up poles, big poles and you're circling like a fort, *wasakahikan*. That's why they were called that because they dealt with Fort Carlton so much and they also would deal with the one out of, north of Lloydminster by Onion Lake a little bit, a little fort *waskahikansihk*. And Atakakōp even went as far as *amiskiwachīw waskahikan*, Beaver Hills Fort, which is now Edmonton, and Atakakōp was also up in that country.

As they wandered, as they traveled, you had two major chiefs in the south, one was called Cimaskōs, Short Stick, and today now you know him by Pēpēkisis, Pēpēkisis is a reserve by Balcarres, SK, close to Fort Qu'Appelle. Well Pēpēkisis's father would have been Cimaskōs and he was a major chief on the prairies. So already you got Mistawasis, you got Atakakōp, and you got Cimaskōs that were major chiefs.

They had one further east a little bit but he also traveled as far as toward Moose Jaw and that was *Piyesiw kakisiwēt*, Thunderbird Loud Voice, and that would be Ochapawēs reserve, Ochapawēs. The chief Ochapawēs, that would have been his father, Thunderbird Loud Voice. So you had four major chiefs now.

Further west you had *Wikasko Kiseyin*, Old Man Sweet grass, further west, was a major chief and there was another one that was called Iron Crow, Iron Crow, *Pewapisko Ahasiw*, but he got killed sort of as a younger, a younger man, when the fights were starting with the Blackfeet again, and the Bloods and he got killed. So they had six major chiefs on the plains here, and their travels, their wanderings, like I said

Atakakōp was up to Edmonton and you get Little Black Bear that was a chief but he was a sub chief to Cimaskōs and that, they wandered into Montana, and into Alberta, the Cypress Hills, and you got Kawakatōs. They were all sub chiefs to this Cimaskōs, Cimaskōs, Short Stick and that Loud Voice, Thunderbird Loud Voice may be a major chief equal to Cimaskōs, Atakakōp, Mistawasis. But there's times that Little Black Bear would be traveling all the way towards Edmonton way. And then there's times that *Wikasko Kiseyin*, Sweetgrass, would be up towards Regina way.

Payipwat became a major leader as well after. They're originally from north of North Battleford country. Sagohew (Beats Them) was the name of the old man who was chief of that tribe. And when he died around the west of Battleford, north of Battleford, his son took over, and his son was called *wapimika kata piskawat*, the one who has a white bead for his necklace, or he also had another name because he started having some Assiniboine people following him. So they called him Nehiyaw Pwat, Cree Sioux, and as he wandered, as his father was gone now, he was the leader and he began wandering more out into the plains. Biggar, and further west, Unity, and then further south to the *Kinepik Oskiwanisa*, Snake Nose Hills, *Minatakawa*, Cypress Hills, *Kisi chiwanos*, Swift Current and then Old Wives Lake, *Notokwēw Sakahikan*; *Ka pakopēwakak*, another lake close by there, the lake there's lots of water and it goes dry, or you can ride horses in there they won't sink out of sight, hard firm bottom.

But what I'm leading to here by giving you all these explanations is that our people wandered, traveled the plains all over. There's stones that have been placed like the medicine wheel I talked about earlier by Leader, west of Leader close to the Alberta border, they've been placed there for a long, long time. Our people, the old people long ago, as they traveled, out of respect for those places, they would pick up a stone and they'd add to those piles to honour those older generations of people that had made those, helped make those through time, so they'd do that and that's how the piles, rock formations or medicine wheel formations began to get bigger and bigger. Our people always added to them out of respect for those original old people. Many a time the center of those places, many times was the burial ground for a great leader in the past and that's why they would do that, to add to the pile, to honour that old great chief, an old great leader that had led his people through times of, tough times. It wasn't a rosy life.

It was a hard time to feed all their people. If they could do that without their people starving, bringing them through from babyhood to adulthood to old age, leaders were renowned, well respected, and honoured. So they did that, to do that to honour those old leaders and older people through the past.

And I say it was a hard time. Cimaskōs, I'll refer to Cimaskōs, Short Stick again, and this is again by The Elbow, and I said remember our chief Atakakōp and Mistawasis used to love being around The Elbow. And it turned into a gathering spot, a Cree gathering spot in the spring. The Crees would gather there. That was the Cree gathering spot. And we've got a reference that we've seen from, although my old people, the old people when I was small that talked about it because my first language is Cree. I was brought up by my grandparents, and where they were that's where I was at, they made me sit there and listen, and they're talking with their old, the old men and the old ladies are gathering over there too, they're talking, they're talking about what they heard in the past, the history, that oral history that's been passed on. They'd smudge like we smudged here if they were going to get into a sacred story and they'd talk and that way they preserved.

I heard as much as seven Sundances going on at one time at The Elbow there in the valley of the river that turns, *katitipi chiwak sipi*. I had heard that but in 1937 or 1934, I think it was the province that hired a Mandelbaum, a Dr. Mandelbaum from California, and he went from southern Saskatchewan; mostly Crees but he went right across to Battleford way and then our way. There was an old man there called Fine Day from Sweetgrass. That old man talked to him about all sorts of things. In there there's a reference to a, he didn't see it, Fine Day didn't see it, that Cree gathering, but his mother had seen it and apparently those gatherings had been going on for a long time, and that's where the Cree would gather. But his mother had told him I guess orally, not specifically to him but talking with other people, that where he was at when he was a young fellow that there was as much as five to six miles of nothing but tipis, how much Crees would be gathered there at The Elbow. And just to give you an indication how many Crees, five to six miles, if you can envision that of nothing but tipis, you've got about seven different groups of Crees. You've got *Waskahikan Iyiniwak*, the Fort People which Mistawasis and Atakakōp were leaders of, and then you've got the *Tastawēw Iyiniwak*, the Arrow Makers, and that's Little Black Bear, Kawakatōs and the Saddle Lake, Alberta people are part of that so they criss-crossed along to Alberta along The Elbow camping. And then you've got the Calling River people, *Katēpwēw Sipi Iyiniwak*, by Broadview along the whole river, Fort Qu'Appelle going down river, Calling River people. And then you've got the *Natimiw Iyiniwak*, the Up River people which is getting to be the Hobbema crew, the Hobbema people and you've got the *Sipi Iyiniwak*

which is the Battleford per se people, *Sipi Iyiniwak*, so you're getting.

And then you've got *Paskwaw Iyiniwak*, which is Payipwat, getting out there now; Nehiyaw Pwat to begin with. They lost Payipwat when he was, he wasn't called Payipwat when he was a little fellow. The Sioux raided them somewhere down there on the plains and abducted some people including the young fellow that was called. *Kakisikaw wawasan awasis*, Day Lightning was his name, and they took him into the United States somewhere, and for all intents and purposes were converting him into Sioux. But his grandmother was one of them that had been abducted as well, so for quite a while he grew up as a Sioux boy and then he grew into a teenager. And one time Nehiyaw Pwat and them got their revenge on the Sioux for doing what the Sioux had done to them. They raided these Sioux, surprised the heck out of them. During that raid they heard the young teenager speaking Cree and an old lady, and they recaptured that young Day Lightning and the old lady and they brought them back and it was a total victory. They had lived with these people for so long. It was Nehiyaw Pwat's own nephew, was this young Day Lightning; it was his own nephew, so he took him as his own son after that. They had a ceremony. They were going to rename him because it was a new beginning, and they called the ceremonial leader. They called him Payipwat, Hole in the Sioux, because he knew as a young boy he was learning Sioux ways now, and he knew a lot of the Sioux ways of doing things and that's why he had that name, Payipwat, Hole in the Sioux. Anyway, Nehiyaw Pwat died and they turned leadership over to Payipwat because he knew so much about the Sioux and he was a natural born leader as well (Day Lightning can also be said in Cree in a shorter way and people did use it for him (*Kisika Wayak*)).

So you've got about seven different groups of Crees that developed and they would all gather at The Elbow where this *mostos awasis asini*, Buffalo Child Stone was – that stone was about 18-19 feet high and 30 some feet long, that sat by the turning river off to the side of it. It had a story and all the Crees knew that story in those days, of how that stone came to be there and that's the story that I'm eventually getting to here but, I'm letting you know first that we're rich with the history and all the wanderings that our people did.

And the border for our Crees long ago was the *Pikano Sipi*, the Missouri River, *Pikano Sipi*, the Muddy River, that was the border of the Crees. On the other side was the Dakota and the Lakota, *Pwatuk*, on the other side of that, everything on this side. In fact, Poplar, Montana, was where a guy called Little Poplar was killed and was pretty well buried over there. That turned into Poplar, Montana. That was a Cree that was killed there. There was a fort built there a long time ago too for the southern southeast Crees, Wolf Point. So it was all Cree country with some Assiniboine mixed in with us and some Saukteaux.

And I was getting to Cimaskōs earlier to give you an indication of the amount of people that they had following them. North of the elbow, northeast of the elbow, I guess there's a little town there now called Loreburn, I think that's the name of that little town, around there somewhere, some fellow, Yuel Hind, I'm not sure if it's Yuel Hind, one of the first checking up the Fort Qu'Appelle valley, coming up the Fort Qu'Appelle valley. I don't know what year that would have been. I guess you got to find out that history. He has a book out, a nice thick book, but it's in there. He ran into, at about the Eyebrow Hills, south of what's now Diefenbaker Lake there, he ran into Indians over there, First Nations people. And he met them, he mingled with them, and he had some half-breed people that were traveling with him as guides, I guess. So he communicated with those people and he asked them who their chief was, and who their leader was and they told him Cimaskōs. He said he wanted to meet Cimaskōs, I guess. They brought him north and they brought him to the Loreburn area. And that's where Cimaskōs's camp was and not too far away the men were all busy, the people were all busy. He never traveled with less than, he had never less than 300 tipis, Cimaskōs, and there was times he had up to 1,000 tipis. And that's because some of these other chiefs that would pull in sub-chiefs to him, like Kawakatōs, Little Black Bear, they'd pull in, and mingle and live with them. But to feed that many people - if you have 300 tipis times eight people in the tipi, or ten; 300 tipis, lodges alone is what, 3,000 people; so they had huge followings, and I know Atakakōp and Mistawasis had huge followings, because some of the other bands that left when the treaty was made that didn't really agree with treaty in 1876, a lot of them turned out to be leaders, as chiefs like Thunderchild. He was a member of the Mistawasis following, and he turned out to be a leader himself. Moosomin, they turned out to be leaders, so they had huge followings, Mistawasis and Atakakōp.

Cimaskōs is a beautiful example among the lodges and it's documented. But how it's also documented in that book is that he had a huge buffalo pound and it was full of buffalo. And they had built another buffalo pound and them chiefs just chased buffalo into there when this Hind got there to visit so he came in to meet Hind in his lodge. But he had two buffalo pounds with buffalo there to feed his people. That must have been a pretty large amount of buffalo that were corralled in these buffalo pounds. So these leaders, these chiefs - it wasn't an easy life. They had to feed their people, but of course they didn't do it all

by themselves; they had a lot of help.

So that's just to grasp how much people would have been at The Elbow and how many people of the Crees revered that site because of the stone. It was a sacred stone. You wouldn't find a boulder that large on the prairies except for there. And the shape of this huge stone was like a buffalo, like a buffalo sitting down. And the history goes from my old people was almost lost I believe, and I've been reviving it. (Time: 31:19)

A long time ago as the people traveled with their travois, they'd have these camp movers, camp leader that they'd pick, and when they decided to move, they'd all move. Everyone would pack up their lodges and tipi poles and they'd all travel wherever he decided. If things went well they would keep them for a while as camp leaders. They revolved them; they'd get a new person to lead them. So that's how they worked cooperatively. And most of the time they did a pretty good job of moving them towards where there was lots to eat, lots of herbs to pick to add to their meals, to add to their medicines and totally just to enjoy life.

But this one time there was a baby in the hustle and bustle of the traveling, that wasn't secured right. *Wāspison* is a moss bag. It wasn't secured right even with the moss bag, everybody was such in a rush to get going, and somehow one way or another this baby was dropped and as the people traveled in the evening, being well-fed, the baby was quiet, didn't make no noise. Nobody trampled the baby.

They just kept moving on. Well, I guess after a long period of time as they traveled they still didn't notice. Some buffalo came, came along, and these buffalo heard a strange sound, the sound they heard was a baby crying. So they checked it out, inquisitive, being inquisitive and the way they said it was the buffalo people. Long ago they identified them as like a type of people, the buffalo race, the buffalo people. So the inquisitive buffalo searched for the sound, where the sound was coming from and they came upon this little baby who was now hungry. The younger buffalo recognized him as a little human being and they wanted to stomp him, to crush him but it so happened that there was a buffalo bull chief and that buffalo bull chief put a stop to what they were intending to do, and he held them at bay and he told them that the child was innocent, the child had never hurt them, this human being child, and that he was going to take him as his own. But he couldn't feed him. But he had his females, the cows, some of them had calves, and they had milk so he got those cows to come over. They had their own system of runners, etc., so it was those cows that came over. He explained to them that these young bulls had found this child and that they were wanting to kill him and that he had put a stop to it because the child was innocent and he was taking him as his own and adopted him and he wanted one of his cows to bend down over atop the little one so that he could suckle. And that's what happened, and that's how the child survived - he suckled the buffalo cows.

And being buffalo milk that's how he grew strong and he grew fast and before long he was running around like the buffalo calves, for all intents and purposes he was a buffalo. Playing with the calves, growing up, running with the buffalo as they ran, as they walked, as they ate. He ate what they ate. They accepted him as one of them. As he got bigger, one time, after being chased at times by First Nations people for buffalo meat, there used to be people that would see him, a human being that would run with the buffalo. Maybe it was the spirit of the buffalo, they'd say. They'd catch glimpses of this young man running with the buffalo but they could never catch him, they could never catch him. And they could never catch that group of buffalo that he was running with. They were hard to corner; they were hard to catch; they were always on the lookout. But they would catch glimpses of seeing him and they would talk about it and they'd say it was probably the spirit of the buffalo that's running with the herd. As he grew taller, stronger because of the buffalo milk that he had had when he was a youth, he was running naked. His hair was long, shaggy and unkempt, just like the buffalo bulls, their shaggy heads, long. But one time, and he had seen glimpses of these people that were chasing him too and he knew that they were shooting them with arrows and killing them too.

One time they went to drink water in a lake, it was a beautiful mirror lake, calm day, the water was just like a mirror and they all ran into the edge of this lake, all to fill up with water, and as he drank water himself he noticed that the ones drinking water beside him had big heads, horns, which he had seen before, but when he looked at himself in the ripple that they created he could see that he didn't look like them, and that shocked him. That was the first time he realized he was different, and yet he could communicate and he could talk with them, the buffalo language, and they had accepted him so much into their way of being buffalo, of being a buffalo, so that he never thought he was anything else but a buffalo until then when he looked in the water. He felt sad after that. He talked to his adopted father, the old bull, one of the bull chiefs,

and the bull chief told him, "I won't hide anything from you. When you were small, we found you and we raised you. I adopted you. I brought you up as one of us. True, now you know you're not one of us. You're really a human being. You're free to go, you're free to go. If you want to go, go. Find your people. You have a mother and you have a father out there somewhere that's a human being."

Being inquisitive to a great degree he left. He bid adios to his buffalo family and he left. He wandered away. Finally he came upon some people and those people took him to their Indian town, tipis. He couldn't talk human talk; all he could do was grunt this way and that way, just buffalo talk, but slowly, slowly he communicated. Slowly he began to communicate by imitating their sign language and he used sign language to communicate with them, but it took him a while to catch on. It was all totally new to him. He lived with the human beings for a long time and he did eventually, through the travels of that group and the criss-cross travels of the other tribes like I mentioned earlier, he eventually found his mother, his real mother, and his real father.

Being a handsome young man, clothed now, with clothes, he eventually lived with not just one woman, they used to have women, sisters or relatives or whatever that would join together and work together under one husband. And that's how he ended up with about five wives, five women through time, meaning that he was a provider, but the one thing he would never do was eat buffalo, he'd never chase buffalo, he'd never eat buffalo. He knew how to use bow and arrow, but he'd go after elk, the occasional moose, anything else but buffalo. He would never touch buffalo. None of his family would touch buffalo out of respect for the people, the buffalo people that brought him up.

I don't know what caused him, the old people never said, what caused him to leave except for the fact that he became lonely for his buffalo father and his buffalo mother, a loneliness that crept into his mind and body and ate away at him, that caused him to leave. So he bid adios to his human people, his human family now with his wives and his children that he had with these wives. He bid adios to them and he said he'd be back and he left. He found buffalo. The buffalo would be leery of him, because he was a human, but he knew how to communicate with them. He could talk buffalo talk, so they'd loosen up right away, they'd ease up right away because he could talk their talk, and that's what took place. Eventually he did find his buffalo father again on the prairies, his buffalo mother, his buffalo family.

And as he was with them that time, there was a group of people, human beings that came upon them, that started chasing them, whooping and yelling; thundering herd of buffalo, thundering hooves. He was running along with these buffalo and he now knew what was going on. All these buffalo people could be getting skinned and gutted and made into drying meat hanging on racks in these human beings' village, and it made him feel, it sickened him, never made him feel good.

So him and, in a hidden area, him and his bull father buffalo ran into a hidden area which turns out to be by the elbow and the turning river, where the river turns, *katitipī chiwak*, and there his father told him, "If you do not want to be a human being anymore I'll tell you and show you a way that you will turn into one of us all the time. But if you don't want to be one of us all the time, you can roll over four more times and you'll be one of us all the time. But you will also turn into stone. It's your choice."

And he thought about it and he did as his bull father buffalo told him. He rolled over four times and he stood up. He was on four legs - he was a bull buffalo. He could hear whooping and yelling and buffalo being chased and he thought I love being a buffalo, and I love being a human being. I've got family with the buffalo and I've got family with the people human beings. I can't take it. I'm going to roll over four more times. And when he rolled over four more times, as he sat, that's how that stone grew and he turned into a buffalo. And that's the sacred story of the Buffalo Child Stone. I've been trying to keep it alive.

I know Pohorecky, Professor Pohorecky a while back was trying to save it when they were going to make the dam. But they couldn't do it. They were trying. They tried their best to move it up on the hill top, but where it occurred where he turned over four times then another four times after turning into a buffalo he turned into a stone, that was the location. That was the Cree gathering spot, because of the valley, the river, the Buffalo Child Stone, the Buffalo Hump Hill, and on the west side of that lake there used to be all kinds of *wayaman*, *wayaman* is earth paint, every kind of colour you wanted was in one spot on the west side of that lake, and they built a road over that earth paint pit. But everything that our people needed was there, everything that they needed for huge gatherings was there, like every spring.

I refer back to that old man Fineday, with Mandelbaum, where it's written and documented right there where his mother was talking about four Sundance lodges being there when she was there, and if you know, the Sundance takes a lot of work. Even to have one lodge is a big thing, but four of them going on at the same time or seven of them for that matter, one from each of the tribal groupings that turned into seven groupings - that's a lot of people there, a lot of people.

So that's the sacred story of the Buffalo Child Stone. When they tried to move it and they drilled it in five, six strategic places and placed dynamite in those drilled holes and they blew it thinking it would break into six pieces, but instead of that, it shattered - that's the spirit of the buffalo child person and buffalo that still refused to leave that spot. But now it's under water and that's why it had to be removed was that it would have been sinking boats, maybe. They figured it was that big that your boat would hit it, I guess today if you would go by there now, so that's why they wanted to move it atop the hill there. Some people have taken that rock. Some people have it in Regina in their yards, I imagine there's some here in Saskatoon. Poundmaker memorial has a piece of that stone, Buffalo Child Stone, Poundmaker reserve, and they value it. Our people value it. And that's the effort I've been making.

And the province has agreed that they're going to do something and even use some of the original rock and build around it today, and make a similar size but it won't be the real stone, and put it across the valley from the town of Elbow that people could see it from there, but have on the side of Elbow a visiting site and if anybody's really wanting to go see it, what it looked like from the pictures that they have. They can go across on a boat, but on the other side, that we would have some land similar to Wanuskewin or similar to other land that's sort of set aside for ceremony. Maybe we would be able to have a Sundance there yet, in the future somebody may want to have one there, but for sure sweat lodges, camping, even fasting, because people used to fast there. First Nations people used to fast at Buffalo Child Stone.

I guess there's some evidence too from the days of that Yuel Hind when they were traveling there, they were taken to go see this Buffalo Child Stone and they seen tobacco offerings, they seen arrow offerings, they seen beads, early bead offerings all around there and I think they dug a little bit around that stone I'm not sure, maybe this Pohorecky did it. But as far as two feet down they were finding things from the past that had been left there to honour and I guess pray with to the spirit world through Buffalo Child Stone. And that's the sacred story of Buffalo Child Stone.

There's a family in Alberta called the O'Chiese family. There's a reserve called O'Chiese Reserve as well as Sunchild toward southern, Rocky Mountain House, west of there. The O'Chiese family have a picture of the Buffalo Child, an old, old picture. I don't know how they got it or whatever, but Buffalo Child is their ancestor out of one of those five wives he had. They are descendants of Buffalo Child, so I don't know how the timing or whatever, but they're descendants from there so they have a picture of this old-timer that was called Buffalo Child that turned into that stone.

My daughter was visiting over there this past summer and she was telling those people over there about the story that, one of the stories that her father talked to them about when they were children. They were just surprised that somebody knew that story. They went and got a picture, old picture. Time will tell. I've never met those people but that's from my daughter meeting them. Anyway, that's the story.