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# Elizabeth Fry Society of Saskatchewan

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~ Celebrating 25 years of service ~

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*A*s 2006 marks the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Elizabeth Fry Society of Saskatchewan I found myself looking through the Society's archives. Twenty-five years gave me pause to think about the: who, what, where and why of the Elizabeth Fry Society of Saskatchewan.

Elizabeth Fry, an English Quaker woman was appalled by the conditions of the prison and prisoners on her first visit to Newgate prison in 1812. It was then that Elizabeth decided to dedicate herself to educating prison officials and the public about the needs of women in prison, emphasizing that the needs of women prisoners were different from those of men. In 1818, she appeared before the Parliamentary Committee advocating for prison reforms considered revolutionary in her time. Her persistence led to the adoption of many reforms, setting the standard for prison reform. Elizabeth was passionate and compassionate, believing that all people have a 'divine light'.

There are now 25 Elizabeth Fry Societies across Canada with the first Canadian Society being founded in Vancouver in 1939. The Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies (CAEFS), our national umbrella organization, was officially incorporated in October 1978.

The Elizabeth Fry Society of Saskatchewan, initiated by a small but fierce group of Saskatoon women, and incorporated in 1981, were concerned about the particular treatment of, and programming for, females in conflict with the law or who were already incarcerated in Saskatchewan. This group's focus was the, 'unique experiences of women in conflict with the law, to identify specific problems associated with those experiences and examine vehicles through which these problems might be mitigated'.

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Early concerns included:

- an increase in the number of females of all ages being processed through the courts and, subsequently incarcerated
- the shortage of service delivery programs for women in conflict with the law, in particular community based services and programs oriented towards women in conflict with the law
- the lack of community awareness concerning the needs and problems of women in conflict with the law.

As I read about the beginnings of the organization it came to me that there have been many changes over the years of which the Elizabeth Fry Society of Saskatchewan has been a part, and these changes have impacted upon women prisoners. Over the past 25 years there has been a flurry of activity around women prisoners by different Elizabeth Fry Societies, other justice seeking organizations and various levels of government. To name a few: Royal Commissions, Advisory Committees, the Arbour Commission, Creating Choices, Human Rights Complaints and addresses to the United Nations.

With each inquiry, commission or complaint comes changes; some insignificant, others unintentional, and some very substantial. As I perused the archives, the 25 years of struggles began to take a circular shape from 1981 to 2006.

The thread of advocacy weaves through the 25 years, embracing and supporting women prisoners. The circle embodies the toil and as well as the tenacity of the women who have volunteered and worked for E Fry and the courage of those women who have shared their lived experience of being criminalized. The circle is illuminated by the light of those who have engaged and continue to engage in the struggle.

There is still a dark space within the circle. Social conditions contributing to the criminalization of women remain the same or are worse than in 1981 and include poverty, racism, marginalization and disenfranchisement. Women are the fastest growing prison population and aboriginal women in prison remain at an alarmingly high level with their presence in maximum and segregation units being still highly disproportionate. Also the criminalization of women with mental health and addiction issues seems pervasive.

Kim Pate, Executive Director of CAEFS in, The International Response to Poverty, Abuse and Mental Illness

*'Crime is a theory.*

*Name any behaviour and we will be able to identify times when it is considered legal and times when it is not. Law and criminalization are theories and choices made by those who we give, as well as those who take, power.*

*Who among us does not already acknowledge that jails are not the shelters battered women need, that they are not treatment centres, that they are not an appropriate substitution for adequate and affordable housing, education or skill development. We know who is and is not in prison – with few exceptions (mostly involving women of course) the wealthy and most privileged are not jailed. Crime is a theory defined, monitored and enforced for specific identifiable purposes.'*

Now governments of all persuasions and levels are embracing the language of 'get tough on crime'. The latest being the changes intended to keep prisoners that have committed 'particular' crimes to warrant expiry (keep them incarcerated until the end of their sentence) and the

imposition of minimum sentences. This is a political easy sell, bought at the cost of ignoring the experience of the last several decades that shows the rates of crime are dropping, that mandatory minimum sentences, where individual circumstances are not considered, are irrational, and keeping people inside until warrant expiry is the least desirable alternative. Releasing a prisoner at warrant expiry leaves them with little or no social supports by which to reacquaint themselves with the community, gather support for themselves, and gradually and safely integrate into the community.

The task appears to be clear for the next 25 years and it is the same task envisioned by those creative and courageous women who started the Elizabeth Fry Society of Saskatchewan 25 years ago.

We give tribute to the first 25 years of Elizabeth Fry Society women who have believed, struggled, triumphed and continued on through challenging and daunting times.

The next 25 years will see the Elizabeth Fry Society of Saskatchewan remain vigilant in our intent to de-institutionalize women who are criminalized, seek community solutions, advocate for social change, eradicate the conditions that lead to criminalization, and insist on maintaining the dignity and human rights of all women.

The darkest places have been illuminated by compassion and action.

- Caroleen Wright  
Executive Director

*'If you have come here to help me, you are wasting our time. If you have come here because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together.'*  
- Lilla Watson

## Welcome ...

~ **Cindy Carbno**

The Society would like to welcome Cindy back from her maternity leave and to introduce her as our new Residence Director. Cindy has been with the Society for eight years. She has been a Case Management Worker and Designate and brings to the position a wealth of experience and knowledge.

~ **Ailsa Watkinson**, Board Member

We welcome Ailsa back from her sabbatical in Australia. We've missed her energy and insight. We look forward to hearing about her adventures 'down under'.

## Farewell ...

~ **Gwen Gleason-Graham**, Residence Director  
We thank Gwen for her compassion and the professionalism she demonstrated during her short time with the Society. We wish her well in all her future endeavours.

~ **Regan Sloan**, Volunteer Coordinator  
We have appreciated Regan's hard work and dedication to the Society and our volunteers. She will be missed at our main office but we are pleased that she will be continuing on as a Casual Supervisor at our WCTR.





## Rebels With A Cause...

**Louise Halfe** – Louise was born in Two Hills, Alberta, raised on the Saddle Lake Indian Reserve and attended Blue Quills Residential School. Louise made her debut as a poet in 1990 writing in “*Writing the Circle: Native Women of Western Canada*”. In 1998 her book “*Blue Marrow*” was short listed for the Governor General’s award. Louise has travelled extensively doing readings and presentations of her work as well as conducting writing workshops. In January 2005, Louise was named Poet Laureate of Saskatchewan.

**Catherine Bohachik** – Going above and beyond, Cathy has been a strong advocate for justice as a lawyer in Northern Manitoba, Saskatchewan and for many years through Legal Aid in Saskatoon. She has worked tirelessly for the rights of her clients. As an Elizabeth Fry volunteer for many years, Cathy contributed energy, enthusiasm and compassion to the organization and was a creative force behind ‘Rebels With A Cause’.

**Anita Jackson** – Anita is a member of the La Ronge Indian Band and has lived her entire life in that community. She has a Bachelor’s Degree in Social Work and has completed the course work for a Master’s. She has been a fixture in the north as a Family Service Worker, worked in substance abuse programs and has been a Health Director for her Band. She is also an Emma Lake Fiddle Camp – Old Tyme Music junkie but is still working on her jigging skills.

**Natalie Keshane** – Natalie is from the Keeseekoose First Nation in south-eastern Saskatchewan. As a professional Medicine Wheel Counsellor for Building A Nation, she assists clientele with their case management and life skills to address such issues as; domestic violence, foster care, adoption, alcohol/drug addictions and residential school issues. She is a self-directed learner and has nurtured six children to happy and healthy lives as a single parent mom.

**Sylvie Roy** – Sylvie was born in Quebec and moved west in her early twenties. She has studied human nutrition, worked as a La Leche League leader, and home-schooled four children. Seeking to have women more informed, involved and in control of their own body and health care, she was instrumental in the legalization and funding of midwifery care in Saskatchewan. Her newest enterprise is to work to help develop a small community near Regina based on an organic, self-sustaining lifestyle with a vision of promoting ways of living more lightly in creation.

**Susan Saville** – Susan is the District Director of the John Howard Society in Saskatoon. In less than two years she has helped implement a high school outreach program, an enhanced assistance program for young offenders with cognitive disabilities, a transition home for youth at risk and an outreach vehicle service for hard-to-reach youth all of which she has managed to do with intelligence, wit, creativity and an ever-present smile. She is quick to implement ideas and Saskatoon has benefited greatly from the energy that she brings to her work.

**Melisa Schoeppler** – After surviving burns to 95% of her body, Melisa has chosen to make a difference by sharing her recovery journey with her community. By speaking in schools and to other assorted groups, she has found a way to empower others by sharing her story of survival and the life lessons she has learned on her journey of recovery and healing.

**Ernestine Starr** – In 2005, Ernestine retired from the Department of Community Resources after 35 years of service, where she had been instrumental in bringing the plight of those most vulnerable in our society to the fore front, as well as bringing solutions and insight into their everyday situations. Ernestine was a mentor to staff, a friend to clients and staff alike and always willing to share of herself and her resources.

*A rebel without a cause may be seen as naïve – a cause without a rebel on the other hand, may be seen as a cause no one is willing to risk confronting.*

*~ Phillippos*



# The Elizabeth Fry Society

Invites you to our 4th Annual *Fundraiser* ...

## ~ *Rebels With A Cause* ~

Wednesday, May 3

Odeon Events Centre - Theatre  
241 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue South

*Guest Rebel:* Louise Halfe

~ Poet Laureate of Saskatchewan

- 2006 Rebels -

Catherine Bohachik

Anita Jackson

Natalie Keshane

Sylvie Roy

Susan Saville

Melisa Schoeppler

Ernestine Starr

▪ Cocktails and Silent Auction 5:30 pm

▪ Greek Buffet 6:30 pm

▪ Celebration 8:00 pm

*Entertainment by:*

**Brewster & the Roosters**

*Have your picture taken on our motorcycle!*

ADVANCE TICKETS ONLY

**\$35.00** (with a \$15.00 tax receipt)

*For tickets call: Sharon at 934-4606*

▪ Rebel attire is encouraged  
but not mandatory ▪

- Celebrating 25 years in Saskatchewan -



# Annual General Meeting

Elizabeth Fry Society  
of Saskatchewan

Thursday, June 22, 2006  
5:30pm

The Refinery  
609 Dufferin Avenue

♦ Refreshments will be served ♦

Everyone welcome

For more information call 934-4606

# I AM METH

I destroy homes, I tear families apart,  
I take your children and that's just the start.

I'm more costly than diamonds, more precious than  
gold,  
The sorrow I bring is a sight to behold.

If you need me, remember I'm easily found,  
I live all around you in schools and in town.

I live with the rich, I live with the poor,  
I live down the street, and maybe next door.

I'm made in a lab, but not like you think,  
I can be made under the kitchen sink.

In your child's closet, and even in the woods,  
If this scares you to death, well it certainly should.

I have many names but there's one you know best,  
I'm sure you've heard of me, my name is crystal  
meth.

My power is awesome, try me you'll see.  
But if you do, you may never break free.

Just try me once and I might let you go,  
But try me twice, and I'll own your soul.

When I possess you, you'll steal and you'll lie,  
You do what you have to, just to get high.

The crimes you'll commit for my narcotic charms,  
Will be worth the pleasure you'll feel in your arms.

You'll lie to your mother, you'll steal from your  
dad,  
When you see their tears, you should feel sad.

But you'll forget your morals and how you were  
raised,  
I'll be your conscience, I'll teach you my ways.

I take kids from parents and parents from kids,  
I turn people from God and separate friends.

I'll take everything from you, your looks and your  
pride,  
I'll be with you always right by your side.

You'll give up everything, your family, your home,  
Your friends, your money, then you'll be alone.

I'll take and take, till you have nothing more to  
give,  
When I'm finished with you, you'll be lucky to live.

If you try me be warned, this is no game,  
If given the chance, I'll drive you insane.

I'll ravish your body, I'll control your mind,  
I'll own you completely, your soul will be mine.

The nightmares I'll give you while lying in bed,  
The voices you'll hear from inside your head.

The sweats, the shakes, the visions you'll see,  
I want you to know, these are all gifts from me.

But then it's too late and you'll know in your heart,  
That you are mine and we shall not part.

You'll regret that you tried me, they always do,  
But you came to me, not I to you.

You knew this would happen, many times you were  
told,  
But you challenged my power and chose to be bold.

You could have said no and just walked away,  
If you could live that day over, now what would  
you say?

I'll be your master, you will be my slave,  
I'll even go with you when you go to your grave.

Now that you have met me, what will you do,  
Will you try me or not? It's all up to you.

I can bring you more misery than words can tell,  
Come take my hand, let me lead you to hell.

~ author unknown

# Thank You . . .

to those who have made donations to the Society during the year.

St. Martin's United Church Women ~ St. Thomas More College  
D. Hudson ~ S. Handley ~ L. Newson ~ F. McLean  
G. Brown ~ K. Peterson ~ C. den Hollander  
All Saints Anglican Church

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**Thank you** to the following who helped to make Christmas a special time for our clients and their families:



N. Poon  
Kelly Coin Ltd.

M. Roy  
L. Samuelson

CFCR  
Saskatoon Co-op

*And ...*

To those who made donations at our annual Christmas Open House held at the Women's Community Training Residence.

**A** special thank you goes out to the staff and customers of the Saskatoon Fabutan studios for their generous support at Christmas for the women we work with.

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**SPECIAL THANK YOU TO:** Brenda McCarty who donated a fridge to our Women's Community Training Residence.



SIGA for their generous sponsorship of leisure cards for the women and children at our Women's Community Training Residence.



# MEMBERS WANTED

Members and volunteers are the bricks and mortar of every non-profit agency. Over the past several years our membership has dwindled. We know reversing this alarming trend is imperative. Issues for women in conflict with the law continue in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

- ⇒ Services and programs for women are still inadequate
- ⇒ Women's prisons are filled to capacity
- ⇒ Money for community release options is lacking

The Elizabeth Fry Society of Saskatchewan is the only agency in the province to:

- ✓ Provide support and services to federally incarcerated women
- ✓ Operate the only halfway house for women in our province
- ✓ Advocate on behalf of criminalized women at a national level.

For Twenty-five years we have been a support for women across the province. Now we are asking for your support. Become a member and help strengthen our organization. Your membership provides you with voting privileges at our Annual General Meeting, and copies of our newsletters, keeping you up to date on issues concerning women and the criminal justice system.

## Membership Application

<input type="radio"/> Under/unemployed	\$ 5
<input type="radio"/> Individual	\$10
<input type="radio"/> Organization	\$25

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to support the Elizabeth Fry Society of Saskatchewan  
with a donation.

\_\_\_\$10    \_\_\_\$25    \_\_\_\$50    \_\_\_\$100    \_\_\_other

Please make cheques payable to:  
The Elizabeth Fry Society of Saskatchewan  
201, 165 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue South    Saskatoon, SK    S7K 1L8

**Board of Directors**

Merla Dyck	Member
Connie Lupichuk	Member
Nancy Poon	Co-Chair
Elizabeth Smith	Co-Chair
Ailsa Watkinson	CAEFS President
Linda Wood	Member
Joanne Ure	Treasurer
Caroleen Wright	Executive Director

**Funders/Donors**

Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies  
 City of Saskatoon  
 JBL Charitable Foundation Inc.  
 Saskatchewan Law Foundation  
 Saskatchewan Literacy Network  
 SIGA  
 Proud member of the Saskatoon United Way

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The Elizabeth Fry Society has earned revenue by providing services for Saskatchewan Justice and Correctional Services Canada. Our fund-raising activities, your memberships and charitable donations also assist us in continuing to provide programs and services for women at risk.

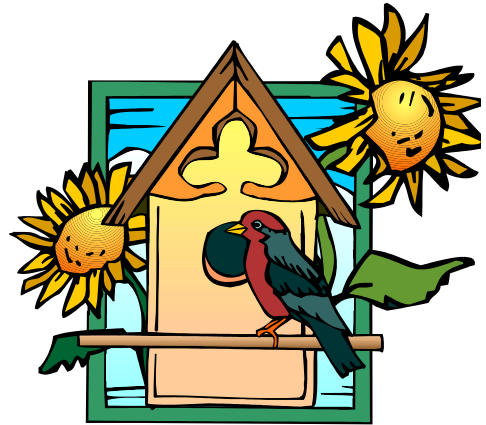
**The Elizabeth Fry Society of Saskatchewan  
and Amalgamated Charities Inc...**

*working together to raise funds for the Society*

**Upcoming Bingo dates are:**

- Friday, Apr 21st, 12:00 noon to 6:00 p.m.
- Friday, May 5th, 12:00 noon to 6:00 p.m.
- Friday, May 26th, 12:00 noon to 6:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, May 31st, 12:00 noon to 6:00 p.m.

Bingo revenue is used to maintain the Elizabeth Fry Society's office, print our newsletters and accept collect calls from women in crisis and women in prison, where phone systems permit collect calls only.



***Mission Statement***

The Elizabeth Fry Society of Saskatchewan is committed to working with women in conflict with the law. Recognizing unique problems derived from their position in society, we strive to provide programs and services which ensure fair treatment and encourage an end to recidivism. We support humane solutions occurring within and from the community.

**Contact us at:**

Elizabeth Fry Society of Saskatchewan  
 201, 165 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue South  
 Saskatoon SK S7K 1L8

Phone: (306) 934-4606  
 Fax: (306) 652-2933  
 E-mail: [efry@sasktel.net](mailto:efry@sasktel.net)  
 Web: [elizabethfrysask.org](http://elizabethfrysask.org)

