



Stitching Generations Together

The Isadore and Mary Rose Charlo Family Exhibit and Doll Sewing Workshops

Tłıch'ho Cultural Commons Research Series—Volume 2



Dedats'eetsaa:
Tłıch'ho Research & Training Institute

The cover photo was taken by Tessa Macintosh (Tessa Macintosh Photography) of Isadore and Mary Rose Charlo.

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This booklet is a living document that will change and grow according to feedback. This version is current as of December 2023

We welcome any comments and/or inquiries. Please direct these to Rebecca Bourgeois at rbourgeo@ualberta.ca

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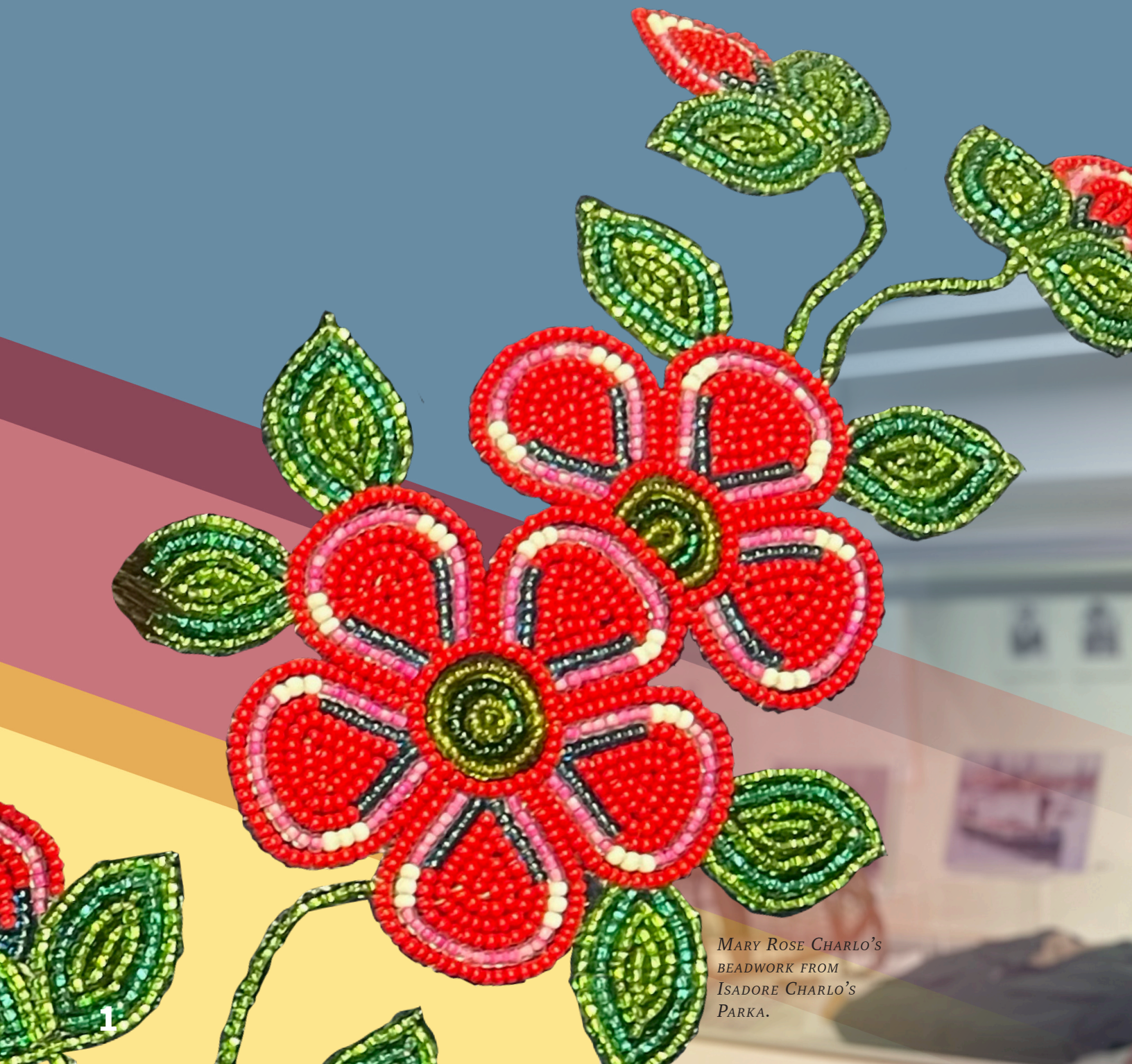
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*IN MEMORY OF
ISADORE & MARY ROSE CHARLO.*



MARY ROSE CHARLO'S
BEADWORK FROM
ISADORE CHARLO'S
PARKA.

@ the Community Museum on the 2nd floor of Kò Gocho (Sportsplex), Behchokò

THE ISADORE AND MARY ROSE CHARLO FAMILY EXHIBIT

Curated by Elizabeth Sanspariel with the help of Rosalie Scott (Conservator at the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre), and supported by Karen Gelderman, Therese Washie, Sam Drybones, and Johnny Tailbone.





THE ISADORE AND MARY ROSE CHARLO EXHIBIT IN THE COMMUNITY MUSEUM, BEHCHOKǫ.

Introduction

*T*he exhibit and doll-sewing event originated from discussions at the Night at the Museum archival sharing circle (see Tłıchǫ Cultural Commons Research Series vol. 1) that took place in December 2022. Both at this event and in interviews that followed, we heard that community members would like to see their family members and teachers honoured in the museum, rather than just the chiefs or political leadership. Thanks to the donation of a new glass display case by the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre, this feedback was able to be incorporated into the museum. Tłıchǫ Arts and Heritage Facilitator Karen Gelderman knew that many Tłıchǫ families curated their own cultural belongings, and approached Elizabeth Sanspariel about creating an exhibit that honoured her parents. This resulted in the creation of the Isadore and Mary Rose Charlo Family Exhibit.

The Isadore and Mary Rose Charlo Family Exhibit in the Behchokǫ Community

Museum was a first attempt at creating a family curated display designed to share the stories and legacy of a strong Tłıchǫ couple. Their daughter, Elizabeth Sanspariel, collected belongings and stories with the help of her family members. From there, assisted by Rosalie Scott (the conservator at the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre), this exhibit was created. It is the first of a series of new museum programming—the Tłıchǫ Family Exhibit—that will provide a rotating space where community members can curate belongings that tell the story of their families.

Accompanying the exhibit was the Mary Rose Charlo inspired doll making workshop and school event. The workshop and exhibit combination is a powerful way to teach younger generations traditional Tłıchǫ skills. We hope that this model is the start of larger museum programming that will include exhibits and workshops focused on other traditional practices and arts, such as snowshoes and dog blankets.



• THE COMMUNITY MUSEUM • BEHCHOKQ' •

ISADORE AND MARY ROSE CHARLO FAMILY EXHIBIT

• CURATED BY ELIZABETH SANSPARIEL •





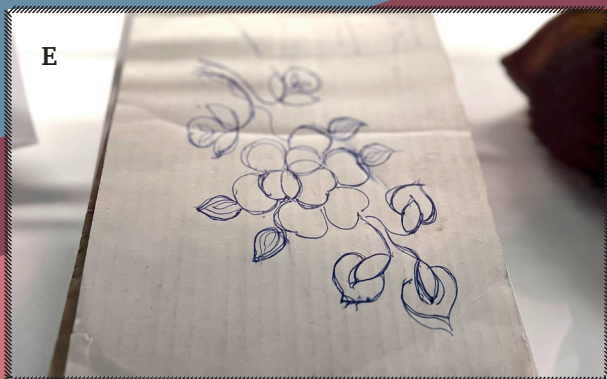
MARY ROSE CHARLO POSING WITH ONE OF HER DOLLS.

BEHCHOKÒ, 2002. PHOTO BY TESSA MACKINTOSH.

Mary Rose Charlo's Sewing

Mary Rose's sewing courtesy of Charlo Sanspariel Family

Mary Rose was a talented sewer. Not only did she make creative pieces – such as her famous dolls – but she also skinned muskrats, made caribou skin bags and many other traditional Tłıchǫ hand sewn objects. Mary Rose designed and beaded the parka and jacket on display for her husband Isadore (A). Her ink pen drawing on cardboard (E) shows the beginning of a design that would have resulted in another beautiful work of beading, such as what is seen on the gloves (C).

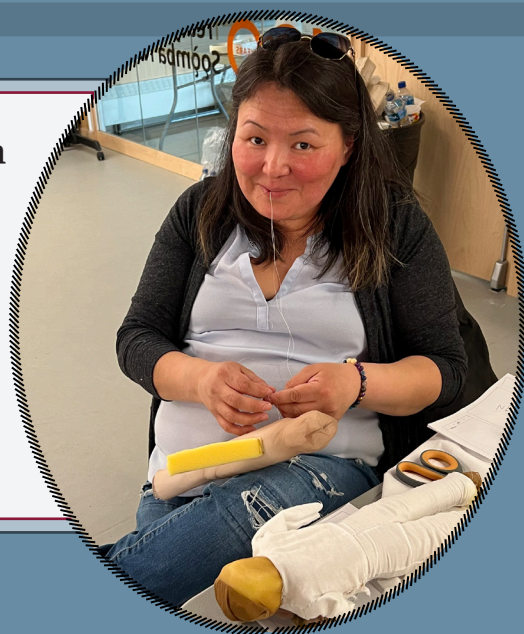


A, ISADORE CHARLO'S PARKA, MADE FOR HIM BY MARY ROSE CHARLO; B, MARY ROSE CHARLO'S SEWING KITS, BEHCHOKÒ, 2002. PHOTO BY TESSA MACKINTOSH; C, GLOVES BEEDED BY MARY ROSE CHARLO; D, JACKET MADE BY MARY ROSE CHARLO FOR ISADORE CHARLO; E, BEADING PATTERN SKETCHED BY MARY ROSE CHARLO.

"I would always go to see her when she was out in the bush, and I would see her awesome skills. All day she'd be working her butt off, and then she'd be sewing again before it got too late in the day when I got there."

BELINDA SANGUEZ

Granddaughter of Mary Rose Charlo



"I didn't spend much time with her when she was working on her dolls because she would put them away if we visited her. I think she liked to do it on her own time, when she was by herself... But I helped with the beading on the moccasins and for the parka... She didn't cut the material in front of you. She only gave me what needed to be [beaded], that was it. And then the rest she did on her own."

ELIZABETH SANSPARIEL

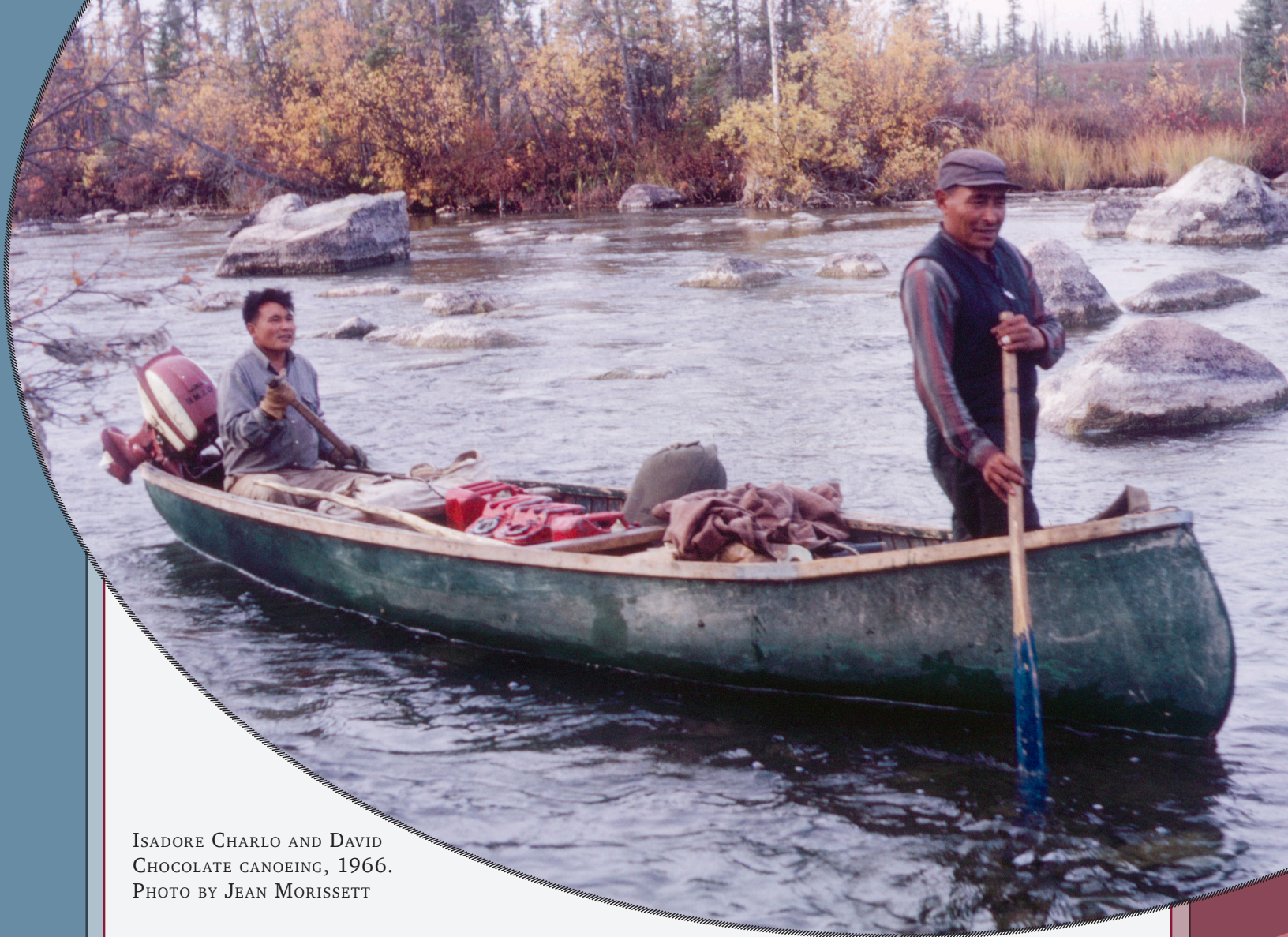
Daughter of Mary Rose Charlo

"Every time we came by, she always put her stuff away so we couldn't see her... I think that she didn't want us to mess up anything when we were over."

DONNA FOOTBALL

Granddaughter of Mary Rose Charlo





ISADORE CHARLO AND DAVID
CHOCOLATE CANOEING, 1966.
PHOTO BY JEAN MORISSETT

Isadore and Travel

From stories told by Sam Drybones, Therese Washie, and Elizabeth Sanspariel

There are many stories about Isadore and his vehicles, his trucks and the trips he would make down to Alberta. The story goes that Isadore, having a good job as an assistant and interpreter for the game warden, was able to buy the first vehicle in Behchokò. He even helped his friend, the game warden Ron Williams, buy a car. His daughter Elizabeth thinks that the rough, shaky steering needed to drive the Bombardier became a part of him and was how he drove other vehicles, shaking and constantly moving the steering wheel.

Therese Washie remembers driving around Edmonton trying to get to a bingo. Isadore, an impatient driver, kept turning here and turning there, twice passing the 'Welcome to Edmonton' sign, crossing the river a couple times, before they got to the bingo in Allendale that had just ended.

Isadore and Mary Rose Charlo on the Land

Isadore and Mary Rose loved being on the land and had a cabin on the highway past Stagg River which they frequented every spring for spring hunting, making dry meat and hide tanning. With Isadore being retired they had more time to spend at their cabin doing what they loved, being on the land.

By Johnny Tailbone

The camp is where Mary Rose had to shoot a bear while all on her own and where she processed hides for her incredible sewing projects.

MARY ROSE AND ISADORE CHARLO, GOTSOKATI, 2009. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE CHARLO SANSPARIEL FAMILY.



C



D



E



C, ISADORE AND MARY ROSE CHARLO PEGGING OUT CARIBOU HIDE ON THE BARREN LANDS, GOTSOKATI, 2009. PHOTO BY TESSA MACKINTOSH; D, CARIBOU HIDE BAG AND MUSKRAT PELT INCLUDED IN THE EXHIBIT AT THE COMMUNITY MUSEUM, BEHCHOKÒ; E, ISADORE WEARING ONE OF THE FIRST PARKAS MARY ROSE MADE FOR HIM. PHOTO COURTESY OF CHARLO SANSPARIEL FAMILY.

Isadore's Game Warden Days

By Johnny Tailbone

Isadore Charlo worked with the game wardens for over twenty-five years as an assistant and interpreter traveling and visiting the Tłıchǫ people throughout the region with a dog team and later on with canoe, Bombardier, and planes. Isadore did a great service back then when hardly any Tłıchǫ people spoke or understood the English language.

Isadore traveled with the game warden Ron Williams by dog team doing their patrol visits to wherever the people were living. The game warden had a dog team of only white dogs, and he asked my dad for one of his white dogs and my dad gave him one. He also worked with game warden Rene Mercredi, even going to the barren land and travelling with the hunters from Bekchokò by canoe.



ISADORE'S
GAME
WARDEN
BADGE.



JIM BEALIEU (LEFT) AND
ISADORE CHARLO (RIGHT).
PHOTO COURTESY OF THE
CHARLO SANSPARIEL FAMILY.

ISADORE'S GAME WARDEN UNIFORM

The Parents of Mary Rose Charlo: Jimmy and Rosalie (Wedawin) Drybones

JIMMY AND ROSALIE
DRYBONES, BEHCHOKÒ,
1967. PHOTO COURTESY
OF MILWAUKEE PUBLIC
MUSEUM/NANCY O.
LURRIE FONDS



By Therese Washie

Jimmy had two children, Joseph and Benny Champagne, by his first wife. Therese Washie tells the story when Benny, working with a prospector in Ft. Smith, was attacked by a bear and bit in the leg. His friend found him and took him out of the bush, carrying him through portages, to get to the hospital in Ft. Smith.

Jimmy hunted a lot and was in the area between Whatì and Rae where Rosalie Wedawin and her family were spring camping. Jimmy came paddling along in his canoe and noticed Rosalie. When she went to get water, he followed her

and proposed. Jimmy and Rosalie would travel to Délı̨ne by dog team and after several years of living in the area came to know and care for an Elder there. The prophet Ayah commented on Rosalie's care of the Elder and when she was pregnant with her first child, the prophet told her to call her Rose and so she was named Mary Rose.

ARCHIVAL PHOTO OF MAKING SNOWSHOES IN THE TŁıCHQ REGION, RAE, 1936. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE HBC ARCHIVES (KEEFER).



Lac Ste Anne

Isadore and Mary Rose were the first known Tłıchǫ couple to attend the Lac Ste Anne pilgrimage in Alberta. They heard about the pilgrimage during one of their travels in the 60s through Alberta from some Indigenous people in that area and had gone ever since then. They told stories about the pilgrimage to the Tłıchǫ people and then a lot of Tłıchǫ people started attending the pilgrimage every summer.

By Johnny Tailbone

Therese Washie, sister of Mary Rose, remembers going with them to Lac Ste Anne. They found their way there, pitched a tent, and went to Edmonton for a day. When they got back, it took a long time to find their tent because so many others had come while they were gone.



ISADORE AND MARY ROSE CHARLO AT LAC STE ANNE. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE CHARLO SANSPARIEL FAMILY.

Mary Madeline Nitsiza's Dolls

We used this exhibit as an opportunity to display the dolls of another well-known Tłıchǫ sewer, late Whatì Elder Mary Madeline Nitsiza.

From the collection of Winnie Cadieux

Showcased is a family set of dolls with a father, mother and baby, teenager and younger child. They are hand sewn with scraps of tanned caribou hide. Mary Madeline Nitsiza is also known for bringing back the traditional babiche bag and showing others how to make them.



PHOTO OF MARY
MADELINE NITSIZA WITH
HER DOLLS, WHATÌ 2001
(TESSA MACINTOSH
PHOTOGRAPHY)
DISPLAYED ALONGSIDE
FOUR OF HER CARIBOU
HIDE DOLLS.

MIKE NITSIZA (MARY
MADELINE'S SON) BRINGING
HIS MOTHER'S DOLLS TO
TEACH SCHOOL CHILDREN
DURING HIS TIME AS A SCHOOL
COUNCILLOR, 1994. PHOTO
BY TESSA MACKINTOSH
PHOTOGRAPHY.



March 11th & 12th, 2023

DOLL SEWING WORKSHOP

@ the Community Museum on the 2nd floor of Kò Gocho (Sportsplex), Behchokò



Hosted by the Tłıchǫ Government Department of Culture and Lands Protection.



*M*ary Rose Charlo's incredible sewing skills are evident in her hand-sewn dolls. These dolls feature traditional clothing in miniature, fur-lined parkas, mitts, and moccasins sewn from scraps of hide and lovingly beaded. As models of Mary Rose's talent, her dolls have traveled the region. While the doll in the exhibit case belongs to her daughter, Elizabeth Sanspariel, the two that were used as examples for the workshop are housed within the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre's teaching collection.

The doll-sewing workshop was born both out of wishes for a women's activity during the annual hand-games tournament and a desire by Mary Rose Charlo's daughter, Elizabeth Sanspariel, to revive the practice of making them. The doll-sewing workshop was hosted by the Tłıchǫ Government Department of Culture and Lands Protection (DCLP) and took place March 11–12. We used patterns designed by Mary Rose's niece, Mary Zoe Chocolate (Granddaughter of Jimmy Drybones and Rosalie [Wedawin] Drybones), based on one of the dolls that Mary Rose Charlo had made. Elizabeth Sanspariel then helped instruct people on how to make her mother's famous dolls. The workshop had ten participants who stayed for the full two days, but many more people stopped by to sew for a little bit or pick up a pattern to take home with them.

Even expert sewers quickly learned how difficult the dolls were to make! It made Mary Rose Charlo's skills—and patience—all the more impressive. While workshop participants worked from patterns, Mary Rose Charlo had made the dolls enough times to do it from memory. The two dolls used as examples were praised for their beauty and the obvious love that was put into making them. They were constantly referenced as participants tried to figure out how Mary Rose Charlo had accomplished particular feats of clever sewing.

I love how the patterns were cut out. I remember [Mary Rose Charlo] eyeballing it and then cutting them out... I was like, what in the world? I guess if you've been making so many, you really just know what to do.

BELINDA SANGUEZ

Granddaughter of Mary Rose Charlo



March 11-12
10:00 AM - 6:00 PM



doll-sewing workshop

Inspired by the work of Mary Rose Charlo
and Mary Madeline Nitsiza

The Community Museum
Kǝ Gocho Sportsplex
2nd Floor, Behchokǝ

For more information, please contact:

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The workshop received plenty of positive feedback. Many participants had long wanted to learn how to make a doll and were eager to pass the techniques they learned in the workshop on to others. On top of the sewing experience, participants also related this process of learning and crafting to broader topics. For example, Annie Mitsima reflected on this event as moments toward healing and reconciliation that can be carried forward through generations.

I immensely enjoyed this doll-making workshop. I found it even spiritually healing and I think it's a good step toward reconciliation, and I always wanted to learn how to make a doll... I'm proud to say I can now make one... maybe [even] teach others so the heritage and culture of this wonderful craft can be carried on for generations."

ANNIE MITSIMA

Elizabeth Sanspariel, the daughter of Mary Rose Charlo, was thrilled that she was finally able to teach others how to make her mother's dolls. Running a workshop like this was something she had wanted to do for a long time. Elizabeth guided participants through the process of making their first doll, even teaching some how to sew for the very first time.

This is what I wanted to do for the longest time. This has been on my mind for the longest time... I wish I had done this with her... Now that I'm doing it, I feel so overjoyed.

ELIZABETH SANSPARIEL
Daughter of Mary Rose Charlo

Belinda Sanguez (Mary Rose Charlo's granddaughter) was happy to see her grandmother's sewing in practice once again. Like Annie, she found the workshop healing, calling it therapeutic. This sense of peace and relation to health was a pleasant surprise and was great feedback from participants. Reflecting on this point is encouraging for the development of a larger workshop program in relation to the archive and museum. Opening up cultural heritage programming such as this into healing spaces would be beneficial to activating museum and archive collections in the holistic cycle of wellness.

*I love to see her sewing come back to life...
[It's] like therapy."*

BELINDA SANGUEZ

Granddaughter of Mary Rose Charlo

Many of the participants also brought the doll-making into their own homes. Kathleen Graham worked on her doll at home between the workshop days and was one of the few participants who finished within the time frame! Her dedication to learning and expanding on her own talents was a model for those still working. Sarah Jones also spent her next few weeks in Whatì staying up late to finish her doll, sourcing fur from her neighbour to use for the trimmings.





I really enjoyed it... it was quite satisfying. I just wish I had this when I was a little girl.

KATHLEEN GRAHAM

Treeva Richardson, who helped with organizing the workshop, recognized how pleasant the practice of sewing was and how great it was to bring people together. As an employee of DCLP, she wonders if we could bring the workshop with Elizabeth to other Tłch̓o communities and run it more regularly in conjunction with pre-existing sewing groups.

I wish I could do this every day, all day.

TREEVA RICHARDSON

The workshop was also a learning opportunity for future events in the museum. The biggest challenge participants faced was the timeframe. Many people pointed out that the project required more than just two days to finish. Future iterations of the doll-sewing



workshop should keep this in mind and run for more than just two days, especially since the time-crunch was felt by novice and expert sewers alike.

[We need] more time to sew, because most of us will not be done.

ELIZABETH SANSPARIEL
Daughter of Mary Rose Charlo

This aspect of time is also important considering that many participants had never sewn before and required extra assistance. While restricting the workshop to more experienced sewers may be one solution, that takes away the opportunity for novices to interact with and learn from experts in an integrated class. Creating an environment that is welcome to all and that fosters co-teaching during future workshops should keep beginners in mind when determining time frames.

I wish we had more help with the sewing and stuff, because I didn't know how to sew at first, too.

DONNA FOOTBALL
Granddaughter of Mary Rose Charlo

Kathleen Graham, one of the more experienced sewers who took part in the workshop, had a lot of great feedback for how to improve it. She mentioned that the room was too dark for hand-sewing, and that sewing machines would have made the project more feasible to finish within the time frame of the workshop. A brighter location and more days to work on the dolls would be helpful for those who would prefer to hand-sew their dolls like Mary Rose Charlo. Workshops that have to run in a shorter amount of time would greatly benefit from the presence of sewing machines to help speed things along. Another suggestion was to have the doll bodies pre-cut, or at the very least give participants the doll dimensions that the clothing patterns are drawn from, so that the finished clothes will fit. Figuring out how Mary Rose Charlo's dolls were both soft and able to stand upright was one of the last pieces of this workshop to fall into place; now that we know to use shaped foam for the doll body.

Those who gathered over the two days worked together to honour Mary Rose Charlo, Mary Madeline Nitsiza, and their own teachers in the creation of their dolls. We learned from one another and shared what we knew, tying in knowledge from across many regions. Participants taught each other to bead, sew, and problem solve collaboratively when problems or questions arose. The group ranged from Elders to babies, beginners to artists. Looking around the room there were people swapping stories and techniques and by the end of the two days





you could start to see peoples' individual styles popping up, inspired by their teachers and shaped by their process of figuring it out. It was truly a collaborative effort where stories were shared and laughter was had.

A. KATHLEEN GRAHAM (LEFT) AND ANNIE MITSIMA (RIGHT) WORKING ON THEIR DOLLS;

B. THE SECOND DAY OF THE WORKSHOP;

C. LUCY NITSIZA CUTTING OUT PIECES OF HER DOLL PARKA;
D. REBECCA BOURGEOIS (LEFT) AND LUCY NITSIZA (RIGHT) ENJOYING THE STORIES AND CHATTER WHILE SEWING THEIR DOLL PARKAS;

E. WATCHING THE HANDGAMES DURING THE WORKSHOP (THANK YOU TO PABLO FROM ARTLESS COLLECTIVE FOR SETTING THIS UP!);

F. MARY ZOE-CHOCOLATE (PURPLE JACKET), DONNA FOOTBALL (PINK SWEATER), JESSICA WETRADE (GREY ZIP-UP), ELIZABETH SANSPARIEL (GREY HOODIE), AND NAOMI RABESCA (BLACK SWEATER) HELPING EACH OTHER FIGURE OUT PARTS OF THE DOLL.





Participants

Donna Football
 Kathleen Graham
 Sarah Jones
 Annie Mitsima
 Lucy Nitsiza
 Jasarah Rabesca
 Naomi Rabesca
 Treeva Richardson
 Belinda Sanguiez
 Elizabeth Sanspariel
 Diane Taylor
 Jessica Wetrade
 Rebecca Bourgeois
 Karen Gelderman
 Elizabeth (Libby) Goldberg

And all others who came and went during the two-day event!



March 1st, 5th & 6th, 2023

SCHOOL EVENT

@ the Community Museum on the 2nd floor of Kò Gocho (Sportsplex), Behchokò

*B*eyond the formal doll sewing workshop during the hand games, it was important to make this programming accessible to the youth as well. A school learning event held over three days allowed students from Elizabeth Mackenzie Elementary School and Chief Jimmy Bruneau Regional High School to visit the museum, learn about the exhibit, and try their hand at crafting their own Mary Rose inspired felt dolls. Although these felt dolls followed a simpler pattern than Mary Rose's dolls, the students found inspiration from her completed dolls while incorporating some of their own flair into the design.



THE CRAFTING TABLE WITH SUPPLIES AND PATTERNS TO MAKE MARY ROSE INSPIRED FELT DOLLS.



ELIZABETH SANSPARIEL AND KAREN GELDERMAN SHOWING THE STUDENTS ONE OF HER MOTHER'S DOLLS.

We were fortunate and very grateful to have Elizabeth Sanspariel join the learning events to talk to the students about her experience making the exhibit and share her parents' story. She shared how her parents were key figures in her life and the process through which the exhibit came to life. She introduced the students to each of the pieces in the exhibit and how they played into her parents' legacy.



ELIZABETH SANSPARIEL EXPLAINING THE EXHIBIT TO THE STUDENTS AND SHARING STORIES ABOUT HER PARENTS.

Mary Buckland from the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre also spoke to the students about what it is like working at the museum and answered many enthusiastic questions. Students were able to ask about a wide range of interests, from dinosaurs to her favourite parts of the job. She brought along a “Dress Like Me” edukit which contained Mary Rose Charlo dolls and child-sized clothing to match the outfits worn by the dolls. The students had fun trying on the parkas and accessories, transforming them into the dolls themselves. Elizabeth Sanspariel’s daughter, September, was thrilled to try on the white parka inspired by her own grandmother, Mary Rose Charlo. Much like September, many students were delighted to find family members represented in the community museum.

The students were very interested in the objects and photos on display in the museum. After Elizabeth shared her family’s story we talked about the students being tasked with curating an exhibit of their own for the museum — next level, Heritage Fair!



SEPTEMBER SANSPARIEL DONNING THE “DRESS LIKE ME” EDUKIT CLOTHING TO BECOME ONE OF HER GRAND-MOTHER’S DOLLS!



MADELINE MACKENZIE (LEFT) STANDS BY HER UNCLE FORMER GRAND CHIEF GEORGE MACKENZIE’S PHOTO AND KHLOE TINQUI (RIGHT) STANDS BY HER RELATIVE, FORMER GRAND CHIEF JOSEPH RABESCA.



DEVIN SIMPSON (LEFT), URIAH LAFFERTY (CENTER), MADELINE MACKENZIE & KHLOE TINQUI (RIGHT) POSING WITH THEIR CREATIONS.



A



B

A, LAILA WASHIE AND ASHTON BEAULIEU DRESSED UP AS MARY ROSE CHARLO'S DOLLS; B, STUDENTS FROM EMES GRADE 4-5 MAKING THEIR FELT DOLLS.

I love how many of the students could make a connection to their own family and where and what their family has done in the community. I think it's important to show them where their family has originated, how the buildings came to be, who has played what role and how they are connected. ...

I loved seeing the displays and seeing my great grand fathers' names beautifully written down [on the family tree] was surely something else.

RIA ZOE

Tłıchq Classroom Assistant

There is incredible learning potential when youth research their cultural roots and learn the ways to share and exhibit their stories effectively. Including the youth within the museum and archival process is not only enriching, but it puts the stories being told back into the hands of the next generations.

This is an especially important value that has been continually shared with us by the Elders guiding this research. They stressed that the youth need to be included in these processes and conversations because this work is being done for them. They taught us that the youth need to be central to the development of Tłıchq heritage spaces and research.



EMES STUDENT DECORATING HER FELT DOLL WITH A TRADITIONAL VEST.

EMES
GRADES
1-4



EMES
GRADE 6



Participants

EMES
GRADES
4-5



CJBS
GRADES
3-6





ELIZABETH SANSPARIEL
(LEFT) AND KAREN
GELDERMAN (RIGHT)
INFRONT OF THE ISADORE
AND MARY ROSE CHARLO
FAMILY EXHIBIT.

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

We noticed the chain reaction effect of displaying objects that represent a family story. The story of Isadore and Mary Rose Charlo, told through their belongings, reminded other Tłıchǫ viewers of their own stories and made them think of how their memories could be preserved and shared. It is important to continue this opportunity for people in the Tłıchǫ region because every story shared strengthens the understanding of Tłıchǫ culture and way of life. The positive community response to the exhibit and workshop indicates that this work needs to lead to a more permanent collection and the creation of a dedicated space to display and interpret Tłıchǫ heritage and culture.

The idea that traditional cultural activities can be healing is not a new one. Many Indigenous cultures view health through a holistic lens, with cultural knowledge and community connectedness feeding into mental, spiritual, and physical health. Embodying or engaging in traditional cultural practices contributes to a sense of not only personal but also community well-being. This sentiment is reflected in the feedback we received from the workshop. Moreover, the act of

sewing is a means of keeping knowledge alive and of becoming closer as a community. Bonds were formed as experts taught novices how to sew and bead, allowing sewing traditions to be shared across generations.

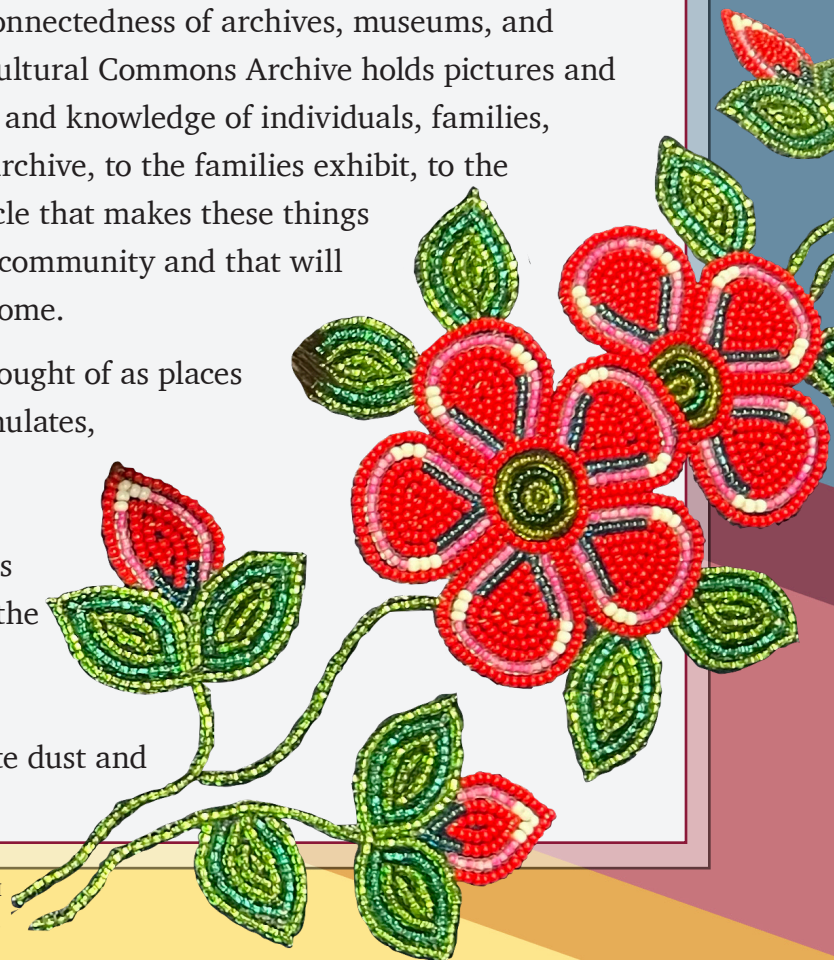
Embodied work such as sewing helps produce and sustain intergenerational knowledge. Learning to make doll-sized traditional clothing such as parkas, mitts, and moccasins is also a great way to begin learning how to make these items at their full size. Even honouring these same skills through simplified activities (such as the felt dolls) brings the youth into the experience in a more accessible way. Mary Rose Charlo's granddaughters spoke of the workshop as a means of bringing their grandmother's sewing back to life. It encourages solidarity and kinship as people come together to sew.

I don't see many of these dolls made, and it's amazing. I'm in awe, and honored that I'm able to come and have a spot and make it... the skills that our grandmothers have is amazing... This is such a good opportunity... We're all together, and we're sewing as one unit and one people.

DIANE TAYLOR

The process by which the Isadore and Mary Rose Charlo Family Exhibit came to be is an illustration of the interconnectedness of archives, museums, and community practices. The Tłıchǫ Cultural Commons Archive holds pictures and videos that represent the memories and knowledge of individuals, families, and communities. Going from the archive, to the families exhibit, to the workshop, this process creates a cycle that makes these things come alive once again within their community and that will sustain this life for generations to come.

Museums and archives are often thought of as places where nothing changes, dust accumulates, and time stops. In re-imagining a Tłıchǫ archive and museum, it is important that we learn from events like this to ensure that we care for the life of the stories and belongings we hold, rather than keeping them locked away to only ever accumulate dust and eventually become forgotten.



THREE GENERATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

*I*n the memory of Isadore and Mary Rose Charlo, this doll making practice has been revitalized by their family. Mary Zoe Chocolate, whose mother Lucy was a younger sister of Mary Rose Charlo, was able to create the patterns we used for the workshop inspired by her aunt's dolls and through her own strong sewing legacy. Although it was challenging to make patterns for small scale clothing, Mary enjoyed the process.

"I belong to a long line of seamstresses; my grandmother Rosalie Drybones, my mother Lucy Chocolate, my aunt Mary Rose Charlo. My mother didn't go to residential school, she lived on the land and sewed her whole life..."

I love to sew, it's my outlet, it calms me. I think when people are practicing their cultural traditions it makes them feel good.

MARY ZOE-CHOCOLATE

Mary Rose Charlo's Niece

Elizabeth Sanspariel and her daughter Tiffany Sanspariel have also been leading the next generations in the creation of these dolls. They are now able to provide traditional dolls to be included in baby baskets, in educational and early childhood programming, and anywhere where else that this journey might take them.

The revitalization of this doll making practice is a story of resilience and of how the belongings held within museums and archives are alive. They are pieces of people and hold incredible knowledge and history. Within mere months, a photo grew into an exhibit, which grew into a workshop, which reached the youth, and has resulted in an entire artistic practice to be revitalized and re-imagined by the descendants of the late Mary Rose Charlo.



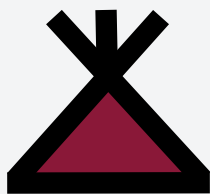
PORTRAITS OF TĚCHQ WOMEN CREATING TRADITIONAL CRAFTS (MARY MADELINE CHAMPLAIN, MARY ADELE SIMPSON, ADELE WEDAWIN, MARY ROSE CHARLO, AND MARY MEDELINE NITSIZA) TAKEN BY TESSA MACINTOSH PHOTOGRAPHY AND DOROTHY CHOCOLATE DISPLAYED ALONGSIDE OTHER CRAFT MATERIALS TO PROMOTE THE DOLL SEWING WORKSHOP.

NEXT STEPS

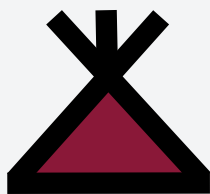
*L*ooking forward to the continued development of museum programming in partnership with the development of a digital archive, our next steps include:



Create a plan and schedule for other family exhibits.



Develop more traditional craft workshops, such as snowshoes, babiche bags, and other projects people are enthusiastic about.



Ensure that the doll-sewing workshops keep running and build upon the feedback received from participants.

E.g., more time, better lighting, pre-cut dolls or breaking the project into smaller stages.

If you are a Tłıchǫ citizen and would like to get involved in this research or would simply like to learn more, please do not hesitate to contact us!

Department of Culture and Lands Protection
research@tlicheo.ca

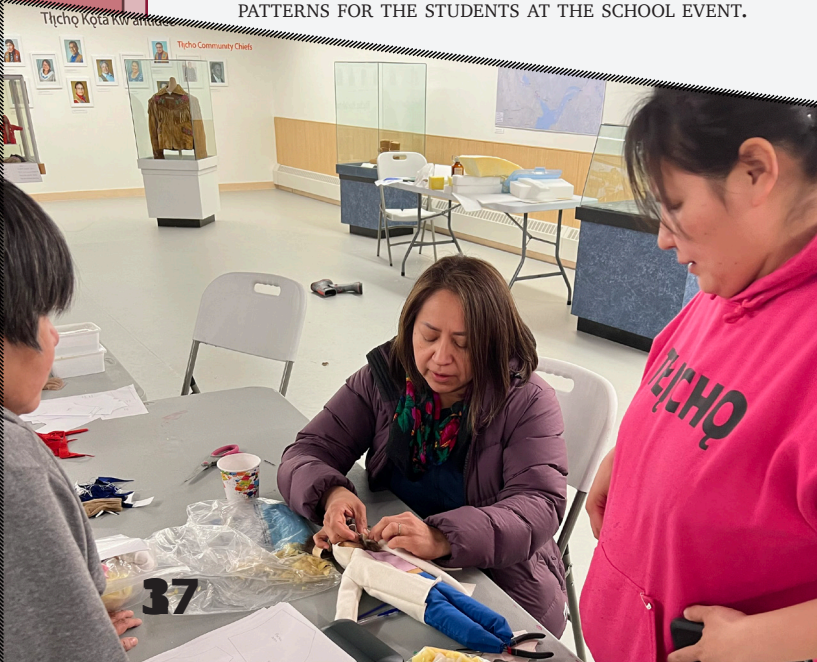
or Rebecca Bourgeois
rbourgeo@ualberta.ca



Key Learnings for the Future...

- Self-directed exhibits are the way to go and should be continued.
- Revitalizing practice is central to all archival and museum programming.
- Sewing and other types of embodied practice help keep knowledge alive.
- Workshops need to accommodate the needs of both novices and experts.
- Sew every day, all day!

A, DAY TWO OF THE DOLL SEWING WORKSHOP; B, ELIZABETH GOLDBERG (LEFT) AND SARAH JONES (RIGHT) WORKING TOGETHER TO BRAID JIHT'II; C, MARY ZOE CHOCOLATE (MIDDLE) SHOWING JESSICA WETRADE (LEFT) AND DONNA FOOTBALL (RIGHT) HOW TO ATTACH THE DOLL'S CLOTHING; D, ELIZABETH SANSPARIEL PREPPING FELT DOLL PATTERNS FOR THE STUDENTS AT THE SCHOOL EVENT.



A NOTE FROM DCLP

*T*he Isadore and Mary Rose Charlo Exhibit and Doll Making Workshop is a wonderful example of how community members can contribute to the vision, creation, and celebration of museum events. Honoring Isadore and Mary Rose by telling their story through photos, artifacts, traditional clothing, tools, and hearing stories about them of their work and travels, shows tremendous love and pride of their contributions to family, community, region, the greater NWT, and beyond!

The dolls of Mary Rose and Mary Madeline bring forth intricate stitching, creating unique playful pieces rarely seen today. The dolls themselves show the passion the makers had for the art of doll making. All that time and effort to work the hides and then the hours of cutting and sewing into usable toys exemplifies talent, dedication and love for the craft AND for those it was intended for.

While honouring Mary Rose and Mary Madeline's amazing doll making talents, we are also revitalizing this type of art. This exhibit and doll making workshop helped to tell a story in hopes of bringing back and strengthening the craft of doll making amongst the Tłıchǫ people. It was delightful to have students from our local schools visiting the museum to learn about doll making. Students had fun trying on traditional clothing from the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Center dress up trunk.

Masì cho to the many contributors who helped to make this exhibit come alive and the workshops so fun and exciting! Masì to those that came out and took part and I look forward to our next event at the museum!

Masì cho,

Tammy Steinwand-Deschambeault

Director, Dept. of Culture and Lands Protection

MASÌ CHO!

We would like thank everyone that was involved in the making of this exhibit and the events that have come from it. There were many people who shared stories, contributed to the exhibit, and participated in the events throughout this process. We appreciate all the efforts and feedback that have been offered to us throughout the past year. We hope that these relationships will continue to grow, and with them, the museum and archive as well.

A big thank you to the Elders that are guiding this research as participants and teachers: Alphonse & Marion Apples (Gamètì), Marie Adele Football (Wekweètì), Henry Gon (Gamètì), Jimmy & Noella Kodzin (Wekweètì), Rosa H. Mantla (Behchokq), Mike Nitsiza (Whatì), Bobby Pea'a (Wekweètì), Marie Adele Rabesca (Whatì), James Rabesca (Behchokq), Michel Louis Rabesca (Behchokq), Moise Rabesca (Behchokq), Joseph Whane (Wekweètì), and John B. Zoe (Behchokq). It is with their guidance that these events were planned as part of the ongoing research.

We want to honour the memory of the late Moise Rabesca who generously gave his time, knowledge, and heart to this project before his passing.



ISADORE CHARLO'S PARKA, MADE FOR HIM BY MARY ROSE CHARLO.

Funding for these events was provided by the Tłıchǫ Government Department of Culture and Lands Protection and the Mitacs Accelerate Program. Food was provided by F.C. Services.



Dedats'eetsaa:
Tłıchǫ Research & Training Institute



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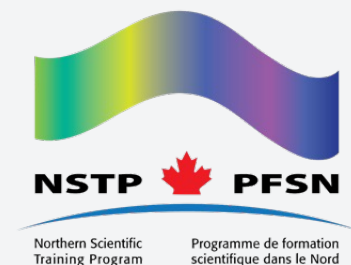
University of Alberta Kule Institute for Advanced Scholarship

Institute of Prairie and Indigenous Archaeology

The Northern Scientific Training Program (Polar Knowledge Canada)

University of Alberta Department of Anthropology

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KIAS | Kule Institute
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INDIGENOUS ARCHAEOLOGY

DOLL PATTERN

Pattern created by Mary Zoe-Chocolate based
on the dolls of Mary Rose Charlo.



The image displays five pattern pieces for a doll parka against a background of diagonal stripes in blue, pink, and yellow. The pieces are: a large 'Parka Front Side' piece in blue on the left; a 'Parka Pocket' piece in blue on the right; two 'Parka Front Fringes' pieces in pink, positioned below the pocket; and a 'Parka Back Fringes' piece in yellow at the bottom right. Each piece is outlined in black and labeled with its name.

Parka
Front Side

Parka
Pocket

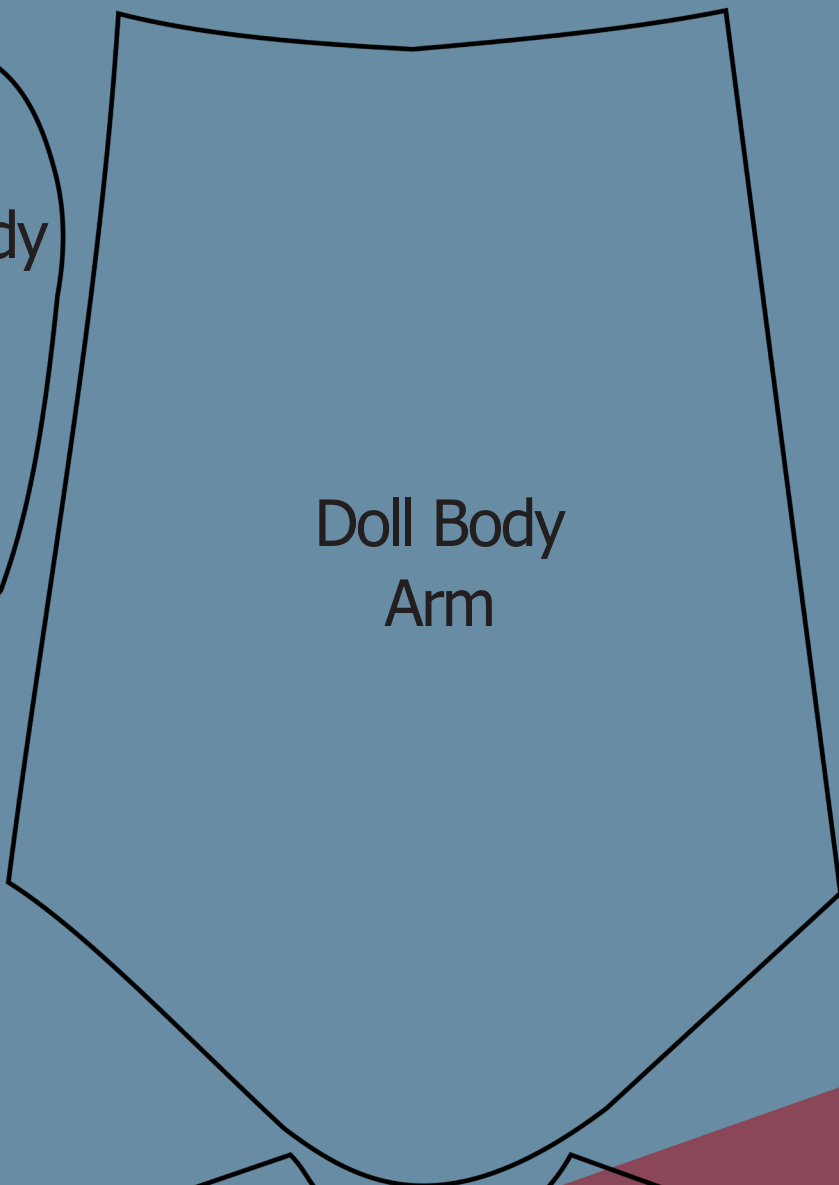
Parka
Front Fringes

Parka
Front Fringes

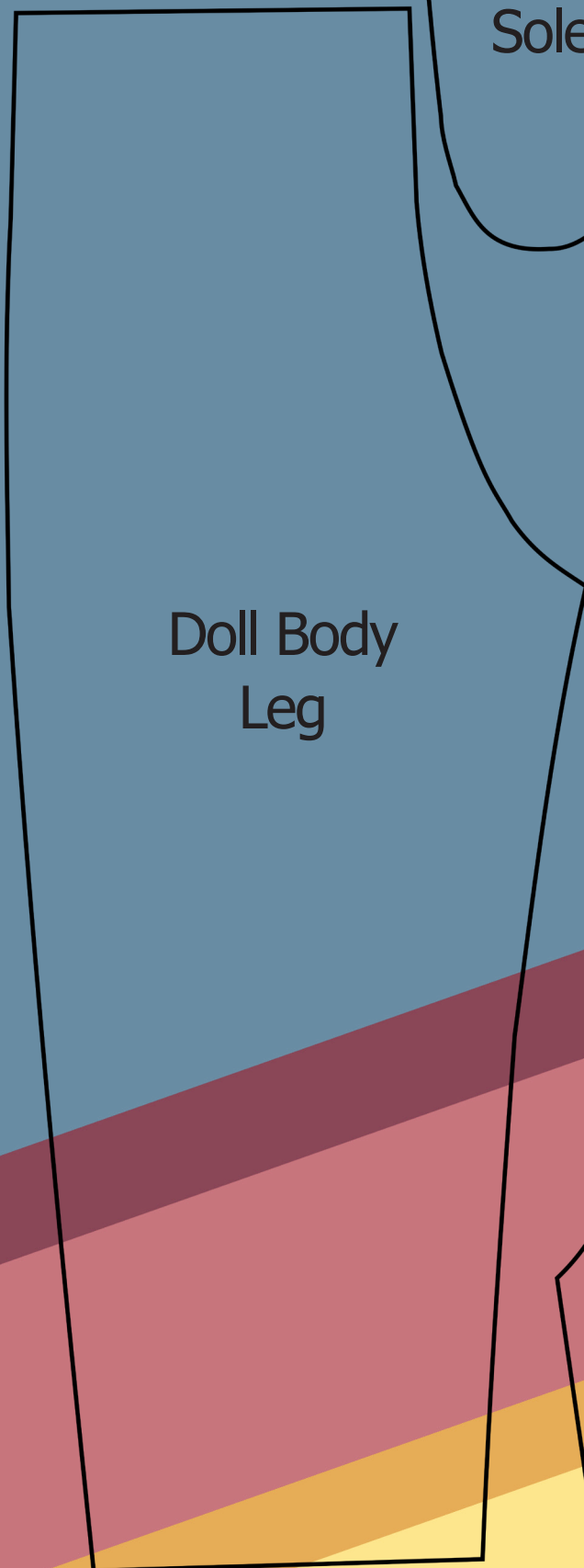
Parka
Back Fringes



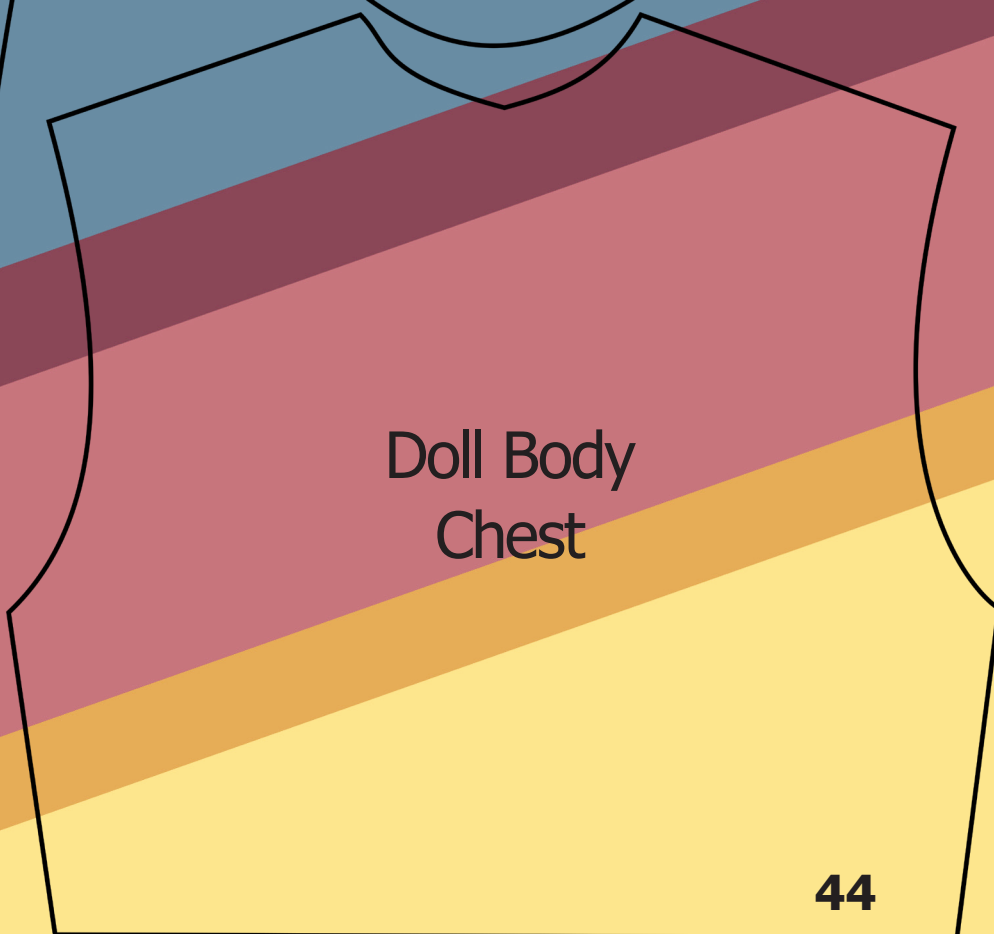
Doll Body
Foot
Sole



Doll Body
Arm



Doll Body
Leg



Doll Body
Chest

Mukluk/Slipper
Vamps

Parka
Back

Top

Parka
Hood

Bottom

Mitts
Palms

Mitts
Back

Mitts
Front

Mukluk/
Slipper
Wrap around

Mukluk/
Slipper
Upper

Fold

Parka
Hood



Front side ---->

Fold

Inseam

Pants



Inseam

Fold

50



Tłichq Cultural Commons Research Series

This series was inspired by our conversations with Tłichq Elders during the first sharing circle of the Tłichq Cultural Commons Archival Research Project.

At this circle, Mike Nitsiza (Whatì), spoke of how he has begun to use booklets to share stories and teachings and how it is a great way to get people excited about these things. Alphonse Apples (Gamètì) also stressed the importance of documenting knowledge, and he too suggested the use of booklets to communicate our work and Tłichq knowledge to the next generations.

With this series, we hope to showcase our research process and the stories that we are so lucky to hear from Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and community members throughout the Tłichq Cultural Commons Archival Research Project.

Whaèhdqò godì t'à hoghasàehtqò masì naxiewq!

Whaèhdqò Kò
Tłichq Nàowòò
Deghats' etsaa



Tłichq
Archives
and Museum