

Iris Vitt née Walters (b. 1931)

Iris Vitt is a participating artist in the *Walking With Our Sisters* project. *Walking With Our Sisters* is an installation art project of 1,700 pairs of moccasin tops or “vamps” commemorating and representing an estimated 824 Aboriginal women and girls who have been murdered or gone missing in Canada since 1961.



Moccasin Vamps created by Iris Vitt for *Walking with Our Sisters*.

Métis historian and Elder Iris Vitt lives in Selkirk Manitoba. Iris is the daughter of Frank Walters (b. 1898) and Minnie Foord (b. 1911). Iris is a Métis genealogist and historian who is preserving her father’s studies and research on the Bungi language of the Métis. She has also donated considerable historical material to the Red River local in Selkirk, Manitoba.

Frank Walters was a Métis historian and cultural preservationist with a particular interest in the Bungee (Bungi) language of his wife’s family. This language was spoken by the so-called Orkney-Cree Half Breeds who lived in the parishes along the Red River north of the Forks and up to Lake Winnipeg. It was the language of his wife’s grandparents and great-grandparents. Frank Walter’s best known article on the Bungi language is “Red River Dialects: Bungee as She is Spoke,” which appears in his book *Pieces of the Past*, Winnipeg: Bindery Publishing House, 1993: 68-71. This book contains many anecdotes and historical vignettes from the St. Andrews parish of Manitoba. It is an update of:

Walters, Frank J., *Pieces of the Past: A Collection of Tales of Old Red River*. West Selkirk, Man: F.J. Walters, c1989.

At the time the book was written, it was estimated that less than 200 people were able to understand, explain, or write Bungee. Previously, Frank had published his Bungee article in the journal of the Red River Historical Society. Frank spent his later years telling his stories to classes of children in the Lord Selkirk School Division.

Walters, Frank J. "Bungee As She Is Spoke." *Red River Valley Historian and History News. The Quarterly Journal of the Red River Valley Historical Society*, 3 (4), 1969–1970: 68-70.



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