



IT STARTED OUT AS A FEATURE FILM...

In 2004 first time filmmaker Aaron James Sorensen privately raised enough money to make a feature film from a script he had written, portraying an endearing portrait of life in a remote northern Alberta Cree community, and the colourful characters who call it home. A good-hearted movie about a good-hearted people – sprinkled with snowmobiles, old-dogs, and good country music. The film, “Hank Williams First Nation,” became a

critically acclaimed audience favourite wherever it played, at festivals throughout North America and in cities and communities across Canada, becoming the third top grossing English language film of 2005. And now the feature film has done something unheard of in Canada. Unlike “Trailer Park Boys,” “Kids in the Hall” and “Strange Brew,” which were all feature films based on television series, “Hank William’s First Nation” is the first television series to be based on a Canadian English-language feature film. (*Note: William’s is apostrophized in the series, not in the film*)

There is an old writer’s adage – “Write what you know,” and Aaron James Sorensen knew what it was like living in Wabasca, Alberta - a small, 95% Cree community in northern Alberta at the end of an 80-mile gravel road. “I worked there as an economic development officer and I later became an entrepreneur. I owned the motel there for a while, I owned the newspaper there, I worked for oil companies there and I taught school there – sometimes all at the same time. I found it to be an interesting and wonderful place, before a lot of white people showed up and before a lot of money showed up. I was there when it had its sleepy remote charm. It was what I knew.”

Sorensen believed there were stories in his town and in communities like it across Canada that were just not being told. “The fact of the matter is there are a lot of good stories and a lot of things that go on in these communities that are underrepresented to Canadians,” Sorensen says, adding, “Their unique charms and their sense of humour, their sense of family, their sense of faith and their good taste in country music inspired me to write the film.”

One of the fans of the film was Joanne Levy, Director of Programming for the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN), who saw the film and recognized the possibilities for a series. At a meeting at the Banff Television Festival in 2006 Levy asked Sorensen if he had any ideas for a series. He came up with some storylines that APTN liked and the green light was given to shoot six episodes.

So the little film that could, the privately funded first feature by a director who was turned down by virtually every arts funding agency in Canada, has evolved into a half-hour television series. “Hank William’s First Nation - The Series” continues where the movie left off, telling the tales of the Fox family and their friends in the sleepy northern Wapahoo Cree Nation Reserve they call home.



EPISODE SUMMARIES

Each episode of the six-part television series is a stand-alone episode. So viewers do not have to have seen the feature film to enjoy "Hank William's First Nation - The Series." Like the film, the series is a collection of stories capturing the unique charms, the character, and the quirky humour of Wapahoo, a fictitious remote Cree community. The whimsical and unique life-affirming culture of the Cree is at the very centre

of these stories as the people in them go through the daily trials and tribulations of their lives. Through it all, the series covers universal themes known to all audiences regarding lessons learned, experiences gained, and hearts swelled and mended.

Episode 1

Sarah Fox finds the perfect graduation dress at the mall and also finds Larcis shopping with Natasha. Sarah ignores Huey and spies on Larcis and ends up making a big splash. Vivian and Adelard Fox welcome Jacob home from New Mexico and await his big surprise. Sarah makes it to her graduation just in time to make her valedictorian speech. Sarah chooses the ending to her graduation day and dances with Huey.

Episode 2

Uncle Martin gets tired of people thinking he is dead so he moves into town. The new teacher Amanda and her son Ritchie move into their new home on the Wapahoo Cree Nation reserve. Huey and Jacob look to purchase an ice cream truck, but they have no money. Huey convinces Adelard to invest in his new ice cream business and they strike a deal. Unfortunately the ice cream truck isn't such a reliable vehicle after all. Uncle Martin starts his new job at the town grocery store. However, a furry customer pushes Uncle Martin over the edge and he quits his job.

Episode 3

Jacob gets a summer job life guarding at the beach. Natasha and Sarah spend time together sunbathing at the beach and visiting Jacob. Sarah practices her French with Ms. Savard to prepare for her application to McGill University. Chief Chicken Wings convinces Adelard to sponsor the ten-thousand-dollar prize money for a speed boat race. Huey realizes that his ice cream business needs help so he hires a new employee, Jessica. Adelard gets his cousin Relic to enter the boat race to try and win his money back.

Episode 4

Amanda receives a warm radio welcome from Huey and gets roped into going on a date with the mysterious Mr. Wright who paid five hundred dollars to take her out. Uncle Martin gets a new job at the pioneer village. Jacob and Sarah get some new wheels. Ritchie meets a new friend Davina and they get into trouble while spying on Jacob and Natasha at the beach. Amanda feels embarrassed when she confuses the restaurant she is supposed to meet Mr. Wright at with another one in town. Amanda and Mr. Wright in the end enjoy five-hundred-dollar burgers.

Episode 5

Huey raises money for the M.A.R.C. by putting on the Classic Country Jamboree. Sarah learns the power of a Saskatoon berry pie. Huey and Jacob run into trouble trying to get a country superstar to perform at his Jamboree. Adelard helps Huey out and calls in a favour from his old friend Ian Tyson.

Episode 6

Sarah learns she has been accepted to McGill University in Montreal. But what about Huey? Chucky Greyeyes challenges Chief Chicken Wings in the Wapahoo Cree Nation election. Adelard and Jacob butt heads about the candidates in the upcoming election. Sarah gets love and life advice from Ms. Savard. Chief Chicken Wings takes drastic measures in order to win the election. Huey and Sarah kiss for the first time.

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EPISODE ONE CREDITS

CAST

ADELARD FOX	Gordon Tootoosis
HUEY BIGSTONE	Sheldon Elter
SARAH FOX	Teneil Whiskeyjack
JACOB FOX	Colin Van Loon
VIVIAN FOX	Edna Rain
HANK WILLIAM BEAUREGARD	Sammy Simon
NATASHA SAVARD	Alexandra Lazarowich
LARCIS NOSKEYE	Mathew Strongeagle
PRINCIPAL LETENDRE	Helen Calahasen
ANNOUNCER	Graham Neil

CREW

Written and directed by	Aaron James Sorensen
Produced by	Aaron James Sorensen
Co-produced by	Ron E. Scott
Editor	Bridget Durnford
Director of Photography	Wes Doyle
Sound Designer	Emre Unal
Creative Consultant	Larry Mollin

Produced in conjunction with the Woodland Cree First Nation

Associate Producer	Frank Lovsin
Camera Assistant	Geoff Huffman
Sound Mixer	Shawn Miller
Boom Operator	Millar Montgomery
Script Supervisors	Alexandra Lazarowich
Production Manager	Jason Simmer
Production Coordinator	Marlaine Andresen

First Assistant Director	Mark Kandborg
Second Assistant Director	Tanis Parenteau
Key Grip	Matthew Vest
Gaffers	Johnny Mack
	Aaron Munson
Makeup/Hair	Gunther Shettere
Location Managers	William Noskeye
	Ada Dolievoet
Transportation Captain	Richard Rodgers
Stunt Double	Lori Mackay
Stunt Coordinator	Jodi Stecyk
Production Assistant	Vanessa Petkus
Legal Affairs	Carole Henson
Business Affairs	Chester Sit
Accountants	Kelvin Creighton
	Franco Dotter
Graphic Artist	Jacqueline Hudon
Webmaster	Elliot Neglev
Development Executive	Carrie Gour
Post Production Supervisor	Bridget Durnford
Additional Photography	Stephanie Stonefish Ryan

Composers: Ernie Gambler, Mike Shields,
John Rutherford, Dave McCann, Aaron James Sorensen

Featuring the Music of:

The Dudes, Dave McCann, Mike Stack, No Guff,
Beautiful Joe, Lester Quitzaw, Ernie Gambler

The theme "Spank Hank"
written by Aaron James Sorensen.
Performed by The Cultivators.

From the feature film Hank Williams First Nation
< www.hwfn.com >

Shot on location in the Peace River Country of Northern Alberta

Produced with the participation of the



Canadian Television Fund

created by the Government of Canada
and the Canadian Cable Industry

CTF: Licence Fee Program
Telefilm Canada: Equity Investment Program

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of Alberta Economic Development in the making of this series.

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Shaw Rocket Fund.

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SPECIAL THANKS

Woodland Cree First Nation	Riverview Mall	Peace Air
The Travellers Motor Hotel	Northern Sunrise County	Northern Air Charter
Lovsin Family	MD of Northern	Ultra Helicopters
Cadotte Lake School Staff	Lights No. 22	Boucher Bros. Lumber
Seventh-Day Adventist	Town of Peace River	Mathieu Hryniuk
Vacation Bible School	Freson Markets	Estabrook Construction
West Edmonton Mall	Armstrong Construction	Central Peace Contracting
DeeDee and Nancy	Krantz Contracting Ltd.	Bar XU
Williams Family	Silvertip Oilfield Services	Buchanan Lumber
Lookin' Good	Grimm's Cafe	Empire Lumber
	Lavergne Construction	

Production Executives for APTN
Jean LaRose Joanne Levy

Produced in association with



For Glen. Our partner and friend.

No beavers were harmed in the making of this picture.

The events, characters, and firms depicted in this telepicture are fictitious.
Any similarity to actual persons, living or dead, or to actual firms,
is purely purely purely coincidental.

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ABOUT THE CAST

Gordon Tootoosis (Adelard Fox)

Gordon Tootoosis was born on the Poundmaker Indian Reserve in Saskatchewan. With his ten brothers and three sisters, he was raised with a strong Cree belief system plus knowledge of the language, art forms and worldview.

At a very early age, Tootoosis became a cowboy and is a champion Calf Roper and Team Roper. An accomplished native dancer, he toured with the Plains InterTribal Dance Troupe in the '60s and '70s throughout Canada, Europe and South America. He competed and won many championships on the North American Pow-Wow circuit in traditional singing and dancing and is now one of North America's most popular and respected Pow-Wow announcers. Gordon was also a social worker, specializing in areas of childcare and dealing with young offenders.

Tootoosis made his film debut in 1972 in "Alien Thunder," with Donald Sutherland. He has since appeared in many theatre, television, film and radio productions. Feature films he has appeared in include "Hank Williams First Nation," "That Beautiful Somewhere," "Nobody's Baby," "Reindeer Games," "One Dead Indian," "Legends of the Fall," "Alaska," "Lone Star," "Pocahontas: The Legend," "Black Robe" and "Leaving Normal," "Big Bear," "The Promise," "Call Of The Wild," "Blood River," "Last Train Home" and "Stone Fox."

On television Gordon became recognizable as series regular Albert Golo on the hit series "North of 60." Other television appearance include roles in "Into the West," "Due South," "Lonesome Dove," "Northern Exposure," "The Campbells," "Mythquest," "Danger Bay," "Smallville" and Hawkeye. He will be seen as Red Cloud in the upcoming mini-series "Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee."

Gordon's voice has been heard as the narration for many documentaries and in numerous radio productions and his was the voice of Kekata in the Walt Disney Studios' animated hit "Pocahontas."

Sheldon Elter (Huey Bigstone)

A true Alberta native, Sheldon Elter was born in Peace River and grew up in Edmonton. He made headlines and became a familiar face across Canada when he appeared on the fourth season (2006) of the CTV hit reality show, "Canadian Idol." Elter has the distinction of being the first aboriginal competitor in the program's history.

A Theatre Arts graduate of Grant MacEwan College, Elter has been involved in many theatre projects, including being a member of a popular sketch comedy group. A versatile performer, the actor/writer/director made a name for himself with his one-man show sensation "Metis Mutt," which won him two Sterling awards and toured across Canada and internationally.

In 2005 he played Romeo in the River City Shakespeare Festival's "Romeo and Juliet." Other stage credits include performances in "Wrecked" (Azimuth Theatre), "Are We There Yet?" and "Carnival Magic/Promise to the Sun" (Concrete Theatre) and "Frostbite Christmas" (Stuck in a Snowbank Theatre, Yellowknife). Sheldon is an Artistic Associate of Azimuth Theatre and a core member of the sketch comedy troupe Blacklisted. On film he appeared as Pretty Boy Floyd in "Turnbuckle."

Teneil Whiskeyjack (Sarah Fox)

Teneil Whiskeyjack grew up in Saddle Lake and presently lives in Edmonton. Besides acting since the age of ten she has been involved in many activities throughout her youth including traditional and hip-hop dance.

Whiskeyjack has performed in several film and television roles including "Renegade Press.com," "Why the Rabbit turned White," "Legend of the Spirit Bear," and the award winning, ABC/Hallmark mini-series, "Dreamkeeper." Her role in "Dreamkeeper" earned her the Outstanding New Performance in Film or TV award at the 12th annual awards of First Americans in Los Angeles.

Colin Van Loon (Jacob Fox)

Colin Van Loon was born in Fort Macleod Alberta and moved around Alberta with his mother Amber Van Loon. Amber was a single parent and a student before she found her calling as a Youth Care and Palliative Care worker. Colin is a natural performer and often to the dismay of his grade school teachers, his mother and the one predominate father figure in Colin's life, his uncle George Van Loon, because his performances often took the outlet of class clown.

His first encounter in acting came in grade 6 when he played "Injun Joe" in his elementary schools production of Tom Sawyer "Huck Finn". He remembers it as "The most exhilarating thing in my life, we did five shows and I was hooked". A few moves and years later, he found himself in a line up to be an extra for the ABC/Hallmark co-production "Dreamkeeper," landing the role of a Dog Soldier.

After some high school theatre Van Loon was cast in the role of Jacob Fox in the 2005 feature film "Hank Williams First Nation." Shortly after he graduated from high school and took a year off to work in the Alberta oil patch, where he decided he seriously wished to pursue a career in acting. He moved to Vancouver where he now lives and studies acting at the Vancouver Film School.

Edna Rain (Vivian Fox)

Edna Rain took up acting lessons at age 55 on the advice of one her sons. The great-grandmother, who grew up in rural Alberta during what she calls "the hungry forties," is well known across Canada as the voice of Gracie Heavyhand on the irreverent CBC Radio One comedy program "Dead Dog Café Comedy Hour," which ran from 1997 to 2000. She has reprised her role in a 2006 revival of the series, called "Dead Dog in the City," which is heard on "Sounds Like Canada" on the CBC.

On film, she created the role of Vivian Fox in "Hank Williams First Nation," and has appeared in a number of features, including "Don't Call Me Tonto," also with Gordon Tootoosis, "Ginger Snaps Back: the Beginning" and "Jet Boy." On television she has had roles in "Dreamkeeper" and "The Beat."

A champion traditional powwow dancer, rain also is proficient at horseback riding, both bareback and saddle, and she is able to drive horse drawn wagons.

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ABOUT THE CREW

Aaron James Sorensen (Writer, Director, Producer)

Aaron James Sorensen was born in Peace River, Alberta and grew up in the hamlet of Dixonville, located approximately 50km north of Peace River and at the time boasting a population of 72.

Armed with a Bachelor of Arts in Canadian Studies from the University of Calgary and an Education Degree from the University of Alberta Sorensen tried a number of vocations, from teaching school to working for oil companies to owning a motel and a small town newspaper to working as a musician and as an Economic Development Officer.

One day he made a personal inventory where you list the things you excel at and the things you don't do so well at, and he wrote at the bottom of the page "Maybe I should make a movie." Thus inspired, he read as many how-to books on the subject of filmmaking as he could get his hands on (most of which he found useless!) and he sat down and wrote the script for "Hank Williams First Nation," which he shot in 2004 after privately raising the capital to produce the film.

Sorensen's first feature to date has played in over 50 festivals in North America, and is just now beginning its run overseas. The Genie nominated film was the third top grossing English language film at the Canadian boxoffice in 2005 (no small feat when you consider Sorensen distributed the film himself). As well the film has garnered awards in San Francisco, Washington and Nashville, and has been universally praised for its portrayal of aboriginal people.

Now, after having written and directed six episodes of the television series "Hank William's First Nation," Sorensen is currently in development on two feature scripts he has written, looking to direct them in the near future.

Ron E. Scott (Co-Producer)

A Métis from Northern Alberta, Ron Scott has written, produced and directed several Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal film and television productions as well as “live” arena events and Awards shows over the last ten years. His television programs have aired on CTV, GLOBAL, CBC, APTN, CITY TV, CLT, VISION TV and in several international broadcast markets including the US, Hong Kong and South Africa.

Among some of the documentary television programs he has written, directed and produced are the Alberta Film & TV Awards nominated, “Young As You Look,” Don Burnstick - You might be a Redskin,” "Race and the River" and “Sugar and Spice - a mother daughter story.”

Currently airing weekly on CityTV is “Cowboy Country,” a half-hour lifestyle series shot on location in Western Canada on everything that is Cowboy. The show also airs on CLT, Book TV and Access TV. Scott writes, directs and produces the series and is currently in production on the second season.

Scott also produced the full-length comedy feature film "Rubberman," which has been to the Cannes Film Market and has sold extensively in overseas markets. During film school he produced the award winning short documentary "Sunday Afternoon," taking home the Bronze Apple at the prestigious National Educational Film and Video Festival.

Scott is a past board member of the Alberta Motion Picture Industries Association and a member of the Aboriginal Filmmakers program at the National Film Board of Canada and he has served as a consultant regarding funding policies with Telefilm Canada. He has been a speaker for the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation and the BDC's E-Spirit Young Entrepreneur Business Competition.

Wes Doyle CSC (Director of Photography)

Wes Doyle is a veteran of the Alberta film and television industry with over 30 years experience as a cameraman and director of photography. Calling Edmonton home, he has been a free-lance cinematographer since 1990 and has worked on numerous feature films, series, documentaries, corporate films, tourism films, and literally thousands of commercials.

Some of the programs Doyle has been camera operator and/or director of photography on include: “Into the West,” “Little House on the Prairie,” “Don't Call Me Tonto,” “Caitlin's Way,” “Mentors,” “Cowboys of the Americas,” “Great Canadian Ghost Stories,” “Rugburn” and “Catching the Chameleon.”

Doyle is a full member of the Canadian Society of Cinematographers. A few of Doyle's many corporate clients include Telus, Syncrude, Western Canada Lotteries, the Province of Saskatchewan, Air New Zealand, the Canada Winter Games, GM Canada and Manitoba Tourism.

Bridget Durnford (Editor, Post Production Supervisor)

Born in Iserlohn, Germany, Bridget Durnford came to Canada in 1966. She studied film at the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT) and worked as a film and video editor all over the world for years before settling in Calgary where she has been constantly applying her craft to numerous feature films, documentaries, music videos, television movies and programs.

Some features Durnford has edited include "Anthrax," "Double Frame," "Almost America," "Silent Cradle" and "Question of Privilege." Included among the many television movies Durnford has edited are "Picking Up and Dropping Off," "Crazy Canucks," "Behind the Camera: The Unauthorized Story of Mork and Mindy," the two "North of 60" MOWs "Distant Drumming" and "Another Country" as well as "Touch the Top of the World."

An experienced editor who has worked at four Olympic Games, the Commonwealth Games and World figure Skating competitions, Durnford has also edited the television series "Shoebox Zoo" and two seasons of "Tom Stone." Documentary series she has edited include "Road Hammers," "Not Your Daddy's Country," "Undiscovered Country" and "The Industry."

Emre Unal (Sound Designer)

Emre Unal is a multi-faceted audio production professional and composer with over fifteen years of top level experience. He has worked with some of the best musicians in the world from his beginnings as an assistant recording engineer at Little Mountain Sound in Vancouver to his present position as chief engineer / in house composer with Twisted Pair Sound in Calgary.

Emre has assisted on music recordings with Jimmy Page, Lindsay Buckingham and AC/DC and worked with leading West Coast producers Bruce Fairburn and Bob Rock on a variety of projects. Throughout the 90's, in addition to his studio duties, he pursued his own musical interests performing in a number of very successful bands and composing over 200 songs. His compositions and performances have been featured on numerous film and television programs including an Emmy award winning spot promoting the ESPY awards.

Film projects he has worked on include the documentary "On the Edge: the Nature of Risk" and the feature film "Jet Boy."

Larry Mollin (Creative Consultant)

Larry Mollin has been a writer and a producer in Canada and the United States for over thirty years. After writing and producing the award-winning "Homemade Television" for the CBC in the 70's he moved to Los Angeles where he became part of many successful television series, including "CHiPs," "Knight Rider" and "Beverly

Hills, 90210,” which he produced and wrote on 128 of the episodes and executive produced 64 episodes of the international hit.

Larry has written numerous pilots and also co-created the Canadian series “African Skies,” fifty-two episodes of which ran on the Family Channel and YTV. He wrote and produced the feature “Borderline Normal,” wrote and executive produced the television movie “Fearless” and has been a writer on the World Wrestling Federation series “Smackdown,” “Velocity” and “Royal Rumble.”

Other recent television projects he has written for include “The Practice,” “Largo Winch,” “The Relic Hunter,” “Adventure Inc.” and “Leap Years.”

Mollin is also a published poet and songwriter. He resides in California, but keeps close to his Canadian roots with family still living in Toronto.

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