



MICHAEL PURVIS Sault Star

The cemetery at the former Shingwauk Indian residential school is pictured on Monday in Sault Ste. Marie. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission will name Shingwauk Hall, the site's chapel, and the cemetery national memorials next month.

## Memorial site for forgotten children

MICHAEL PURVIS  
The Sault Star

A story Mike Cachagee heard in northwestern Ontario a number of years ago has always stuck with the 73-year-old residential school survivor.

Cachagee was with a group of people talking about their experiences with Indian residential schools, when one man told how he hid in the bush as a child and watched, one Sunday, as a float plane took the children away from his small remote community to residential school.

One of those children on the plane was the man's brother.

"He said all he can recall is watching the plane take off and watching it and watching it and watching it until it disappeared. It was a little speck, and then 'poof,' he couldn't see it anymore," said Cachagee.

It was the last time the man saw his brother, who would later die at residential school.

**“At least there is someplace in Canada that will recognize (the children who didn't go home), that will be a lasting memorial for them.”**

*Mike Cachagee, residential school survivor*

"How many times has that happened across the country?" said Cachagee, a member of the Children of Shingwauk Alumni Association and one of those who helped found the organization.

It is for all those children, like that man's brother, who were spirited off to residential schools never to be seen by their families again, that Shingwauk Hall, its cemetery, and the Bishop Fauquier Memorial Chapel, will serve as a national memorial, following a dedication next month.

Commissioner Marie Wilson, of the residential schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, will dedicate the sites on Aug. 3, during a

Children of Shingwauk gathering and conference

As part of the memorial, the chapel will undergo a \$700,000 renovation over the next two years.

Somewhere between 100 and 150 children and staff are believed to have been buried at the Shingwauk residential school site, in a small cemetery in a wooded area a short walk east of Algoma University's Shingwauk Hall. However, family members have confirmed others are buried there as well.

It is not easy to do justice to the memories of those who have become known as "the forgotten children," said Cachagee.

"At least there is someplace in Canada that will recognize (the children who didn't go home), that will be a lasting memorial for them," said Cachagee.

The Children of Shingwauk's eighth annual commemorative gathering will run Aug. 3-6. For the first time, the group will also host a conference at the same time.

Cachagee said the conference marks a transitional period. He said survivors, those who spent time at Indian residential schools, are "getting up there," but their children and their grandchildren are increasingly delving into the lasting effects of residential schools.

"They're starting to look at a lot of the negative impacts of what happened, how to deal with them," said Cachagee.

"There has been a lot of social breakdown as a result of people being raised with no family."