

Our Living Story

by Marilyn Jean Deery and approved by Laura Jean Wilde



Laura Jean and Marilyn Jean
holding Sharing Feather

Our Living Story began in 1973, when my Dad connected with Shaman Chief Kitpou and his son through Scouts Canada. They stayed at our family home for 3 days while in Ontario. What a wonderful experience of fellowship!

Shaman Chief Kitpou needed a favour done to get back to B.C. Dad was able to help the Shaman Chief, even though it meant risking his job. Subsequently, Dad was given the title of Honorary Chief of Attawandaron. Likewise, in the 1990s, my husband Paddy was given the title of Honorary Chief of Attawandaron as well for his good works of charity and compassion. These experiences formed the foundation towards a deeper understanding of the Indigenous way of Life, and respect for the integrity of creation.

In 2010, with a love of dogs, I wanted to own a little Jack Russell puppy. My Senior friend Shirley and I then traveled to a country home 45 minutes away. There we met breeders Laura Jean and her husband Vaughn. Laura Jean and Vaughn are both Indigenous persons. This moment was the beginning of our lifetime friendship.

Over the years, I would ask Laura Jean questions about the Indigenous way of life. Her whole field behind her home is in the shape of Turtle Island. It is wonderful! One day, Laura Jean and I gathered some Church ladies together and we formed a Sharing Circle. Up to that point, we really did not know one another very well. Each person took turns holding a Sharing Feather. Through the Spirit, each would share from the heart. It is a very moving and spiritual experience of God.

Laura Jean and I are now more than friends. We are sisters. Through sharing, I'm in wonder and awe of how God brought us together and how close we are to each other spiritually.

Throughout our faith journey together, what I always need to keep in mind is that the Indigenous peoples have gone through so much intense trauma. To be in friendship, I need to be open to the Holy Spirit, to listen carefully at all times, and to welcome Laura Jean and her family as members of my family. After a time of spiritual growth and trust, Paddy and I have been welcomed into Laura Jean and Vaughn's family.

With our sisterhood and friendship beginning with a puppy 13 years ago, we have grown to become Family and Forever Friends. Thanks be to God, our Creator!