

Lake Melville School, Northwest River

presents

LYDIA CAMPBELL'S MEMORIES

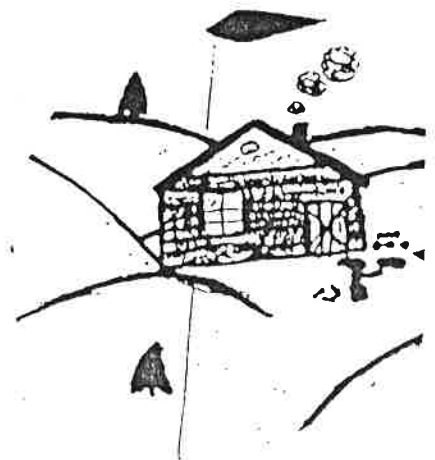
This play is a short interpretation of the events in the life of Lydia Campbell, one of the early pioneer women of Labrador in the late 19th Century.

The play was written by Peter Watts, Barry Pottle & Wally McLean, students at Lake Melville and is performed by students from grades 5-12.

It is interesting to note that many of the students are descendants of Lydia Campbell.

Members of the Cast are:

Allison Montague
Neil McLean
Heather McLean
Ashley Michelin
Darlene Michelin
Stella Michelin
Scott Tuton
Jerry Campbell
Tammy Michelin
Kim Blake
Darren Michelin
Tanya Pottle
Gaylene Chaulk



LYDIA CAMPBELL'S MEMORIES

Presented by: LAKE MELVILLE SCHOOL
Northwest River

CAST

Lydia Tom
Daughter Daniel
Sarah Betsy
Ambrose Brooks

A letter to the Evening Telegram is read to introduce the action. The play opens with Lydia reading a letter from Reverend Waghorne. Lydia stumbles over some words as she is not a good reader due to poor schooling.

LYDIA: Dear Mrs. Campbell:
I have always been interested in the history of Labrador and the life of its people. You being one of Labrador's native inhabitants and having experience in the old Labrador way of life, would be fascinating to those of us who have never experienced or even understood your culture. I am therefore asking you if you would share with us your recollections of your early life. I have included with this letter a notebook which you can use to write your memories.

Yours truly,
Rev. Arthur Waghorne

Back when the children were home I played an awful good trick on Tom and Dan. I wonders if Reverend Waghorne wants those kinda thoughts.

(LIGHTS DIM ON LYDIA; BRIGHTEN ON STAGE)

SCENE 1

A middle-aged Lydia is tending house. She goes to the window and mimes looking out.

LYDIA: Now children, I'll be gone for just a little while, so stay near the house and don't do anything foolish. (LYDIA LEAVES HOUSE WITH GUN, SPOTS CARIBOU AND SHOOTS) There's two behind the snow bank. (LYDIA'S ELDEST DAUGHTER RUNS OUT OF THE HOUSE AND CLUBS THE WOUNDED CARIBOU WITH A PADDLE)

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DAUGHTER: We got 'em! (DOGS BARK IN THE DISTANCE)

LYDIA: I'd better get back and tie them up. You skin this deer. (BOTH LYDIA AND DAUGHTER RETURN TO THE HOUSE)

LYDIA: You got it all put in the store?

DAUGHTER: Yes, ma. (DAUGHTER WASHES UP FOR SUPPER)

(ENTER THOMAS (ELDEST SON) AND DAN CAMPBELL)

TOM: We're back!

CHILDREN: Hi, Dad!

LYDIA: You get anything?

TOM: Yeah, two deer.

LYDIA: Well, sit yourself down and I'll fix up some grub. You got their hearts?

TOM: Yup, out in the store.

LYDIA: I'll go get them. (LYDIA GOES TO THE STORE, PUTS 3 HEARTS IN THE POT. RETURNS TO HOUSE. WHILE OUT TOM TELLS THE CHILDREN A STORY) I thought you said there was only two deer?

TOM: There was?

LYDIA: Well, how come there's three hearts?

TOM: What do you mean? Daniel, did you get one without me knowing?

DANIEL: No, sir. I didn't.

TOM: Then it must have been some mountaineers.

LYDIA: No Indians was here though.

TOM: Then where did it come from?

LYDIA (LAUGHING): O.K. I'll tell you. I shot a deer today and gave you that heart too. I was only playing a trick on you! (ALL LAUGH)

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(LIGHTS DIM ON STAGE WHILE THE REAL LYDIA WRITES)

LYDIA (POURS SOME TEA AND LAUGHS): Oh yes, there were some good times, but hard times too. Why, I remember when I was 11.

(LIGHTS FADE ON LYDIA AND RISE ON STAGE. WE SEE LYDIA'S FATHER SITTING SURROUNDED BY HIS CHILDREN. THEY PRAY AND WEEP.)

AMBROSE BROOKS (SAYS THE LORD'S PRAYER, THEN TURNS TO 11 YEAR OLD LYDIA: Listen, Lydia. Now that your poor mother has died, we're going to have to find someone to look after you. Since I'm going to be out hunting alot of the time I think it would be better for you to stay with old Sarah at Cul-de-Sac. She can teach you things. You understand what I'm saying?

LYDIA: I guess I do, father, but isn't Sarah blind and lame? How's she gonna teach me stuff? Will I have children like my brothers and sisters to play with?

AMBROSE: Don't worry about that. She'll take good care of you.

(AMBROSE LEADS LYDIA TO SARAH'S HOUSE)

AMBROSE: Hello, Sarah. I've brought Lydia to help you.

SARAH: Hi, Lydia. Hi, Ambrose. Sorry to hear of your wife.

AMBROSE: I must go now to check my traps.

SARAH: Lydia, check the stove, then you can scrape the seal-skin. Later I'll tell you how to make kamiks (seal-skin boots).

LYDIA (SCRAPES SEALSKIN AFTER LIGHTING THE FIRE): Sigh!
(AFTER THE SIGH, THE POEM "LABRADOR WOMAN", by A.J.M. SMITH, IS RECITED) Oh, I wish I were home again!

(AMBROSE ENTERS WITH BETSY)

AMBROSE: I have someone here who will keep you company for awhile. Her name is Betsy.

LYDIA: Hello, Betsy. My name is Lydia.

BETSY: Well, Lydia. Come here and help me get to that

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chair. (LYDIA RETURNS TO SEALSKIN AFTER PUTTING AN IMAGINARY BOTTLE OF ALCOHOL ON THE TABLE)

SARAH: Lydia, go and get the bottle in the cupboard over there.

(AMBROSE, SARAH AND BETSY SIT AT THE TABLE AND DRINK AND TALK TO EACH OTHER. AMBROSE JOKES AND SLAPS HIS LEG.)

(LIGHTS DIM)

LYDIA (IN CORNER): Some days were pretty lonely but good came with the bad. There was nobody my age to play with then but I still had a good time with the elders.

(PAIRS OF PEOPLE COME IN AND SIT DOWN. THE PAST AND PRESENT ARE REPRESENTED. THE POEM "THEM DAYS" IS RECITED AS THE ACTORS REMAIN FROZEN ON STAGE. WHEN THE POEM FINISHES, LYDIA CONCLUDES THE PLAY.)

LYDIA: Yes, my life was pretty hard and full of work. Still, I have no regrets about anything. I hope Reverend Waghorne can use my diary to tell people how life was in Labrador. Sometimes I wonder if things really do change all that much. (LYDIA PLACES THE BOOKLET INTO AN ENVELOPE AND SEALS IT)

(LIGHTS DIM)