

A MANITOBA LOVE STORY

Leo Pettipas

Manitoba Archaeological Society

In May of 1963, at the tender age of 18 years, I moved to Manitoba from Nova Scotia. I had just finished my second year of undergraduate study at a Halifax university, and my plan was to complete my education at the University of Manitoba.

Now it so happened that there was at the U of M at that time an archaeology professor who took great interest in the history of the province as it was during the Ice Age when Glacial Lake Agassiz covered huge areas of the countryside. In addition to that enormous inland sea, massive glaciers also buried much of the province, and the place in which we now live was vastly different from what it is today. By sheer luck, I was selected to be a student assistant on a field expedition that would seek out archaeological evidence of the ancient peoples who inhabited the shorelines and hinterlands of the once-great lake.

At the time, that is, in 1965, my plans for the future were still a bit fuzzy, and ties to the Maritime province from which I hailed were still fairly strong. However, a lot of things fell into place that summer; I became fascinated with the whole idea of Lake Agassiz and its influence on the peopling of Manitoba over the several thousand years of its existence. I quickly developed an interest in studying the subject over the long run; and since the fieldwork involved a goodly amount of travel, I got to see a fair bit of the province and to meet many very fine people.

Well that settled it -- I was hooked. After two summers of fieldwork I had decided that I would not only be an archaeologist, but a life-long Manitoban to boot. That's exactly how things worked out, and I'll forever thank my lucky stars for having had the opportunity to make that decision, and for the presence of mind I possessed in making it. At no time since did it remotely occur to me to look elsewhere for greener pastures; the pastures in Manitoba were green enough for me. And the more I learned through my research about the natural and cultural history of the province, the more I liked it. "Familiarity breeds contempt"? Not for me!

But the happy tale doesn't end there by any means. While a student at the U of M, I made a truly astonishing discovery -- the most gorgeous young woman on the planet was a student there at the same time. Imagine that! The world's most beautiful woman -- right here in Winnipeg!! Since we were both on-campus residents, I eventually got the opportunity to meet her. Of course, the fondest dream of every young man is to marry the world's most beautiful woman, so naturally I proposed to her before someone else got the chance. To my everlasting gratitude, she accepted. She was (need I say it?) a native Manitoban.

So I'm now 69 and retired, and after 47 years I'm pleased to report that I'm still happily married to Manitoba's answer to Miss Universe. While she has pursued her professional interests as a Curator at The Manitoba Museum, I have realized, and continue to develop through my writing, my own career aspirations in local archaeology.

To this errant come-from-away, Manitoba has given a home, a career and a wonderful life companion. Hopefully before my time is done I will have in some measure repaid this generous province for all that it has given me.

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