

## Historic site award for heritage society



Submitted photo



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### Beothuk interpretation panels reason for recognition

**Teresa Greene returned from St. John's last week with a big smile on her face.**

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The Millertown resident had good reason to be happy: the Red Indian Lake Heritage Society, of which she is the president, won an award from the Historic Sites Association of Newfoundland and Labrador.

The society was nominated by the Millertown town council.

They knew they had won an award, but when they went to the banquet, Ms. Greene was pleasantly surprised to have won the top award, in the national category.

Four Manning awards were presented that night at Government House. The winners included the Red Indian Lake Heritage Society for their Indian Point Beothuk Interpretive Panels, the provincial category including the Carbonear Historic Walking Tour; The Great Fogo Island Punt Race, and in the community category, the St. John's Heresay Project.

The Manning Awards for Excellence in the Public Preservation of Historic

Places are named after the late Bill Manning, a former Parks Canada Superintendent of Newfoundland and Labrador National Historic Sites. He realized that the preservation and presentation of the province's heritage requires the involvement of people in the community.

The panels at Indian Point were created and placed by the Red Indian Lake Heritage Society, which was established in 1991. The panels, written by famed Beothuk specialist Dr. Ingeborg Marshall, featured artwork by Grand Falls-Windsor artist Craig Goudie, and were reviewed by the Provincial Archaeology Office.

In addition efforts were made to preserve the integrity of the site by having the Provincial Archaeology Office ensure that the signs did not disturb any artifacts.

The boards were only erected this past year, but the site has already enjoyed a sizable number of visitors.

"I really think this will be a tourism boost," said Ms. Greene. "Our numbers have already doubled since we put the boards up, and more will likely come since a lot more people will hear about it."

According to the historic sites association, preserving the memory of extinct peoples is rewarding.

"Providing an accurate picture of a extinct society is challenging and to do so in a way that teaches visitors about extinct people while preserving their memory is a wonderful fit for the intention of the Manning Awards," stated the introduction to the presentation of the National Award. "The Red Indian Lake Heritage Society has taken that on and they are succeeding in that task in its interpretation of the Indian Point site."

The historic sites association also stated Red Indian Lake is one of the most important sites in Newfoundland's aboriginal history. The storyboards tell the tragic tale of the Beothuk, their use of Red Indian Lake as a wintering home, and

European attempts at contact that often ended violently.

The boards also mention the capture of Demasduit, named "Mary March" by the Europeans, and the murder of her husband Nonosbawut, who tried to save her. In 1823, the last known survivor, Shanawdithit left Red Indian Lake.

With her, the Beothuk people passed out of existence and into history, the last of the island's distinct aboriginal group.

"This story is told today along the Indian Point site by the informative tools provided by the Red Indian Lake Heritage Society in Millertown, to ensure that the tragedy of the Beothuk people is not forgotten," stated the association in presenting the award.

"This project shows how community based organizations can pull resources together to help make a contribution to their community, province, and nation."