

REVISED – NEW DATE – August 14-18, 2017

Manitoulin Island Summer Historical Institute (MISHI)

**MISHI 2017: Does Wisdom Sit in Places? Sites as Sources of Knowledge
Call for Participants**

The History of Indigenous Peoples (HIP) Network, based at York University and housed in the Robarts Centre for Canadian Studies, and the Ojibwe Cultural Foundation (OCF), located on Manitoulin Island, is pleased to invite applications for the inaugural Manitoulin Island Summer Historical Institute (MISHI), August 14-18, 2017. MISHI is an annual event in Anishinaabe history that brings together students, teachers, knowledge-holders, and other researchers for a week-long summer institute on Manitoulin Island. It is an excellent opportunity to concentrate on a single theme in Anishinaabe history while engaging with other scholars and to explore Manitoulin Island. The summer institute will be comprised of three elements. First, participants will participate in lectures, workshops, tours, and demonstrations of Anishinaabe history. Second, participants will volunteer time to work for the Ojibwe Cultural Foundation on their historical collections, organizing, digitizing, transcribing, and cataloguing research materials, and preparing curriculum materials for public schools. Third, participants will devote some time to formulating their own project, planning and gathering research, and sharing their ideas with fellow participants.

In his study of the place names employed by Western Apache in the American southwest, Keith Basso has beautifully described how the land holds Apache wisdom, as toponyms are abstractions of stories that contain histories, ideas, information, and moral lessons. Learning the names of all the features of Apache places is akin to learning about Apache history, culture, and knowledge. Anishinaabeg likewise use the same device for marking landscape and inscribing knowledge in physical settings. Anishinaabe place names are made up of words marking history, spirituality, and environmental knowledge, all of which make up Anishinaabe cosmology. Alan Corbiere explains that “history as told by the Anishinaabeg uses the land as text book and bible. The land is named, the cliff faces painted, and points along the land serve as portals to summon powerful assistance in times of strife.” Anishinaabe oral historical tradition uses stories, pictographs, and place names to record, interpret and remember significant events and periods. Manidoog, or spirits, play a central role in this history, as they are actors with significant power in Anishinaabe society, helping humans thrive and protecting them from danger. Corbiere asks “when the pictographs have faded or have become inaccessible and unvisited, the bark scrolls locked in a museum, the place names supplanted, the stories untold...will the Anishinaabe still be able to summon [manidoog] in times of strife?”

MISHI 2017 participants will be asked to listen to and think about how Anishinaabe knowledge inhabits landscape on Manitoulin Island. By exploring the land, petroglyphs, pictographs, oral traditions, and documentary sources, we will discover if knowledge is embedded in space or moves around or can be transported and transplanted.

Participant spaces are limited. To apply to attend, please complete the attached application form with a brief letter of introduction explaining why you are interested in attending MISHI 2017 and how your research aligns with this year’s theme, and a one-page CV detailing your research interests and experience. Students are encouraged to apply and funding is being sought (but not guaranteed) for their support. **Applications are due March 15, 2017.** Please email your application to carolyn@carolynpodruchny.ca.

References

- Basso, Keith. *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language among the Western Apache*. Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1996.
- Corbiere, Alan. 2011 'Mii oodi gaa-zhiwebak: Looking at place names in oral history.' In Alan Corbiere, Deborah McGregor and Crystal Migwans, eds., *Anishinaabewin Niizh: Culture movements, critical moments*, pp. 82-97. M'Chigeeng: Ojibwe Cultural Foundation, 2011.
- Doerfler, Jill, Niigaanwewidam James Sinclair, and Heidi Kiiwetinepinesiik Stark, eds. *Centering Anishinaabeg Studies: Understanding the World through Stories*. East Lansing, MI: Michigan State Press and Winnipeg: University of Manitoba, 2013.
- Johnston, Basil. *The Manitous: The Spiritual World of the Ojibway*. Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1995.
- Johnston, Basil. *Ojibway Heritage*. Toronto, ON: McClelland & Stewart, 2003.
- Pine, Dan. "Anishinaabe Miikan (The Anishinaabe Road)" in *Gechi-Piitziijig Dbaajmowag (The Stories of Our Elders)*, ed. by Alan Corbiere, 11-36. M'Chigeeng, ON: The Ojibwe Cultural Foundation, 2011.

Application Form

Name:

Mailing Address:

Email:

Phone:

Current institutional affiliation and position:

Research Interests: