

Real People. Real Life. Real Hope!

SPRING 2025

TRIBAL TRAILS

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# News & Views

[www.TribalTrails.org](http://www.TribalTrails.org)

A department of  
NORTHERN CANADA EVANGELICAL MISSION



## "And how shall they hear?"

*With the mailing of this newsletter we've included our book "Real People – Vol. 2," a collection of life stories from 10 Tribal Trails TV guests. If you haven't received a copy, please see our offer on the back page!*



*You will recognize Tribal Trails Bible teacher, Bill Jackson, as one of the stories included, and will read how he came to faith in Christ. There wasn't space in "Real People..." to continue his story from that point in his life, however, so here we include an excerpt adapted from Bill's biography "As Long as the Rivers Run."*

The Battlefords, Saskatchewan, was the center of activities for new missionaries, Bill & Shirley Jackson. They worked with Pastor Bert Johnson in what had become a familiar task, at least to Bill. Traveling to reserves within a 40-mile radius, he preached in Cree, sharing with the Native population the message of God's life-changing love and grace.

"I am a believer in Jesus Christ. I would like to visit the homes of your Reserve and tell people the Gospel story." Observing courtesy, Bill's first visit was to the chief to obtain permission. As he spoke, a Band councilor entered.

"I don't think so," the councilor interjected. "We have our own religion here. We don't need another one." So formal permission was denied.

From his own experience, Bill knew he could not assume that people had heard the Gospel just because they were connected with a church. Burdened by the knowledge that many people on the reserves had not believed on Jesus, Bill was determined to present the Gospel. Did not the Bible make it clear that there could be no salvation if the Gospel was not heard and obeyed?

**"We have our own religion here ... We don't need another one."**

He remembered the list of questions in Romans 10:14,15,17: "How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent?" Bill knew God had sent him. He knew "faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Whatever the cost, the Gospel had to get to the people.

Bill knew the laws which governed reserves. It was not legal to prevent a person from going to a specific dwelling on the reserve unless the resident of that dwelling objected. "Then we will just visit some friends we have here," Bill told the Band councilor.

That settled, Bill & Shirley began their visitation ministry to the reserves surrounding the Battlefords. That included Poundmaker, Sweetgrass, Red Pheasant, and others. On some reserves Bill went from house to house introducing himself and witnessing to the saving grace and keeping power of the > > >

## Clear Proof & Assurance

"WE BOTH believed Philippians 4:19," Shirley shared, "which assures us that God shall supply all your needs. If we didn't believe that, we wouldn't have dared enter missionary service. My husband had proved God many times in this matter, but as yet, I had not come to the place where I must look to God and Him alone for material needs."

This would change, however. One Saturday the Jacksons had only two dollars left and no idea when they would receive any more money. They needed one dollar to go to the reserve to hold services on Sunday (gas prices were much lower in 1957). Not having had meat for a while, Shirley and Bill agreed it would be nice to get some. Finally, they struck on an idea. They decided to use the other dollar for gas and go to the lake and fish. That way, they would have lots of meat.

Bill knew there was a boat beside the lake that was seldom used. It belonged to a friend and Bill knew the friend wouldn't mind them using it. When they got to the lake, however, the boat was gone. They had used their last dollar for nothing. "I'm afraid my faith hit an all-time low," Shirley remembered.

READ HOW the Lord supplied for the Jacksons that day! ... See free book offer below. Shirley writes, "Many times since I've looked back to the experience and been blessed and encouraged. It was a clear proof and assurance to my doubting heart."



> > > Lord Jesus Christ. Other times, meetings were held in the home of someone who requested that they have a meeting at their place. Advertising was done throughout the reserve by word of mouth.

In those early days of ministry, if anybody had asked Bill why he couldn't leave preaching and teaching on the reserves to the churches which were already there, his answer would have been simple. "If people don't know the way of salvation through Christ, then I should tell them. In my whole time at residential school (operated by a church), I do not remember once that a staff member spoke to me personally about the Lord Jesus Christ. I remember being interested when the principal read to us from John chapter three one Sunday morning. I wondered what the 'new birth' was. But, he just kept on reading. He never explained it."

Bill & Shirley threw themselves into the task of reaching others with the Gospel. Not all the witnessing was done on reserve. In North Battleford, Bill used every means possible to minister to Native people. He made hospital visits where he was often welcomed simply because the patient would otherwise be alone. Every visit was an opportunity for personal evangelism. But each hospital visit also offered something else. Grateful for the expression of care, some of those patients would later welcome the Jacksons to their homes.

It was the same in jails. Bill never ended a jail visit without sharing the Gospel and giving tracts or booklets to those who could be helped by them. The bus depot was yet another place where Bill ministered. Deliberately seeking out Native people there, he started conversations which soon turned to the things of the Lord. Native people may appear shy and restrained. But when another Native person starts a conversation, he or she is usually well received. Because of his own Native identity, Bill had many opportunities to share Christ with travelers at the bus depot.

The Jacksons recognized they were in a "seed-sowing" stage of ministry among the Native people. Their job was to plant the seed of God's Word in human hearts. They and others watered that seed with prayer and, when possible, with further Bible teaching. Called to be witnesses for Christ, they

were very aware of the need to be trustworthy, faithful to God's Word, and consistent in ministry. Shirley & Bill both knew that it was God who must give the increase (1 Cor. 3:6,7).

After a year in North Battleford, the Jacksons moved a short distance to Cochin, keeping the same ministries. About this time, Bill added another avenue of service to his busy life. At the request of NCEM, in 1958 he agreed to record Gospel messages in the Cree language for release through the Indian Gospel Broadcast.

This new ministry utilized radio to spread the Word of God into distant corners of the Northland. The programs were also released in major city centers such as Winnipeg, where CKY radio station, for example, beamed out its broadcast early on Sunday mornings. Increasing to 50,000 watts in 1960, CKY beamed the voices of missionary John Unger, Bill Jackson and others who took part in the broadcast, up through all the northern communities as far as Churchill, Manitoba, latitude 59 degrees. ●

*Bill's radio ministry continued into the 1980s when Tribal Trails TV was launched. Besides television, our half-hour program still additionally reaches into First Nations homes through radio.*



### Free Book Offer

**Bill Jackson has served as a missionary, pastor, Bible school teacher, radio & TV preacher, and writer. You can read more about Bill & Shirley's lives, and their ministry that began 65 years ago.**

**To request a complimentary copy of Bill's biography "As Long as the Rivers Run" please email: [info@tribaltrails.org](mailto:info@tribaltrails.org) ... or phone: 306-764-3388.**

... from  
... our  
... viewers



AS YOU MIGHT imagine, it's a major task making sure that our Tribal Trails spiritual helpline is available seven days a week. It's more than our own staff can handle, and for several years we've relied on missionaries across the country, and volunteers to partner with us in this front-line ministry.

John Greyeyes from Ft. St. John, and Pierre Gregorie from Ft. Nelson, BC, are among our volunteers taking calls from viewers. Pierre came on board last year, and recently shared with us: "I feel totally blessed to be able to answer calls on the helpline. Being part of Tribal Trails is like joining the greatest family on this planet! Thank you, Lord, for all your support and your love."

First Nations ministry lay worker, John Greyeyes (pictured here), has been serving with us since 2007. Recently he told about two of his most remembered calls:



"A young man had called some time ago, telling me that he was at the end of his rope," recalls John. John prayed with him and shared Scripture, and ended the call this way: "I asked him, 'How long till you graduate?' He said about a year. I said, 'Why don't you finish school, find a job, and call me to let me know how you're doing?'"

"A year later my coworkers at Tribal Trails helped me to reconnect with him," continues John. "I found out that he was following the Lord, was getting together with local Christians (though he hadn't yet decided which of two churches he would commit to) ... and he had a better job than me! I told him I was proud of him, and I was so thankful to the Lord, as I was reminded how low this young man was when I first talked with him."

Some calls seem extra difficult. John also mentions a call from a grieving mother who told about her son (who she believed knew Jesus) who had committed suicide. John and Pierre and our other spiritual helpline workers appreciate prayer as we regularly talk and pray with many callers who are hurting.

● **PRAY** for wisdom as we seek to respond to callers with God's love, truth and hope.

## *We appreciate & need your* **Prayers**

● **Pray** for our **STAFF NEEDS**, especially **PROGRAM PLANNERS & VIDEO EDITORS**. We are happy to provide on-the-job technical training for those with aptitude and heart to reach First Nations. (As media missionaries, our staff are required to raise their own financial support.)

● **Pray** for **GENERATION HOPE** our recently begun media outreach to First Nations youth/young adults. **JORDAN & LINSEY BLODGETT** are now both accepted media missionary candidates. Pray for them as they build their prayer/financial support team, while already producing Generation Hope testimony videos and social media posts. It would be great to have them able to devote themselves full-time to this new outreach.



*GENERATION HOPE*

## **FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR'S**

Some of you have stopped in at our Tribal Trails studio located just west of Prince Albert. We appreciate your visits! You probably noticed that our number of staff is not very large. Yes, we do have room for more staff (see prayer request above), but I am often reminded and encouraged by the number of people on our team who serve at a distance.

Besides the spiritual help phone team, there are fellow missionaries like Walter Selke, and Jordan & Linsey Blodgett in Regina, who record and edit video for Tribal Trails/Generation Hope, working from their homes.

Also, there's staff member, Corrie Hill in Alberta, who has been recording and editing songs and interviews, and speaking at ministry events. There are others who have represented Tribal Trails at missions conferences and trade shows.

There are others, including people like you, who distribute Tribal Trails DVDs, books and calendars in your communities. Really, you are part of the Tribal Trails team, too! We value our Tribal Trails prayer team who lift up the needs of viewers who have contacted us with their concerns. And there are those who give of their finances, without whom this ministry could not continue.

Our greatest joy is seeing people drawn to Christ. Having many involved in many locations and in many ways brings much joy, as well!

**Brent Wahlstrom**  
*Tribal Trails Administrator*





# OUR STAFF ...

*We've introduced some of our Tribal Trails missionary staff in past issues of News & Views. Here are others who give their time to this ministry:*



Blaine Witherow has served in Tribal Trails production since the early 1980s when this ministry was launched. Video technology has changed much over the years, and Blaine has faced the challenge. Rachel's work includes mailing spiritual help resources and corresponding with viewers.

Jan Sassmannshausen joined us from Germany 14 years ago. He has faithfully been answering letters and emails from viewers. And with us being short-staffed in program planning, he has willingly stepped in. "Often the program guests' stories speak to me in my own situation, and I get encouraged, comforted or taught," Jan shares.



Following ministry in Arctic Quebec and representing NCEM in eastern Canada/USA, David & Joanna Bouck joined our Prince Albert staff in 2016. David serves in studio production and video editing, along with NCEM facilities responsibilities on site. Joanna serves in NCEM's Finance Department. They are part of a fellowship on a nearby First Nation, where David preaches.

*Each of our Tribal Trails staff is responsible for building their team of financial supporters. If you would like to support one or more of them, please let us know and we will put them in contact with you.*

## WAYS TO DONATE ...

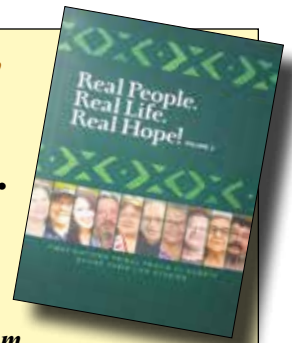
Check our website or phone 306-764-3388 for details.



Tribal Trails is made possible by the gifts of interested people.

*Request more copies!*

## Real People. Real Life. Real Hope! VOLUME 2



*Following encouraging responses from readers and distributors of "Real People ... Vol. 1," we're excited about our newly released book, "Real People ... Vol. 2"!*

*Sharing these life stories is a great way to spread the Good News of Jesus and what He can do in a person's life. Feel free to request as many copies as you can use.*

*Share a copy with an unsaved friend or stranger. Look for businesses or offices that will put the books on display. Place copies in your church library.*

*This is all at no cost to you (there is no obligation, though donations are appreciated).*

*(Sorry, free offer for North American addresses only)*

*Email: [info@tribaltrails.org](mailto:info@tribaltrails.org) or Phone: 306-764-3388.*

*Additional resources for First Nations readers are available for purchase at [www.tribaltrailsbooks.com](http://www.tribaltrailsbooks.com)*



**Tribal Trails News & Views** is the newsletter of NCEM-TV, a department of Northern Canada Evangelical Mission (NCEM), issued two or three times a year. Subscriptions are free (donations towards costs are appreciated).

Since the early 1980s NCEM's television ministry has reached across racial, religious, and geographical barriers with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Your involvement through prayer, financial giving, and other personal contributions can make a difference in the lives of First Nations people who Christ loves and for whom He gave His life.

**Addresses:** All correspondence (other than US financial or US address changes) should be sent to: **Tribal Trails / NCEM-TV**  
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In Canada please make all cheques payable to: NCEM-TV or Tribal Trails.  
In the US please make all checks payable to Tribal Trails and send to:  
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**Designated Giving Policy:** Spending of funds is confined to NCEM Board/Officers approved programs and projects. Each contribution designated towards a Board/Officers approved program or project will be used as designated with the understanding that when the need for such a program or project has been met, or the Board/Officers have determined it cannot be completed, the remaining contributions designated for such program or project will be used where needed most.

A financial statement is available upon request. Pre-authorized and online giving is now available. Visit our website or contact us for more information.