

Submission to Anishinabek News – December 2010

By Shawn Jeffords

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Ipperwash cleanup under way

KETTLE AND STONY POINT FN – A homegrown team of First Nations ordnance technicians will help clean up the dangerous grounds of Camp Ipperwash.

The class of 15 citizens of the Chippewas of Kettle and Stony Point First Nation graduated from an Unexploded Ordnance Level 1 Technician course Monday. The rare certification allows the team members to help clean up the camp and speed its return to their band, said Chief Liz Cloud.

"Some of the members are direct descendants of the original Stony Point peoples; they will now be able to help clean up their ancestral lands," she said.

The six week course was taught by a team from AMEC Earth and Environmental, with help from the University of New Brunswick. Students spent 200 hours in the classroom and at the army camp doing hands on work like safely exploding old ordnance.

Stoney Point Reserve land was expropriated in 1942 during the Second World War by the federal government, which promised to return it two years after the war ended. It remains government land but is occupied by members of the band. The base was used to train soldiers how to use weapons like bazookas, grenades and rifles.

"There's still a lot of garbage out there," Cloud said. "We had a shell wash up on the beach at Port Franks in the summer and there was another found in a tree in the park a few weeks ago."

Cloud said half of the camp has been surveyed and early indications are that it could take between 10 to 15 years and millions of dollars to fully remediate the park.

The band is still in negotiations with the federal government over its return. They hope to have a plan in place by March 2012, she said.