HIGHLIGHTS:

- Mr. Kapoeze was born on the Ochapawace Reserve in 1902.
  Attended residential school.
- Story of the animal world before humans existed.
- Tales of Wisakedjak.
- Flood and creation myths. The creation myth is an interesting blend of Indian and Christian stories.

Long ago there were many in the camps but only one chief.

The chief knew the Great Skunk was going to be on the warpath and so he told those in the camps that the Great Skunk would be coming in human form. And the chief asked who would investigate the Great Skunk. They talked amongst themselves and finally the Weasel said, "I'll go," and the mouse said, "I'll go with him." The chief said, "How will you go near the Great Skunk without him knowing you?" The Weasel answered, "We'll go through under the snow and when we come out we will end up right in the middle, between his feet." "Good," said the chief, "and in the meantime, we will run and hide because if he comes here and farts once he'll kill all of us in the
The snow was beginning to melt and it was warmer on the side where the Great Skunk was walking, the side where there were many trees; and the Weasel and the Mouse were able to come out of the snow right in the middle of his feet.

The Great Skunk stopped and he made a fire to dry himself and took off his moccasins and looked into the fire and saw something in it that made him suspicious. He slowly began to realize that the chief of the camps knew he was coming and didn't want anyone to get hurt by the Great Skunk. So he put his moccasins back on and slowly tracked the trail of the Weasel and the Mouse, even though it was hard to follow because they had gone back and forth and made it very difficult. And when he reached the camps, he found they had been moved. He tried to follow the tracks of those who had been in the camps but they all went in different directions. And then he found one track in the distance and he followed that one.

Two old ladies were walking slowly, one with a baby girl on her back that faced backwards. "If you see anyone coming," said the lady to the little girl, "you tell me right away," and she walked on ahead, faster than the other older lady. Soon the older lady was left behind and the Great Skunk soon saw her and caught up to her and said, "Grandma, Grandma! Where are you going?" The old lady said, "The Great Skunk is on the warpath and has come in human form, and the chief has told us that if he farts all of us in the camps will be killed, and that is why all in the camps are running away."

Upon hearing this, the Great Skunk got mad and pretty fed up with this and put his tail up and farted and killed her right on the spot and said, "Crude old lady talked too much!" and he went on.

The other old lady with the little girl walked on and soon the girl said, "My Grandmother, someone is coming," and the old lady said, "We'll go up to that hill there. Tell if you see him when we get there." They walked as fast as they could and went over the hill and the girl said, "I don't see him now." Then the old lady lay down on the ground and told her grandchild not to move. "When he comes here, lay quiet. That's the only way to save our lives."

The Great Skunk was coming and they could hear his footsteps in the snow. And when he saw them he said, "My Grandma, my Grandma, she must be dead. I'll see what could have killed them." He looked them both over and felt their bodies all over to find a clue. He found a small wound and supposed that was the cause of death of them both and stretched them out and went on his way saying, "Oh, where will they go in this great big world?"

When he left, the old lady saw him walking down the hill and as she was not too old and had good strength, took a short cut to find those others from the camp. Soon she found them
trying to cross the frozen creek and told them the Great Skunk was coming.

They were very scared when they heard this and asked, "What will we do with him?"

Wolverine said, "I'll eat him up without making a sound," and the Lynx said, "I'll cut him up and kill him." Wolverine went down and cut a hole in the ice and put in some wooden poles, and the rest watched and wondered what he was up to.

Meanwhile the Great Skunk, still in human form, was now getting closer. "My brother-in-law, my brother-in-law," called out the fierce Wolverine. "You're not my brother-in-law," said the Skunk. "My brother-in-law, you don't remember me?" said the Wolverine. The Great Skunk thought for a moment before he answered, because he wasn't sure what the Wolverine was going to do and finally he said, "Sure, brother-in-law." "Look there," said the Wolverine, pointing to the ice-hole, "that is where you and I will hunt beaver together," and when the Great Big Skunk turned around, the Wolverine bit him on the mouth.

"I'm biting the Great Skunk on the mouth," said the Wolverine but the others who watched could not understand him as his mouth was biting the Great Skunk. And they listened closer as he repeated what he said. The Lynx was scared and taken with cramps (that's what he pretended) and climbed a tree nearby and fell off, and climbed up again and fell down again.

As Lynx did this, the Great Skunk managed to shout, "My brother-in-law, we were going to hunt beaver. Don't bite me." "You're not my brother-in-law," said the Wolverine, "you Big Skunk!" Lynx had fallen off the tree three times by now and when he climbed up the fourth time, he jumped on the Great Skunk and clawed him and cut him and bit him and killed him.

So the chief of the camps cut up the Great Big Skunk and when he was carved into little pieces he said, "From now on, you will be called skunk." And the little skunks went away from that place with their tails up in the air. Then the chief said to everyone, "Wolverine has saved the earth."

(This is like a legend but it's not. It is a story about this earth before any people lived here and this is what happened, and this was finally told to old men of people in dreams.)

Now Wolverine said, "I have a bad taste in my mouth and I don't feel good about it." "Yes, I know," said the Heavens. And when Wolverine rolled over, he was changed into Wisakedjik, and he felt good and began to sing his song about the Great Skunk, "I held onto his mouth."

The Wolf was going by with his 12 pups and heard the singing and he said, "What is he talking about, my children? It sounds like he is saying something important! Go and ask him to come and smoke with me; tell him your father said so." The youngest one of the pack stood up and his father, the Wolf,
said, "Gegekayoos," (which means Hairless Tail) "you go and meet him and tell him what I said and tell him I wish to know what he is singing about." So the pup Gegekayoos went to Wisakedjak and said, "Of what do you sing?" And Wisakedjak said, "The Great Big Skunk, I got him by the mouth. That's what I said." Gegekayoos said, "Thank you, thank you, now will you please come with me and I will take you to my father and you will sit with him and tell stories and smoke together and have a good life." And so they went to where the Wolf was, and after sitting together the father Wolf said, "Thank you, thank you, my brother, for our lives; if you hadn't done such a brave thing there would be nothing growing here now."

After having a good smoke, Wisakedjak said, "I think it's going to be pretty rough for me to live so I would like you to lend me my nephew to hunt for me." The Wolf said, "My way of life is also very hard, but if you want it that way my brother we will help you."

"I'll do whatever you say," said Wisakedjak to his brother and the Wolf sent his children away to hunt and kill meat. But they went and ate so many bush animals they all lay down and slept.

Wisakedjak finally tracked them down and found them all sleeping, too full to move. The old Wolf came with him and woke them up and said, "Get up and feed your uncle." Once again he called upon the youngest, Hairless Tail (Gegekayoos), to help his uncle, and the young wolf threw up his food right then and there. "I can't eat that awful sticky stuff," said Uncle Wisakedjak looking at that which his nephew had brought up from his stomach, and he turned his head away. But when he looked back it had changed to pemmican, and so he ate it all until there was nothing left and he was full. And away the wolves went again.

"Go and help your uncle to eat once more," yelled the old Wolf to his children.

And so, Wisakedjak tried to follow and keep up with them, and as he tracked them he remembered the old wolf's words, that this way of life was a hard way and then he heard the Wolf say, "Whatever you find while living in this way, keep it for yourself; it is yours."

They were now chasing big animals and they came upon a big cowshit on the ground. "Your nephew must have dropped this lovely fur here," said the old Wolf. "Take it for yourself to keep warm." "I don't want to take a big cowshit," thought Wisakedjak. And the Wolf said, "If you don't want it, I'll take it." When Wisakedjak looked around he saw the Wolf take it and it was a lovely cow fur, and he said to himself, "I should have kept that for myself and it would have kept me warm while I sleep."

They began tracking again and soon they found a tooth on a
tree and the Wolf said, "Take this for hunting." Wisakedjak said, "No, I don't want to take an old tooth." The Wolf said, "Your nephew left it here," and seeing that his brother Wisakedjak didn't want it, took it for himself, and it was some kind of good hunting knife. "I should have taken it," thought Wisakedjak, "I was wrong there too."

Away they went again and they came to a place where Hairless Tail had eaten plenty of meat and left just the bones. Old Wolf said, "(Gegekayoos) Hairless Tail, cook the bones and we will eat." The young one began chewing the bones, making much noise with his teeth and the wolf said to Wisakedjak, "Don't look at your nephew right now." But Wisakedjak peeked at his nephew as he was chewing and a piece of bone flew up and hit Wisakedjak in the eye and it hurt him. "Big brother, I guess you were looking at him," said Wolf, and Wisakedjak got mad and said, "No, I wasn't looking," and he said no more. Grease was made from the bones and then they all ate. After Wisakedjak's stomach was no longer upset, they continued on.

"Hairless Tail, find a good place for your uncle to sleep," said old Wolf, and they followed the young pup up a sharp hill and found him on the top, curled up, fast asleep. "It's very cold here," thought poor Wisakedjak, but Wolf said that he should lay down in the middle and all the wolves would sleep all around him. During the night it got very cold and Wolf told his children to cover Wisakedjak with their tails and they did and they kept their new uncle warm and he sweated and slept well. But a little later one of them farted, and it was terrible and Wisakedjak threw off the wolves tails and told them he didn't want to sleep like that. Now with nothing to cover him he was very cold again and he tried to sleep. Old Wolf told his children to cover him with their tails again because he knew his brother would catch cold and they all went to sleep.

In the morning they all went on their way again and when Hairless Tail killed a big animal, his uncle Wisakedjak said that he wanted to cook it this time. As he cooked and chewed he told the others not to look at him because he remembered what had happened to him before and didn't want any of them to get hit in the eye with a bone and get mad. The wolves lay down and waited but one wolf, who did the cooking before, lay close to Wisakedjak and so Wisakedjak hit him with a piece of bone on purpose. They blew their breath on him and brought him back to life and then started on their way again.

Soon the Wolf said, "Well, my brother, I think it is time for us to part. We can't go on this way forever. My way is a very hard living."

"One thing then," said Wisakedjak, "lend me one of my nephews." Wolf said, "Hairless Tail, you will be the one to go with your uncle."
So the two of them went away together and, in the foothills of the mountains, made a wooden lodge and stayed there. And Hairless Tail hunted and caught game easily and brought it back to the lodge and Wisakedjak skinned and cooked and made dry meat and they were happy.

With the coming of spring and then summer Wisakedjak was scared by a bad dream in which he saw his nephew, Hairless Tail, jump over a creek and fall into a very dark place. So one morning when the young wolf was leaving to hunt, Wisakedjak said, "Wait, Hairless Tail, my nephew, I had a bad dream and in it I saw you chasing something near the creek and go into a very dark place. Do not hunt near the creek."

So the young wolf went away and as he was chasing a big animal, like a moose, he wanted to kill it so badly that he didn't realize he was near the creek and a big bobcat jumped on him and killed him.

When night came and his nephew had not returned Wisakedjak worried and said, "Oh, my nephew is gone and has left me for good," and he walked around and cried for him in the night.

In the morning the Sun came up and spoke to Wisakedjak telling him that his nephew was killed by a big bobcat, and Wisakedjak asked the Sun and the Grass which way his nephew had gone. They gave him the right direction of the creek where he had told his nephew not to jump after game, and Wisakedjak went walking and crying until he came to a big lake near the creek.

"That is the shore where the bobcats come from," said the Sun. "When you shoot them, shoot at their shadows, not at them." But Wisakedjak didn't believe these words about shooting shadows.

When the bobcats appeared on the shore, Wisakedjak changed into a tree stump and they began to play around. A white bobcat refused to come ashore when the others asked him to and he told them that he heard Wisakedjak was nearby looking for his nephew and that was why he wouldn't come ashore. The others said, "Wisakedjak isn't here. We don't believe that at all."

So the white bobcat came ashore and joined in the game they were playing. When they got tired they went to sleep, and the white one slept close to the tree stump. In his mind, Wisakedjak heard the Sun telling him not to shoot right at the bobcats, but to shoot at their shadows, but Wisakedjak thought he wouldn't kill them if he did that. As the white bobcat slept sideways, Wisakedjak shot an arrow into the bobcat's elbow and missed him, and they all woke up and ran away.

Again the Sun spoke to him in his mind, saying, "I told you what to do and you didn't believe me!"
The next morning Wisakedjak wanted to kill the white bobcat and again the Sun reminded him of the right way to do it. And when the bobcats all went to sleep, Wisakedjak shot the shadow of the white bobcat, hit it and the bobcat went into the lake screaming and the water was red with blood.

At that moment Wisakedjak heard something coming. He heard the thumping of feet and the sound of a rattle and a voice singing a song, "I'm going doctoring, I'm going doctoring." It was the Big Frog and Wisakedjak asked, "Grandmother, where are you going?" "I'm going to see the chief of a nearby camp," said the Big Frog, "but I heard that Wisakedjak has killed the chief. Anyways, in that camp, one of my grandchildren is ill and I am going to take the sickness away as the child is in pain."

Wisakedjak listened and then suddenly hit Frog and killed him and skinned him and put the skin on and walked on singing, "I'm going doctoring, I'm going doctoring," carrying the rattle on his back, shaking it.

When he came to the camp he saw lots of tipis, with one tipi in the middle. "Open the door for Grandmother," said a young girl when she saw him approaching and then she led him saying, "This way my Grandmother." And all the while Wisakedjak sang, "I'm going doctoring."

When they reached the tipi, he turned to all the children who had gathered and said, "I am going to take out the sickness from my grandchild that causes much pain, so stay away for awhile until I have finished." And he went in and he was left alone with the sick one, and he began to rattle the rattle.

The young girl, who met him first, suspected this was not Grandmother and when she heard what was going on in the tipi she thought, "That is not the way Grandmother does it."

Soon the noise stopped inside the tipi and the others thought the sickness had been taken out. But when Wisakedjak said, "I have taken nothing out," and they saw the frogskin near the door they shouted that Wisakedjak had hit the child. So he ran fast away to the shore, and all the Underwater Manitou began to cry to one another.

Now the Sun told Wisakedjak, "With this axe, cut down all the trees that grow on this big foothill and make a big ark boat out of them."

When he finished, he found his dead nephew and blew his breath on him and brought him back to life. The Sun told him to stay there and his nephew stayed with him and soon many, many creatures of all kinds that run and fly came to the ark boat.

And then the Flood came, and all the Manitou cried because of the way the water was being used, and the ark floated around on the water.
And Wisakedjak thought, "A person can't live this way, a person that's going to live and grow! Where are they going to stay?"

He thought and thought and then he said, "I make the earth," and he threw a creature that could dive into the water but it drowned.

So he said to Muskrat, "You, little brother, must go down deep and get dirt." Muskrat went down three times and each time failed and on the fourth time came back. But he had drowned, and when Wisakedjak opened up the little fingers of Muskrat he found a little bit of dirt.

Then Wisakedjak blew and blew on the dirt and soon it was very big but he didn't know just how large it was, so he told his nephew to run around the earth and find out just how big it was.

The wolf ran around and when he returned, he said, "My uncle, it is too small, not enough for people to grow." So Wisakedjak blew again on the earth, this time in the four directions ending up in the east and said, "That's the best I can do."

"What now uncle?" said the nephew and Wisakedjak began to sing this song and all the creatures gathered around and listened.

(Song on the Tape)

Heaven and Earth thanked him for this and Wisakedjak was the first one to walk on the Earth as it is now.

There was dirt and darkness but no wind or air, and the Day and the Night began thinking that people could not live this way. So the Day said, "I will bring light and the people will say, 'Live'," and the Night said, "I'll bring darkness and the people will say, 'Sleep'."

Then God or Father said, "Do your best," and the Day came first and as it came up, He said, "It looks good." The four Thunderbirds were also thinking of the people and said, "The people can't grow yet. We will bring grass and people will call it grass."

"Do your best," said the Father and the clouds came from the south and the Thunderbird brought the thunder and the grass grew with all kinds of berries. "That is good," said the Father, "but there is still no wind." So the Winds said, "We will make wind so the people will have air to breathe," and they went in the four directions north, south, east and west.

Then the Creator said, "Now I'll make a human being. And He took some dirt and blew His breath on it and Man stood up and Father told him, "This is where you will stay."

But soon Man became lonely and began to cry. The Creator
saw this and said, "It is so bad that he is lonely. I'll make him a partner." And when Man had fallen asleep, the Father took a piece of Man's rib and blew His breath on it and made a woman.

They were both naked, this man and this woman, and Father said, "Man, you will stay the way you are and live like that." And then he said to the woman, "Woman, you will be different in your way, and you will feel different things, and each month you will be sick and feel pain when you give birth." And Man didn't like that and cried in sorrow, but Woman smiled and was happy and didn't mind. So Father said, "Then Woman, you will have that, but don't eat those berries. They are white and taste good, but don't eat them and you will always live forever."

But the woman misunderstood the words and thought that time was limited and so she started the life as we know it now by eating those berries. When she had eaten of those berries and told her husband, he asked her what he should do and she told him that she did not want to be alone and that if he too would eat those berries, they would be the same and not alone.

Then the Creator said, "I had put you here to live forever, but now you have eaten that which I told you to leave alone and so you will not live forever." (And that is why we suffer in so many ways on this earth because we earned that.)

The Manitous now asked, "Is there anything else of great importance that is needed here on this new earth?" The bears said, "We would like to be medicine-makers and take the medicines all over this world." One of the bears stayed here on this land and the other said he would swim the ocean and take medicines to the other far-away lands. And then he took a medicine bundle on his back and stepping on flat stones, so that he wouldn't sink in the mud, and reached the ocean. Halfway across he looked back but the Manitous told him to keep going and pointed the way. When he reached the shore he shook his body and the medicines flew off his back in all directions and he said, "This will help the people and they will live by it." The people were given everything and the law of the medicines was made.

In the meantime, now there were many, many people, and these old people had names, like "Old Standing," and "Rain," and "Forever Stander." They were the first people who were medicine-makers and Manitou showed them how to put up Sundances, Brave Dances, Chicken Dances, and Trading Dances and with Ghost Dance it was finished.

(The white man asked if he could be a medicine-maker and Manitou asked him what he would use. And the white man killed his child and offered that and Manitou said, "No, you are not the one for that." And when He asked the Indian what he would use, the Indian killed a dog, and Manitou said, "Yes, the dog is the one to use. Sometimes you don't like him, even hate him, but he is the one to eat and use.")
These are the truths for those who wish to believe, and the dog was used for all of the ceremonies, and this is what happened in the beginning.

Joe Kapoeze

Red Pheasant Indian Reserve
Saskatchewan
73 years old

INDEX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INDEX TERM</th>
<th>IH NUMBER</th>
<th>DOC NAME</th>
<th>DISC #</th>
<th>PAGE #</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MEDICINE AND CURING PRACTICES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- origins of</td>
<td>IH-048a</td>
<td>KAPOEZE 2</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPIRITS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Wisakedjak (Cree)</td>
<td>IH-048a</td>
<td>KAPOEZE 2</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STORIES AND STORYTELLING (GENERAL)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- animal</td>
<td>IH-048a</td>
<td>KAPOEZE 2</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- creation myths</td>
<td>IH-048a</td>
<td>KAPOEZE 2</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- flood myths</td>
<td>IH-048a</td>
<td>KAPOEZE 2</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STORIES AND STORYTELLING (GENERAL)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- tricksters</td>
<td>IH-048a</td>
<td>KAPOEZE 2</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4-10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>