



The meeting of John Lake and Chief Whitecap — one of the most interesting and “undertold” stories of Saskatoon’s rich history.



“The Founders” is a monumental art installation that will permanently recognize the founding moment of our vibrant and growing city, and will serve as an educational touchstone for our citizens and visitors. It will celebrate our diversity, and the coming together of two great leaders and cultures.

On behalf of City Council and grateful Saskatoon citizens, I acknowledge artist Hans Holtkamp, our sponsors, the management and staff responsible for the planning and installation, and Chief Darcy Bear and the people of Whitecap Dakota First Nation for this partnership and the wonderful relationship that we have shared over the past 125 years.

Donald J. Atchison

His Worship Mayor Donald J. Atchison
City of Saskatoon

Saskatoon Acclaimed Cultural Capital of Canada, 2006

In 2006, Saskatoon was designated a Cultural Capital of Canada as part of the federal government’s promotion of the arts and culture in Canadian municipalities. This sparked interest in creating a permanent public art installation to commemorate the meeting of John Lake and Chief Whitecap in 1882.

A commissioning jury was established with representatives from the City of Saskatoon, University of Saskatchewan, Whitecap Dakota First Nation, The Partnership and Meewasin Valley Authority. An impressive proposal submitted by local sculptor Hans Holtkamp was unanimously selected. Today, his larger-than-life work, “The Founders,” sits at the base of the Traffic Bridge, very near the site of the historic meeting more than 125 years ago.



The meeting between John Lake and Chief Whitecap has allowed us to celebrate the partnership and heritage of two cultures, planting the seed for a vibrant multicultural city.

The “Founders” is a piece of art that illustrates the diversity of our communities and the pledge of two leaders looking toward a future of cooperation and partnership.

Our two communities have co-existed as good neighbours for more than 125 years, and continue to move forward to promote our rich histories.

On behalf of the Whitecap Dakota First Nation we would like to acknowledge the vision of Mayor Atchison and City Council for recognizing the significant role that Chief Whitecap played in creating our beautiful city, and thanks to the volunteers and sponsors who have worked with us on “The Founders” project.

Darcy Bear

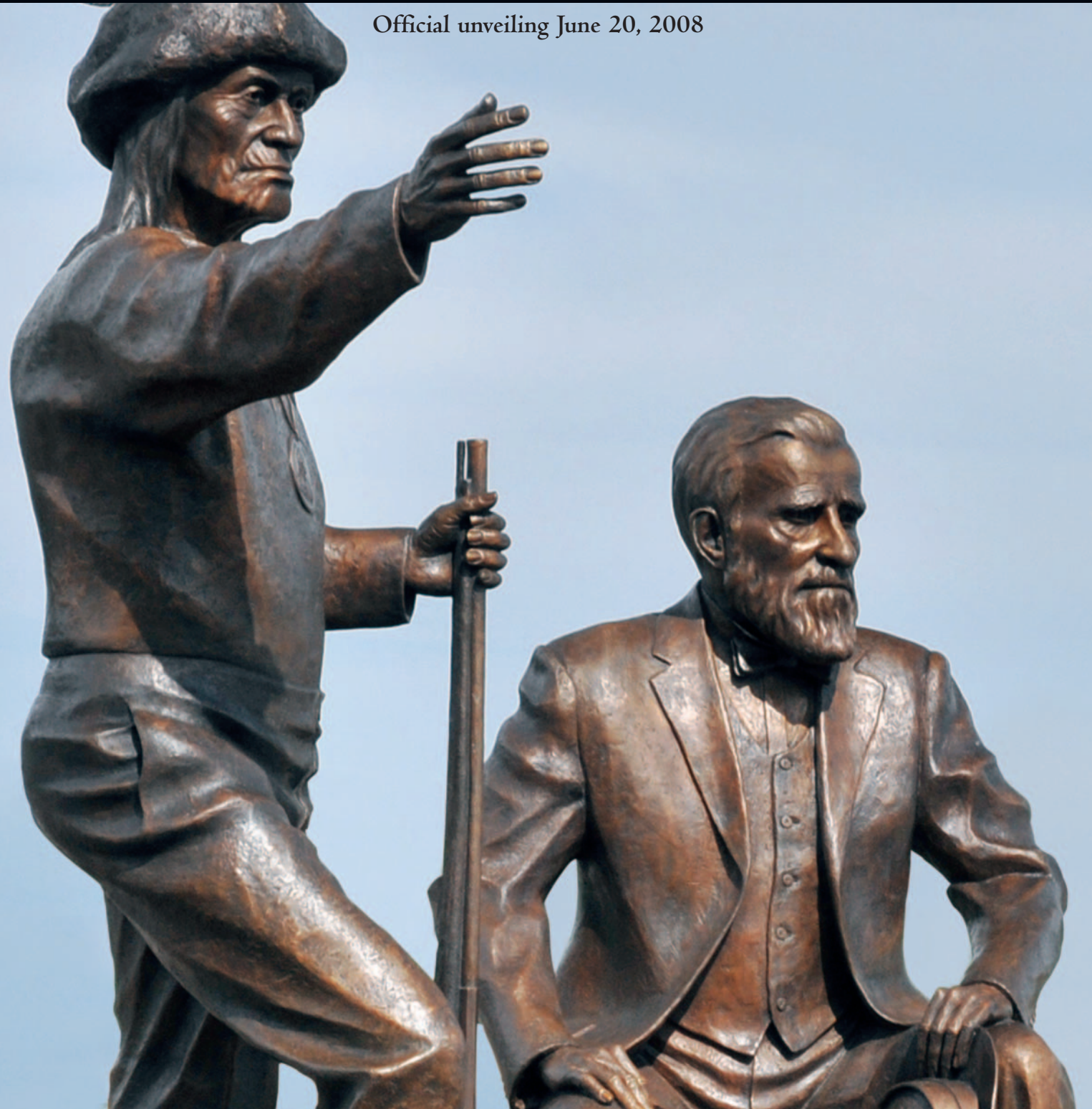
Chief Darcy Bear
Whitecap Dakota First Nation

THE FOUNDERS

CHIEF WHITECAP & JOHN LAKE

SASKATOON 1883 - 2008

Official unveiling June 20, 2008



Sculpture by Hans Holtkamp

Sponsors

We gratefully acknowledge our sponsors who helped make this official unveiling possible, June 20, 2008.



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Photography of “The Founders” by Henry James

“The Founders”



The larger-than-life bronze statue of John Lake and Chief Whitecap overlooks the city from the base of the Traffic Bridge, Saskatoon.

The meeting

The August morning is heavy with heat. A light breeze rustles through the long grass and provides faint relief to the man sitting in his heavy black coat. Beside him stands a tall Aboriginal man surveying the view before them. Having led his nation to this area more than a generation ago, he is well versed in its hills, valleys and waterways. As the two men gaze at the river, there is a sense of affinity between them. And so they remain still, part of a spellbinding scene that remains unbroken ... if only for a few moments. This is the beginning of the city that will become Saskatoon.

The present and the future

The meeting between John Lake and Chief Whitecap in 1882 was an example of what newcomer and Aboriginal relations can be: two nations working together with the goal of living peacefully side by side. That ideal is never easy to achieve. Now, the spirit of that first meeting is immortalized in “The Founders”, a monumental-size statue that sits near the place where the two very different men came together. It is a symbol that celebrates how Saskatoon came to be and how far we’ve come.

Twice life-sized



Hans Holtkamp poses with the sculpture in place.

The sculpture

When the City of Saskatoon was looking to tell the story of Chief Whitecap and John Lake, it was Hans Holtkamp’s vision of mutual respect and co-operation that captured the spirit they wanted. Bringing his vision to life was a year-long journey that saw Hans travel to a foundry studio in California, the only place he could complete such a large work. From a quarter-size clay sculpture he progressed up to twice life-size scale, first in clay, then in a series of moulds. Molten bronze was poured into the final ceramic mould. Once hardened and finishing touches applied, “The Founders” was ready for the journey back to Saskatoon, where it would make history of its own.

Hans Holtkamp, sculptor

Hans Holtkamp ranks with Bill Epp and Joe Fafard as one of western Canada’s most accomplished sculptors. His commissioned works grace public and private spaces, from the Saskatchewan Legislature to the University and Saskatoon, and have earned critical recognition, including an



honourable mention at the 2006 International Portrait Arts Festival. What distinguishes his work is how each piece evokes a time, a place, a personality.



Top: four busts in preparatory clay prior to casting. Above: Holtkamp’s half life-size maquette, or small-scale model, selected by the jury.