

And from my English ancestors, I apologize today for what my people did to you. I taught in two residential schools. In 1954, I taught in Norway House United Church Residential School for three or four years, and then I taught in the Alberni United Church Indian Residential School in BC. I worked very hard to be the best teacher I could be, and I did not know about the violence and cruelty going on in the dormitories and in the playrooms. But I have found out through one of my former students, who was five years old when he came to Norway House, his name is Edward Gamblin, and Edward Gamblin and I have gone through a personal truth and reconciliation.<sup>196</sup>

In a media interview afterwards, Ms Kaefer said that she contacted Mr. Gamblin after hearing his song a few years ago describing the cultural, physical and sexual abuse he had suffered at Norway House school. She said, “I just cried. I told my sister that I can never think of teaching in the residential school in the same way again.” She called Gamblin after hearing the song. He told her he had to hide his abuse from the good teachers for fear he would lose them if they found out what was happening and left. He invited Kaefer to a healing circle in 2006 and they became close friends. Kaefer said Gamblin taught her not to be embarrassed about her past, being part of a school where abuse took place. “I was 19 and you don’t question your church and your government when you’re 19, but I certainly question my church and my government today.” ... Gamblin said Kaefer taught him how to forgive. “There are good people [teachers] who don’t deserve to be labeled,” he said.<sup>197</sup>

Some family members of former staff also came forward. At the Manitoba National Event, Jack Lee told the Commission,

My parents were staff members of the Indian residential school in Norway House. I was born on a reserve in Ontario and I moved with my family to Norway House when I was about one or two years old, and started school in the Indian residential school system, basically, at the very start as a day student ... as a white boy.... My father agonized very much over his role.... But I just want everyone to know that my father tried his best, as many other staff members tried their best, but they were working with so limited resources, and many of them felt very bad about their role in it, but they chose to stay in the system because it was still better than nothing, it was still better than abandoning the system, and abandoning the students that were in it.<sup>198</sup>

At the Atlantic National Event, Mark DeWolf spoke to us about his father, the Reverend James Edward DeWolf, who was the principal at two residential schools: St. Paul’s in Alberta and La Tuque in Québec. He said,

I’m quite hesitant to speak here this morning ... I’m not here to defend my father so much, as to speak part of the truth about the kind of person my father was. I think he was an exemplary principal of an Indian residential school.... Part of the story will be about what I saw around me, what my parents tried to do, however effective that was, however well-intentioned that was, however beneficial or not beneficial it