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**Friends of the  
Saskatoon  
Afforestation  
Areas Inc.**



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Thanks to Dr. Rose Roberts for advice on Land Acknowledgements

References:

1. Gridley, K. (1989). *Man of the Trees: Selected Writings of Richard St. Barbe Baker*. Willits, California: Ecology Action of the Midpeninsula.
2. Hanley, P. (2018). *Man of the Trees: Richard St. Barbe Baker - the First Global Conservationist*. Regina, Canada: University of Regina Press.
3. University of Saskatchewan, University Archives & Special Collections, Richard St. Barbe Baker fonds, MG 71, Barbe Baker M6 England

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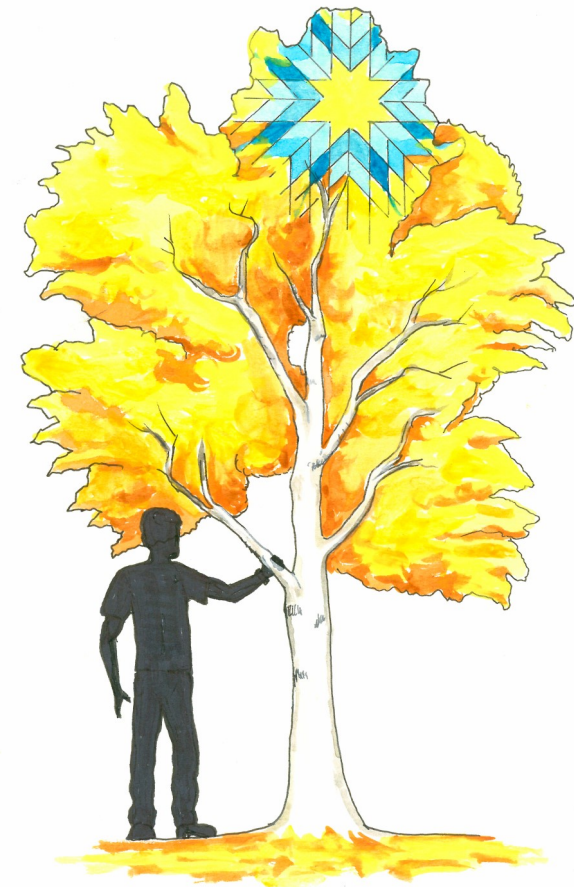
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## Booklet 5

### A Promise to the Future



You will become wise, not only by book-  
learning, but by being able to read the book of  
nature.

~ Richard St. Barbe Baker<sup>[1]</sup>

# Land Acknowledgement:

The afforestation areas are situated in the West Swale Yorath Island Glacial Spillway, a sacred site in Treaty 6 Territory and Homeland of the Métis. Those who entered into Treaty 6 are the Cree *Nêhiyawak* (neh-HEE-oh-wuk), Saulteaux *Nakawē*, and Nakota the *Yankton* and *Yanktonai* people.

May our relationships with the land, standing peoples, forests, and waters teach us to honour and respect the past and invite us to move forward in harmony. May we all come together as friends, to find inspiration and guidance from histories, languages, and cultures which broaden our understanding and community collaboration for the present and future.

## Season: Winter

### Introduction:

Have you ever heard of the Man of the Trees? He was born on October 9<sup>th</sup>, 1889, in England. He travelled the world, promoting tree planting, good forestry practices and the protection of special forests like the redwoods. His greatest ambition was to reverse the growth of deserts and he worked out a plan to reclaim the world's biggest desert, the Sahara, through tree planting. He understood 100 years ago that trees and forests influenced climate, protected soils and by holding water, prevented flooding.



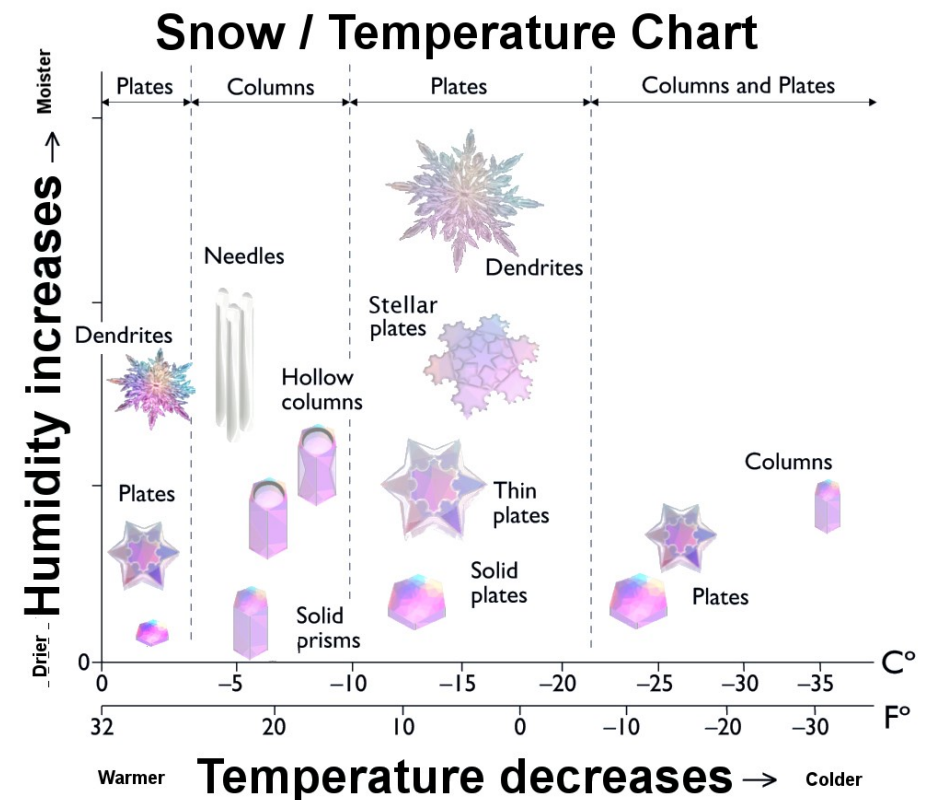
Richard St. Barbe Baker <sup>[3]</sup>

Why is he so important to Saskatchewan? He studied at the University of Saskatchewan, lived near Beaver Creek, spent time in the forest near Prince Albert, and planted his last tree on the U of S campus before passing away at the age of 92. The afforestation area we describe here was planted in 1972 and named in his honour in 1978.

Temperature has a big impact on how water will move through the Earth's water cycle. In winter we see this clearly.

1. Bring a dark piece of paper outside when it is snowing. Can you find some of the snowflake shapes below?

2. Determine the temperature range from the different shapes you see.



Adapted from <http://www.snowcrystals.com/morphology/morphology.html>

## On-site or Outdoor Activity:

1. Tracking animals is a good way to understand the habitat you live in. Go for a walk and try to identify two different sets of wildlife tracks. Which animals live near your tree?

Draw the tracks on a separate piece of paper.

Decide what type of animal tracks you see:

- 4 toe pads with nail marks for canines (dogs, foxes, coyotes).
- 4 toe pads without nail marks for felines (cats, cougar, lynx)
- 5 toe pads with nail marks for weasels (badgers, mink, skunk)
- 4 narrow toes on front, 5 on back both showing nail marks (rodents)
- 5 toe pads front and back, larger back foot both showing nail marks (bear and raccoon)

2. In winter the snow becomes important habitat to all creatures that stay active. Mice, voles, and weasels make tunnels under the snow to protect themselves from the cold air outside.

Coyotes, owls, and foxes benefit from this also, because the snow protects their food source.

The subnivean zone, the area under the snow close to the ground, is much warmer than the air outside.

In groups of 5, find some undisturbed snow and take the temperature using a thermometer. Compare with the air temperature.

Air: \_\_\_\_\_ Subnivean: \_\_\_\_\_ Difference: \_\_\_\_\_

## Story: A Promise to the Future

*Note: Anything written in italics was written by Richard himself and quoted directly from his texts.*

It is hard to imagine living through two world wars. Richard lived through both and fought in the first one. The First World War was declared in 1914 when Richard was 25 years old.

Richard experienced the horrors of war and lost many friends in battle. One night in Flanders, waiting in nervous anticipation for the next attack, Richard made a vow that if he survived the war he would dedicate the rest of his life to forests and trees.

Throughout the war years he came close to death several times. He was caught in the artillery shelling of his post. His horse rolled on top of him fracturing his femur (thigh bone). His ship sank not once, but twice, on the 58 crossings he made of the English Channel to deliver horses. His last injury was during a shift bringing horses towards the front lines on a train at night. The train was bombed and Richard had to take a leave from the British military to heal.

As he healed, he began to formulate his plan to go back to school to study forestry. His devotion was so strong that even the lack of money didn't discourage him. When Richard focused on a goal, mysterious things would happen to help him on his journey.

**An idea came to him in a dream.**

*I dreamed that I saw an aeroplane evolving into a home on wheels. It was quite clear to me how the parts could be utilized.<sup>[2]</sup>*

Richard had a vision of how to salvage materials from the war that were no longer needed. When he awoke that morning, there was an ad in the local newspaper inviting people to make offers to buy parts of unassembled airplanes. He got on the train immediately, drawing up a design for the first trailer caravan on his way.

When he arrived he found out that he couldn't buy just a few airplane undercarriages like he had planned, he had to buy 36.

Richard could only offer the little money he had. He was shocked 10 days later when 10 truckloads of materials were delivered!

Richard was busy studying and had to take breaks between classes to find places to store everything. Quickly, friends and strangers helped out and Richard's business began to grow.

He named his invention the *Navarac*, which is caravan spelled backwards. He sold some units as family holiday trailers and some units became housing for veterans when they returned from war. Through these endeavours Richard made enough money to pay for forestry school.

Richard experienced what many people today call the power of manifestation; the ability to make your dreams come true. Just as Paulo Coelho describes in his book *The Alchemist*, when you want something with your whole heart, the universe conspires with you to make it happen. Serendipity, events that happen by chance in a beneficial way, become part of the treasure map you follow to realize your dreams.

One of Richard's students would leave you with what he learned from Richard: pray for guidance, listen to your heart, watch for cues, be bold in embracing opportunities, and act with trust.

## Reflection:

In 7 clean ups spanning 6 years over 16,510 Kilograms (36,400 pounds) of toxic and hazardous waste along with garbage have been removed from the Richard St. Barbe Baker Afforestation Area through community clean-up campaigns.

1. On a separate piece of paper, make a list of items at school that end up in the garbage, especially after lunch.

2. What are some creative ways you could reduce this amount of garbage if there were no limitations? Could you repurpose some of it like Richard did?

## In School Activity:

*"When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the Universe." ~ John Muir*

1. Your teacher will provide a list of species that live at the afforestation area. Choose a plant and animal to learn more about. What are they doing in this season?

### **Carnivore:**

English Name:

French Name:

Indigenous Language Name:

Scientific Name:

### **Herbivore:**

English Name:

French Name:

Indigenous Language Name:

Scientific Name:

*(Specify which Indigenous Language—Cree, Lakota, Nakota, Saulteaux, Michif)*