Charles [Wodbu] Red Hawk was the first Dakota teacher at Whitecap Dakota First Nation. Charles Red Hawk Elementary School at Whitecap is named after him.

Charles Red Hawk was born at Standing Buffalo First Nation in 1886, and relocated to the Whitecap Dakota First Nation with his family when he was three years old.

He attended the Whitecap Day School as a child, which was established following a petitioning of the Lieutenant Governor in 1886 by Whitecap members for a community day school.

Red Hawk taught for approximately eight years at the day school from 1916 to 1923. At that time, the school was a one-room log building. He later became an engineer in the steam engine threshing outfit.

Charles [Wodbu] Red Hawk passed away in 1964 at Whitecap Dakota First Nation at the age of 78. He was predeceased by his wife Eva (Littlecrow) Red Hawk.

Chief Darcy Bear has been the Chief of Whitecap Dakota First Nation for over twenty years.

Chief Darcy Bear was born on the Whitecap Dakota First Nation. His grandparents raised him with the knowledge of his Dakota history and culture. Chief Bear now has three children: Alyson, Dalyn, and Drey Bear.

Change happened for Whitecap community when they first elected Darcy Bear as Chief in the 1990s. Chief Bear was first elected at age 23 and has stayed elected for 7 terms. He had a vision to change the Whitecap Dakota First Nation.

Photo courtesy of John Lagimodiere and Eagle Feather News
Chief Bear knew that to have a successful community, he needed to create alliances with Whitecap’s neighbours. The Dakota have always valued their allies. Chief Bear helped to create jobs in the community. Whitecap leadership formed economic partnerships, and put their new money into cultural and social sides of the community. A new school was built in 1996, and health and education partnerships soon followed. Chief Bear knew that Whitecap needed to govern their lands and form their own laws without the full control of the Canadian government and the Indian Act. In 2003, Whitecap signed onto the Framework Agreement on First Nations Land Management and approved the Whitecap Dakota First Nation Land Code, which threw out twenty-five percent of the Indian Act and enabled Whitecap to self-govern their lands. In 2012, Whitecap Dakota First Nation took another big step towards independence with the signing of a Self-Government Framework Agreement with the Government of Canada.

Chief Bear has been recognized in the following ways:

• 2005: Commemorative Medal for the Centennial of Saskatchewan
• 2005: named one of the "Ten Most Influential People" by Saskatchewan Business Magazine
• 2006: CANDO "Economic Developer of the Year” award
• 2011: honoured with the Saskatchewan Order of Merit, the highest recognition given to residents of Saskatchewan
• 2012: honoured with the Diamond Jubilee Medal reflecting his commitment to service
Dakota Information Card

Chief Wabasha (ca. 1720)

An important Dakota leader named Chief Wabasha, who was also called “Red Leaf”, was born around 1720. The exact date of his death is unknown. He is from a long line of Dakota leaders who carried the name “Wabasha.”

In 1776, Wabasha III was became a British General for his role in the American Revolution. Chief Wabasha was important in establishing trade and military ties among the Dakota and the British, and brought 1,000 warriors to fight on the side of the British during the revolution. Even though the British eventually lost the war against the Americans in 1783, Wabasha and other Dakota leaders did not transfer their allegiance to the Americans, remaining loyal to the British Crown following their defeat.

In 1787, the Dakota signed a written treaty with the Crown at Michilimackinac. The use of the calumet, wampum, and gift giving guaranteed this alliance in the eyes of the Dakota. Representatives of the Mdewakanton, Sisseton, Wahpeton, Wahpekute, Teton, Yankton, and Yanktonais were present. Signatories included Wabasha and Tatanka Mani. As part of the agreement, the Crown promised the Dakota would gain the “protection of the Great King.”

Information adapted from:


1 Articles of Peace at Michilimackinac, 12 July 1787, RG 10, Vol. 16, 157-60, Reel C-1224, Library and Archives Canada.
Dakota Information Card

Chief Wabasha (ca. 1765-1836)

An important leader of the Dakota who carried the same hereditary name of “Wabasha” was born around 1765 and passed away in 1836. Chief Wabasha was the leader of one of the Dakota tribes that was named the Mdewakanton. He was also referred to as The Leaf, or Red Leaf.

He played a key role as an ally to the British in the War of 1812. Wabasha (ca. 1765) was responsible for raising many Dakota Oyate supporters. He participated in key battles during the war of 1812, including Mackinac, Detroit, Fort Meigs, and Fort Stevenson.

Wabasha (ca. 1765) was an important spokesperson for the Dakota before, during, and following the war. He received a medal for his participation in the War of 1812. Wabasha was one of the many Western Nation Chiefs with whom Robert Dickson created alliances on behalf of the British Crown. After the signing of the Treaty of Ghent, Wabasha continued to be an important spokesperson for Dakota people’s rights against growing American expansion.

Wabasha (ca. 1765) is a part of the Spirit of Alliance Monument that the Whitecap Dakota First Nation gave to the City of Saskatoon. Chief Wabasha is facing Colonel Dickson and they are giving each other gifts. The fact that Wabasha is a part of the monument shows how important he still is to the Whitecap Dakota people.
Information adapted from:


Dakota Information Card

Chief Whitecap

- *Wapaha Sīk* was Chief Whitecap’s Dakota name.
- 1819: Chief Whitecap was born.
- 1889: Chief Whitecap passed away from tuberculosis.
- Chief Whitecap had a wife and children.
- When the Canadian government forced First Nations to settle onto reserves, Chief Whitecap’s people settled at Moose Woods (Present site of Whitecap Reserve)
- Chief Whitecap built a home for orphans and widows in his community.
- Chief Whitecap’s community hunted, raised cattle, and farmed to make a living.
- 1850’s: Chief Whitecap and other Dakota make peace treaties with the Métis, Saulteaux, and Assiniboine.
- 1862: Chief Whitecap and other Dakota people return to their northern homeland.
- 1879: Chief Whitecap and his people settled on land 26 kilometres south of Saskatoon.
- 1882: Chief Whitecap led John Lake to where the city of Saskatoon would be built.
- Chief Whitecap is a co-founder of the city of Saskatoon. Some people call him the father of Saskatoon.
- 1885: Chief Whitecap asked the Métis to pass through Saskatoon peacefully on their way to Batoche.
- Settlers testified to Chief Whitecap’s honesty and loyalty.
- Chief Whitecap and his community had friendships with the European settlers.
- Chief Whitecap’s community hunted buffalo on the Saskatchewan plains with the Métis and Assiniboine.
• Chief Whitecap selected reserve lands along the South Saskatchewan River.

• 1979: City of Saskatoon names 350 acres of land along the Saskatchewan River “Chief Whitecap Park”.

• 2005: bronze statue was built in Whitecap Park

• 2009: Highway 219 was named Chief Whitecap Trail.

• 2017: the school in the Stonebridge community was named after Chief Whitecap.

Information adapted from:


Dakota Information Card

Debra Moccasin

Debra Moccasin is from the Whitecap Dakota community. Debra has 2 children. One child is a boy and the other is a girl. Debra sews and beads. She makes regalia.

Debra has been dancing off and on since she was 5 years old. She dances both traditional and competition powwows, but she especially enjoys the traditional powwows. The type of dance that Debra dances is called Old Style Fancy. Whenever she dances, she is dancing for those who are sick, for those who cannot dance, for those who cannot dance, and for all people.

Her regalia is made up of many pieces. The ideas for the regalia came in a dream and parts of her family and herself are represented in it. On her headband and choker she represents the 7 council fires of the Dakota people with the teepees. The teepees also represent home. In her hair, she has 2 eagle feathers and a beaded rose hair clip. The blue rose on her hair piece is her mom’s mother’s colour, and the red rose on the other side is her dad’s mother’s colour.

The yellow rose medallion is from her naming ceremony. It represents one of her Indian colours. Debra was given her Indigenous name and colours at a ceremony. Her Indigenous name is She Who Walks with the White Buffalo, and her colours are white and yellow. Debra’s name was given to her by an Ojibwe healer. On Debra’s regalia, you will see where she has included little mirrors. This
is so that any negativity will bounce off of her. On her moccasins she has eagles to carry on her last name. She uses fabric with a floral pattern because it reminds her of the grandmothers, who used to wear dresses made from a similar material.

“Bringing your dream into reality”
Dakota Information Card

Gerald Willoughby

Gerald Willoughby was one of Saskatoon’s first settlers and a friend to Chief Whitecap.

Gerald Willoughby was among the first settlers to the Saskatoon area, arriving from England in 1883. He owned and operated a general store in the settlement of Saskatoon. Oral history from Whitecap Dakota First Nation tells of when Whitecap residents came to the city for supplies — a four-hour sleigh trip in winter — Willoughby invited them to stay in his stable overnight.¹

Willoughby and Whitecap developed a friendship over time. Willoughby testified in the Chief’s defense during Whitecap’s treason trial following the 1885 Riel Resistance. Chief Whitecap was acquitted of all charges, in large part due to Willoughby’s testimony.

Willoughby maintained a friendship with Whitecap’s family after the chief’s death. According to the Star Phoenix (August 19, 1933), Willoughby and Mrs. Charles Eagle (Whitecap’s second wife) visited for many years afterwards during the Saskatoon exhibition, an event that many people from Whitecap visited each year.

Information adapted from:


Dakota Information Card

Harold Charles Littlecrow

Harold Charles Littlecrow is an honoured veteran from the Whitecap Dakota First Nation.

Harold was also known as Sapper. He was born in 1918 at Whitecap Dakota First Nation, which was called Moose Woods Reserve at that time. His parents were William & Annie Littlecrow. He had many siblings.

Harold is an honoured veteran. During the Second World War, Harold enlisted in the army. He was one of seven members of the Whitecap Community who volunteered in the Canadian Armed Forces. Throughout WWII, Harold fought with the 11th Field Company of the Royal Canadian Engineers. His division landed in Normandy early in July of 1944. While heroically saving the life of his fellow soldier, Harold was tragically wounded in action. On that day, 335 officers and men of that division were killed in action or died of wounds. He died of his injuries on July 26, 1944 at the age of 26.

The man he saved--D. Charles MacDougall--wrote to a local newspaper. Here is a portion of MacDougall's recollection:

*I first met Sapper Harold Littlecrow early in September 1943 when I was posted to No 2 Platoon, 11th Field Company, Royal Canadian Engineers. At that time the company was stationed in Storrington, south England. He introduced himself as Harold Littlecrow, ...I’ll never forget his friendly smile which seemed to go well with his tan coloured face. ...

Our division landed in Normandy on July 7, 1944. The front was about 10 to 12 miles inland near Caen. It took the division two days to land and assemble. We then proceeded to the front. On the
way we would stop for a brief rest and then continue on. The closer we got the more shells we encountered. …

In late July we were well into the thick of things. The weather was extremely hot and dry, making our chemically treated battle dress very uncomfortable. The objective of the 2nd Division was to sweep down a valley and capture a village. British troops flanked our right which was high, wooded ground. The 3rd Canadian Division flanked our left which was similar terrain. The British had tough slugging. From the high ground to our right and left we were sitting ducks as mortars peppered the area constantly. …

I never saw my Indian friend again. I learned later that he had died of wounds that day. His stomach wound was worse than he had let on to me. He must have been in great pain when he tended me. He cared for me before he even thought of himself. If I had not received his attention, I would certainly have bled to death. I owe him my life.

But that was Harold’s way. Thinking of others but never of himself. Like the people he sprang from, he had a courageous heart and gentle spirit. His love for life and fellow men beamed all over when he smiled. He had a face that you could read and draw courage from. Part of me was buried with him. I shall always remember him and pray for him¹.

The Province of Saskatchewan remembers Sapper Littlecrow by naming Littlecrow Lake northwest of Stony Rapids, Saskatchewan in his honour.

Information adapted from:


¹ D. Charles MacDougall, source unknown, on file at Whitecap Dakota Government Office, Whitecap Dakota First Nation, SK, (n.d.).
Harry Littlecrow

Harry Littlecrow was the Chief of the Whitecap Dakota First Nation for 28 years.

Harry Littlecrow was born in 1889 on the Whitecap Dakota First Nation (then known as Moose Woods). He had three daughters and two sons with his wife, Jane Littlecrow. Harry passed away on August 16, 1961 at the age of 72.

Harry Littlecrow became the Chief of Whitecap Dakota First Nation in the 1930’s. As Chief of the community through the 1930’s through to the early 1960’s, Harry was responsible for administering many of the Indian Act policies, including distributing rations to the community. He would pick up once a month in the nearby town of Dundurn. He would also distribute the community’s mail.

The Chief was also responsible for administering the on-reserve permit system. As Chief Littlecrow’s grandson, Melvin Littlecrow explained:

You needed it to sell hay, posts, wood, or anything like that. […] He recorded everything on paper, and you had to give a permit slip to the person you were selling to. He had to submit copies of everything to the Indian Agent. Even to sell horses or cattle you had to get a permit—for anything you sell. Even if you wanted to butcher your own cattle, you had to notify the Chief. He would count them all every month—horses too.¹

At this time, the Whitecap community relied heavily on the cattle and hay industries. During his time as Chief, the community had approximately 150 head of cattle. The community would take hay and cattle to sell in Saskatoon.

Chief Harry Littlecrow spoke at many public events in Saskatoon, advocating for the recognition of the rights of the Dakota people in Canada.

Information courtesy of Melvin Littlecrow.

Additional information adapted from:


¹ Melvin Littlecrow (Elder), Interview with Jarita Greyeyes, May 10, 2012.
Harry Littlecrow (right) and Charles Red Hawk (left) at the Whitecap Dakota First Nation. Circa 1950. Photo courtesy of Melvin Littlecrow.
Išťa Toto Wiŋ (Helen Dickson)

Išťa Toto wiŋ¹ was an important Dakota woman. She was born around 1781 near Big Stone Lake, located in modern-day Minnesota. She was the daughter of the Dakota leader Red Thunder (I).

In 1797, Toto wiŋ married a well-known Scottish fur trader named Colonel Robert Dickson. Before they were married, Dickson courted her for many years in order to gain the trust of the Dakota people. After she married Dickson, she also used the name Helen Dickson. They had 4 or 5 children. One boy was named William, and one of the girls was named Helen. After the War and the signing of the Treaty of Ghent, the family ended up living in what became American Territory. This was difficult for them, and when Dickson suddenly died in 1823, Toto wiŋ took her children and followed her son William, who was a well-respected trader like his father. Later it is known that Toto wiŋ and her children were running a trading post near St. Pierre in the province of what is now called Ontario.

Toto wiŋ is a part of the Spirit of Alliance Monument that the Whitecap Dakota First Nation gave to the City of Saskatoon. The fact that she is a part of the monument shows how important she still is to the Whitecap Dakota people. She is an important part of the monument to show the valuable role that women played in supporting the people they knew that went to war. It is known that many people stayed with Toto wiŋ and her family during the War of 1812.

¹ Išťa Toto wiŋ is also known as Ista Totowin
Information adapted from:


June Eileen Eagle

The late June Eileen Eagle is a Veteran and is a member of the Whitecap Dakota First Nation.

She was born June 15, 1941 at Whitecap Dakota First Nation to William and Nora Eagle. June spent her childhood at Whitecap Dakota First Nation. She then attended the Prince Albert Residential School.

After graduating from school, June joined the Royal Canadian Air Force in 1961. June became a Leading Aircraft Woman at the Gimli Airbase in Manitoba. She was honourably released from the Air Force in January of 1966.

Following her departure from the Air Force, June worked for the Provincial Government from 1966 until her retirement in 1996. June passed away in 2014 at the age of 73.
Dakota Information Card

Lorne Littlecrow

Lorne was born on May 9, 1922 at Whitecap Dakota First Nation, which was called Moose Woods Reserve at that time. His parents were William & Annie Littlecrow. He had many siblings.

Lorne Littlecrow is an honoured veteran from the Whitecap Dakota First Nation. During the Second World War, Lorne enlisted in the army, joining in June of 1943—just after his 21st birthday. A farewell party was held in the Moose Woods community school.

Throughout WWII, Lorne served with the Regina Rifles in the United Kingdom and Continental Europe. He was involved in the liberation of France, Belgium, and Holland. He was honourably discharged in July 1946. For his service, Lorne was awarded the 1939-45 Star, France and Germany Star, and the Canadian Volunteer service medal and clasp.

Following his discharge from military service, Lorne was employed as a steam engineer at the University of Saskatchewan heating plant, where he worked until his retirement. He was a long time member of the Army, Navy & Air Force Veterans Club in Saskatoon. His favourite past times were hockey, rodeo, and playing music, including the guitar and fiddle. Lorne would often play at local community dances held in the Whitecap community.

Lorne passed away on December 28, 1988. He is remembered as a kind and generous man by his children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren.

Information and image courtesy of Janice Daniels.
Robert Dickson

Robert Dickson was born in the year 1765. He died quite suddenly in June of 1823 on Drummond Island, which is now in the state of Michigan, USA. He was born in Scotland and was known for his fiery red hair and beard, and the Dakota called him “Red Head” or Pahin ša ša. Later, he came to Canada to be a trader. Dickson operated in the regions west of the Mississippi River and was employed by the British North American trade companies. Dickson had trading posts in Ojibwe and Dakota territory.

Dickson fell in love with a Dakota woman named Išta Toto wiŋ. He had to wait many years before he could marry her, in order to prove his loyalty to the Dakota people. Dickson and Toto wiŋ were married in 1797. They had 4 or 5 children. One boy was named William, and one of the girls was named Helen. After the War and the signing of the Treaty of Ghent, the family ended up living in what became American Territory.

Robert Dickson became an ally to the Dakota people. He earned their respect. Dickson illegally brought supplies to a Dakota winter camp along the Mississippi numerous times. In 1811, he smuggled goods out of Queenston, Ontario, down the Ohio River to the Mississippi and Prairie du Chien. He was planning on trading these goods for profit. Arriving among the Dakota, he found many were starving. Dickson enlisted fellow traders to set up a trading post on Pike Island and issued all of his supplies as gifts. The traders were regarded as heroes among the Dakota for the life-saving British goods.

Oral histories of the Dakota refer to the War of 1812 as pain sa sa wainyanyaŋpi “When the Red Head Begged for Our Help.” Dickson helped talks to continue between the Western First Nations (like the Dakota) and British forces, which was important. He related and renewed the land and peace promises of the British, and
fought hard to make sure that the Dakota and other Western First Nations were receiving steady supplies throughout the war. During the War of 1812, Dickson fought beside Dakota men. As a Colonel in the army, Dickson was a representative of the British Crown and gave out flags and medals to the First Nation allies. These medals acted as a symbol of the promises made by the British Crown to recognize First Nation contributions to the military campaign.

After the war, Dickson became an Indian Agent in January 1814 for the area west of Lake Huron. Robert Dickson stayed in Prairie du Chien throughout the winter of 1814-15, trying to get supplies for the Dakota from the British. In the end, Dickson’s ties to his First Nations relatives overshadowed his relationship to the British. In his effort to feed hungry First Nation women and children with army supplies, he was accused of attempting to overrule the authority of the British military. He was tried and acquitted, but this ended his ties with the British military.

Following this, Dickson tried to establish a land base and trade relations for the Dakota with Lord Selkirk, where the Dakota would provide cattle and buffalo meat and hides to the settlers of the Selkirk Settlement in what is now Manitoba. There appears to also have been land negotiations as a part of the arrangements between Selkirk and the Dakota. Unfortunately, both Dickson and Selkirk died unexpectedly before the formal arrangements could be put in place.

Colonel Robert Dickson is a part of the Spirit of Alliance Monument that the Whitecap Dakota First Nation gave to the City of Saskatoon. Colonel Dickson is facing Chief Wabasha and they are giving each other gifts. The fact that Dickson is a part of the monument shows how important he still is to the Whitecap Dakota people.

Information adapted from:


Letter from Allez, September 4, 1821, Selkirk Papers, pp 7365-7367.

Letter from Robert Dickson at Fort Douglas, August 15, 1820, Selkirk Papers, pp 7004-7006.

Letter from Allez, September 4, 1821, Selkirk Papers, pp 7365-7367.


Dakota Information Card

Senator Melvin Littlecrow

Melvin Littlecrow is a respected knowledge keeper from the Whitecap Dakota First Nation.

Melvin was born in 1942 on the Whitecap Dakota First Nation. The people of Whitecap have long history as skilled at cattle ranching and raising horses. As a child, Melvin learned how to handle horses from his grandfather, Harry Littlecrow. He recalls taking hay to Saskatoon to sell to the local businesses to feed their horses. Melvin grew up to raise horses and cattle of his own. He competed in rodeos racing chuck wagons all over Saskatchewan, Alberta, and Montana for over 35 years. He continues to raise horses on his farm at Whitecap today.

At the age of seventeen, Melvin Littlecrow took his first job as a construction worker building the Gardiner Dam at Lake Diefenbaker. After returning to work on his family farm for a few years, Melvin entered into the steel work trade. He worked as a steel worker for over three decades, and had a hand in many of the major construction projects in the province, including Saskatoon City Hospital, the Midtown Plaza, and five potash mines.

As a Councillor for the Whitecap Dakota First Nation from 1994-2000, Melvin was a part of the revitalization of the community. This included the building of the new school and new on-reserve housing developments. He then moved into the role of FSIN Senator. He continues to be involved in Indigenous governance as a Senator for the Saskatoon Tribal Council, as a member of the FSIN Treasury Board, and is on the board of the Dakota Dunes Community Development Corporation.
Vivian Anderson has worked as an educator at the Whitecap School many years. As the school’s Dakota language instructor, she ensures that the youth at Whitecap stay connected to their Dakota ways.

Vivian Anderson was born on the Whitecap Dakota First Nation. She has six siblings. Growing up, she and her siblings spent a lot of time with their grandparents who taught them about their Dakota ways.

As a child, Vivian spoke Dakota as her first language, and learned English when she attended the day school at Whitecap at the age of six. She attended the residential school at Prince Albert for a short time, then returned to Whitecap and went to school in Saskatoon. She took linguistics at several universities and is a certified language instructor.

She is active in the Whitecap community and has served on many advisory committees. Most recently, she is an advisory member for education and lands.
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