

Tom Longboat

And there is the old residential school building, an imposing relic of the days, not so very long ago, when it was the accepted thing to teach native children that their own culture was worthless.

One of the students was Tom Longboat, who would achieve worldwide fame as a long distance runner. One of his sons told me some years ago that his father had been physically punished at the school for the offence of speaking in his Mohawk tongue. Tom Longboat's response was swift and appropriate: he ran away from the school, never to return.