

SOUTH AND NORTH

# THE FALL TOUR

OCTOBER - NOVEMBER 2008

## Eeyou Istchee was an experience



Flying north on Air Creebec to Chibougamau with Paul Wertman from the Grand Council of the Crees made the transition from southern to northern Quebec a welcome exchange.

Paul was instrumental in setting up the award-winning community known as Oujé-Bougoumou. We happened upon each other at the Montreal gate prior to boarding the plane.

The hour flight north over boreal forest into Cree lands was the start of an eight-day tour traveling to different locations where elders and notable leaders live. These people all played an important role in shaping the Cree Nation into what it is today.

The James Bay and Northern Quebec Cree have been gordongroup clients for 20 years. I have travelled to the territories in the past and have great memories of being there with my father, who accompanied me on fishing trips to Lac Mistissini with George Blacksmith.

I'm here this time as a result of being sponsored by the Grand Council of the Cree to capture history. The Grand Council have engaged us to document (in broadcast quality footage) historical records of each Cree leader's perspective. We will capture their memories of the time in 1975 when the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement was signed.



G.C.C.E.I.

We have met and interviewed people who directly signed the JBNQA or played an important role contributing to Cree Nation leadership.

The Crees' story is one of the most controversial situations in Canadian Aboriginal history. The Cree took the position that they would assert their rights and not allow unbridled exploitation of the land. We've been engaged to record the stories and capture the essence of what took place at that time. We will get testimonial and visual footage that will be used to properly communicate what occurred from the Cree perspective. gordongroup has been providing design and communications support to the Cree for twenty years. We produced the book *I Dream of Yesterday and Tomorrow*. In at least two or three scenarios we produced critical mission outreach tools such as referendum and voting materials or informational and educational messaging to the communities.

–Bob Chitty

## Dr. Ted Moses



An important contributor to the documentary, Ted asked us to travel to the bush to do his interview. Ted was the Grand Chief at the time the controversial “Peace of the Braves” agreement was signed. It happens that one element of the agreement has the James Bay Cree sharing in the sale of all resources that are produced from Cree lands. Ted's request for an interview at his camp created special circumstances; at the time we agreed to go, we really didn't know how far away he actually was and the conditions we would encounter in getting to him.

We used the “route du nord” to get to Ted, an extremely rough gravel road. One hour out in our big suburban Yukon truck, we blew the first tire. The road to Ted's destroyed two tires over the duration of the trip. We spent over 15 hours touring along through spectacular northern forest, lakes and rivers to meet Ted.

I contemplated whether Ted may have wanted us to be educated and gain appreciation for his great territory, and that our lesson in part was the time spent traveling outbound to reach him.

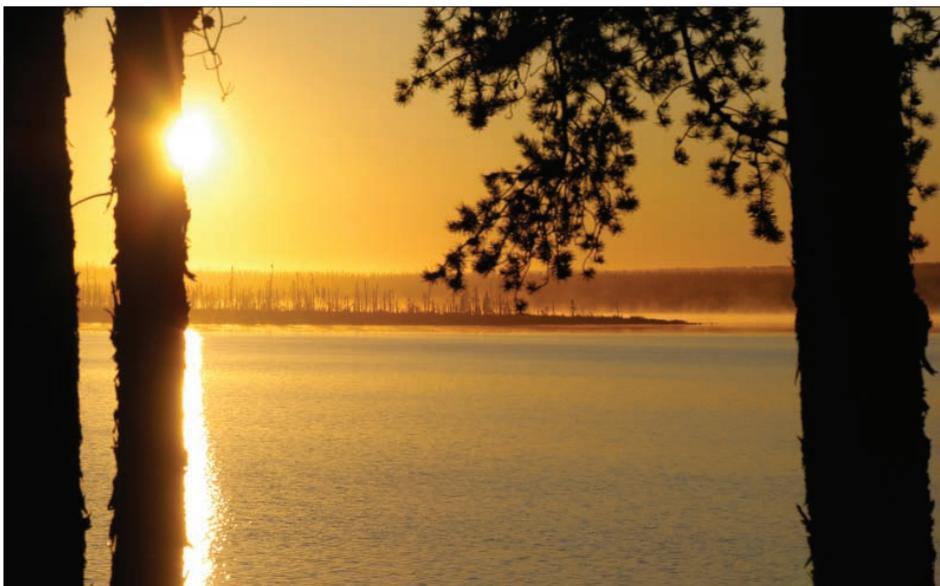
We received a very rich lesson about Cree land!

## Expedition



The documentary film tour started in Val-d'Or, Quebec, where Fred Blackned, Billy Diamond and Violet Pachanos were recorded.

We engaged director Franziska von Rosen. Her son Doug was on camera. Miles and Rob took care of sound and lights in all the locations where we created sets. Rob also filmed with a second camera each interview. Everything was shot in HD. Shawna from gordongroup



dealt with logistics and scheduling for the entire trip.

A number of incidental situations like flat tires and gaining access to HQ's installations were resolved underway.

## Eastmain Dam



Once interviews were wrapped up in Val-d'Or the crew carried on north by truck to Chibougamau. I transitioned into the tour for Shawna, who departed back to Ottawa upon my arrival. I was struck by the professionalism of the crew and their intent to "get the job done."

We travelled in close quarters with luggage and gear carefully stowed in the vehicles to allow for all six of us to have a seat. On most of the days we toured together, setting out early and arriving back at our lodging after dark.

We gained an important appreciation for the land using roads to get to our destinations rather than planes.

## Ian Diamond



Ian Diamond joined us as consultant for the duration of the tour. His insight and understanding of the region was beneficial. Ian's knowledge made the experience a success. Along the route he shot

still photography. He was extremely enthusiastic about the objective, and he helped throughout with relations during each of our encounters with the Cree leaders. Ian shared stories and perspectives throughout the trip.

We were struck by the profound views of the statesmen we met and interviewed. The choice of words and clarity they all used to make their views known was very powerful. We're intent on having three more interviews for this first stage of the project.

