

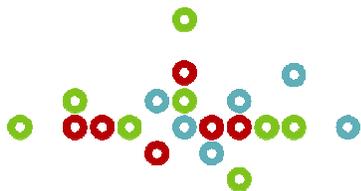
Little War on the Prairie:

A Report on MPR's 2012 Project Supported by the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund

September 24, 2012 – December 31, 2012



Chief Arvol Looking Horse of the Cheyenne River Reservation



**MINNESOTA
PUBLIC RADIO®**



Grant Overview

In 2008, Minnesota's voters passed the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment (Legacy Amendment) to the Minnesota Constitution. The amendment created four funds, one of which is the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund (ACHF). The ACHF receives 19.75 percent of the sales tax revenue resulting from the Legacy amendment **to support arts, arts education and arts access, and to preserve Minnesota's history and cultural heritage.**

Minnesota Public Radio (MPR) is a recipient of ACHF funding. Each January, MPR is required to submit an annual report to the Legislature detailing its ACHF activities and expenditures. This report covers MPR's programs and projects conducted in calendar year 2012 and supported by the following ACHF grants from the Sesquicentennial Commemoration Public Radio Grants Program (Minnesota Laws, 2012, Chapter 264, Article 5, Section 5): Fiscal Year 2012 (September 24, 2012 – December 31, 2012) – \$7,332.64

MPR was awarded up to \$15,000 through the grant process, but because of the differences in the content production timeline and the grant application timeline, not all the project expenses were eligible for ACHF funding. MPR covered all project costs from June 2012 through the start of the grant period in September, resulting in a lowered overall recognition of ACHF funds from the original application.



Third graders from Mankato area schools participate in a Dakota round dance at the 40th annual Mankato Wacipi (Mankato Pow Wow)

To alleviate printing costs, this report will be submitted online and available at MPR's website (<http://minnesota.publicradio.org/about/mpr/legacy-amendment-projects/>). The estimated cost of preparing this report (as required by Minn. Stat. § 3.197) is \$84.00.



A Dakota dancer at the annual Mahkato Wacipi (Mankato Pow Wow) in Mankato, MN

Little War on the Prairie, an hour long piece of reporting for on-air broadcast and online distribution with professional photography, tells the story of an episode that is poorly understood by most Minnesotans but is arguably the defining event in the state's history: the U.S.-Dakota War.

Long known as the "Sioux Uprising," the bloody 36-day war raged up and down the Minnesota River Valley, claimed hundreds of lives (perhaps thousands in its aftermath, including the forcible banishment of the Dakota people from the state), and culminated in the largest mass execution in U.S. history. On December 26th, 1862, 38 Dakota warriors were hanged in Mankato with 4,000 eager spectators looking on. The war, and the longer process of Indian removal that the war essentially completed, cleared the ground for the Minnesota that we know today.

150 years later, John Biewen, who grew up in Mankato, took listeners on a journey into the

events of 1862: a vivid, scene-based telling of what happened and why. The program explored the evolving way in which Minnesotans have told the story of the U.S.-Dakota War—or, just as often, have mis-told or forgotten it.

Biewen grew up hearing next to nothing about events that shaped the place in which he was raised. Only well into adulthood did he get interested in 1862, and only through researching



John Biewen and Gwen Westerman

this documentary did he learn the facts in any detail. One recurring question: Why do Minnesotans know so little, and seemingly care even less, about their own dramatic civil war? (One answer, offered by Biewen's father, a retired schoolteacher: "Maybe because we won.")

The last segment of the program explored the history of the history. In the first years after 1862, Minnesotans celebrated in triumphalist terms the subduing of the "savage" Dakota, rarely explaining the "uprising" in its full context of broken treaties, insults, and starvation. In the second half of the 20th century, amid heightened consciousness about the nation's racial sins, Minnesotans found little reason to talk about the U.S.-Dakota War at all. Only in recent decades have scholars, journalists, state historians—and at least some schoolteachers—begun to tell a relatively full and balanced story.

Still, if you ask the average Minnesotan today, even in the Minnesota River Valley, about the War of 1862, you're likely to get an uninformed shrug. The history is uncomfortable, deeply at odds with the standard tale of peaceful settlement by Scandinavian and German settlers. It is uncomfortable not only for white Minnesotans but also for Dakota people, who voice well-founded complaints about the treatment of their ancestors but struggle to justify the slaughter of hundreds of white settlers by rampaging Dakota warriors. The Dakota people were deeply divided about the war in 1862 and they remain so today.

Little War on the Prairie was broadcast twice on December 11th, 2012, and told a fair, rounded story, one aimed at sparking long-overdue dialogue among Minnesotans of all backgrounds.



Drummers in Pipestone, Minn. Celebrate homecoming to Minnesota after 150 years of exile.

Online Resources



Shelby Childs, 9, of Red Wing plays inside a tipi at the Legacy of Survival event

Beyond the on-air feature, ACHF funding helped Minnesotans experience the history, legacy and discussion about the U.S.-Dakota War through dedicated online resources on the MPR website. The website extends the reach and lifespan of the project by featuring the archived audio from Biewen's reporting.

As a further resource for listeners and teachers, the website provides a collection of other online and on-air reporting by MPR on the U.S.-Dakota war, including coverage of the more than 250 people who crossed from South Dakota into Minnesota in August to respond to the event 150 years previous that had seen the many Dakota exiled from the state; and an interview with Stanley Crooks, chairman of the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux community about the

divisions within his band surrounding the attacks in 1862.

To offer context to the audio resources, MPR has also posted maps of the conflict, a reading list of books written by experts in the field, and links to additional web resources by academic and historical society sources.

Perhaps most engaging, however, are the photo displays posted online. These slideshows give context to the on-air materials while placing the events with real people in real places. The photos for this report are taken from that display.

The website serves additionally as an educational resource for teachers and individuals who are looking to explore this complicated time in Minnesota's history.

Education Outreach



Sixth grade students in North Mankato participate in a class discussion on the U.S.-Dakota War of 1862

Following the broadcast of the radio story, MPR produced and hosted an hour-long web event for educators to convene and explore ways to integrate the materials into the classroom. The

format featured a live stream of a hosted panel of content experts on the subject of the U.S.-Dakota War:

John Biewen is audio program director at the Center for Documentary Studies at Duke University, and a former Minnesota Public Radio reporter.

Curt Brown is a Star Tribune reporter who wrote the series “In the footsteps of Little Crow: 150 years after the U.S.-Dakota War” which was also turned into an e-book.

Kate Beane is Flandreau Santee Dakota, and a PhD candidate in American studies at UMN Twin Cities. She is a graduate instructor at UMN and also serves as adjunct faculty teaching Dakota Culture and History at Minneapolis Community and Technical College in downtown Minneapolis.

The panel was moderated by the News Director of MPR News, Mike Edgerly. The theme of the conversation focused on what students should

know about the conflict, and what are resources to help teachers teach the story, which is a

requirement in the 6th grade education standards for Minnesota.

During the live conversation, a panel of guest writers led participating educators in a discussion around the topic area, fielding questions for panelists and adding insights. That panel was made up of educators from around the region, including Roxanne Gould from Augsburg College, Mathew Larkey and Michael Heurth from Minneapolis Public Schools, Jason Bessette from the St. Paul American Indian Magnet School, and Dawn Quigley from Forest Lake Indian Education.

The event was open to the public, but outreach for participation focused on classroom teachers via Indian Education lists, educator email lists, and partnership outreach. 41 participants, the

majority being classroom teachers, engaged the panel members and followed the discussion.

Participants reported that the panel was helpful to not only understanding the material, but in connecting with peers on strategies to integrate the information into their classroom instruction. "I did hear that there are standards which are supposed to be taught but aren't, and it made me think why," responded one educator. Another educator reacted to "a comment [guest expert] Kate [Beane] made [that] really stuck with me and I think it needs to be repeated and remembered by all venues discussing and teaching the U.S.-Dakota War of 1862: 'Dakota history is much longer than the war.' As an educator of middle school Dakota children, I need to facilitate a discussion on how the war continues today."



Tayo'Jo Boyd, 6, of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, dances at the Mankato Pow Wow

Partnerships



Julian Boucher of the Lake Traverse Reservation, and Chief Arvol Looking Horse of the Cheyenne River Reservation

This project will be produced on contract by John Biewen, an audio producer and native of Mankato, Minnesota. Biewen began his award-winning career in the 1980's covering agriculture and rural issues for MPR. Biewen, now an independent radio producer, partnered with Gwen Westerman, a professor at Minnesota State-Mankato and a Dakota member with blood ties to multiple participants in the events of 1862. Visiting the sites of key events and battles, Biewen and Westerman were assisted in the telling by historians and

voiceovers of first-person accounts (from white and Dakota witnesses) recorded in the decades after the war.

The education efforts were made in partnership with multiple Minnesota school districts, including Minneapolis, St. Paul, and Mankato. The connections made with educators will be explored by MPR on an ongoing basis with the creation of an Educators Advisory Panel that would explore additional topics for similar projects in the future.

Project Overview

Project Name: *Little War on the Prairie*
Project Start-End Dates: September 24 – December 31, 2012

Listenership Information: Because of the delay in data processing, we do not yet have the data yet for that day, but we can provide an average that is representative of the audience to those times on an average Tuesday during the broadcast times. For 12+ statewide listeners who tune in Tuesdays from Noon-1pm or 7-8pm, we expect about 70,000 people heard the broadcast.

Number of Broadcasting Stations: 23

FTE's: 0.03

Measurable Outcomes:

- 1 hour-long radio documentary broadcast on-air (x2)
- Website created with photography and additional informational resources
- Education event to promote usage of materials and information in classrooms

BUDGET

Production - \$4,355.88
Promotion/Educator Outreach - \$2,353.12
Social Media/Educator Outreach - \$623.65

*All photos by Caroline Yang



Chief Arvol Looking Horse, of the Cheyenne River Reservation, leads the Dakota Wokiksuye Walk to Minnesota

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