

Errol Sidney Ranville. (b. 1953)

By Randy Ranville¹

Errol Ranville, nicknamed “C-Weed,” was born on August 1, 1953 at St. Rose du Lac, Manitoba, the son of Emile Gerald Ranville (1919-1990) and Mary Catherine Spence (1912-1995). His paternal grandparents are François Ranville (b. 1882 at Wood Mountain) and Henriette Nepinak (b. 1899 at Pine Creek). Errol’s maternal grandparents were Joseph Spence born c. 1875 at Ste. Rose du Lac and Nancy Campbell.

The well known Metis band, C-Weed, is led by Errol Ranville. Errol also records on his own. He formerly operated, C-Weeds, a cabaret in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

Errol grew up in a family of 12, nine brothers and three sisters. His older brother Stirling is a Country Gospel singer and musician. Errol moved to Winnipeg with his family and completed high school there. Later, he completed his Bachelor of Social Work degree in 1980.

Errol started his band in 1975 and they released their first record album in 1980 and had a number one single, “Evangeline,” on Canadian country Radio. Their second album “High and Dry” was released in 1982 and the song of the same title also became a number one single across Canada. The band received Juno Award nominations in 1985 and 1986. In 1995 he began recording solo projects under his own label and the song “I Wanna Fly” was named Song of the Year at the Manitoba Country Music Awards. A new C-Weed CD was released on May 21, 2010. The CD, entitled “*Magic in the Music*” is a C-Weed greatest hits album to commemorate the C-Weed Band’s 35th Anniversary. Most recently, Errol was Executive Producer of the Manito Ahbee Festival and APC Music Awards.



The current line-up of the C-Weed Band includes the band's founder—lead singer/songwriter Errol "C-Weed" Ranville on guitar, his big brother Don Ranville on drums, bass player John Ervin and, Marc Arnould on keyboards.

Errol is a direct descendant of François Ranville, born in 1815 at Pembina and Marguerite Demers-Bellegarde. François would be his great-great-great grandfather. His 4th great-grandparents were and Joseph Ranville² born in 1779 at Lac Qui Parle, Dakota

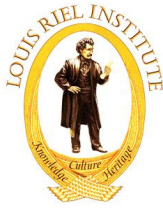
¹ Errol’s brother Randy is a Genealogist with the Metis Resource Centre.

² Joseph Ranville (Renville) II. (1779-1846)

Joseph was the son of a Dakota woman, Miniyehe, and a French Canadian fur trader, Joseph Renville Sr. Joseph Jr. He is best known for translated the entire Bible into the Dakota language in 1837. In 1804, Joseph Jr. married Marie “Tonkanne” Little Crow, the daughter of Petit Carboneau and the niece of chief Little Crow.

He was educated in Canada, then returned to Kaposia village where he was born, upon the death of his father in 1795. From then on he lived with the *Gens du Large* (Sioux of the Prairie). At age twenty-six he left Prairie du Chien and worked as a guide and interpreter for Zebulon Pike during his exploration for the source of the Mississippi. During the War of 1812, he attained the rank of captain while acting as an interpreter for the British. He was commander of the

Territory and Marie Tokanne Little Crow, born 1889 near Fort Snelling.



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Dakota warriors at the siege of Fort Miede. After the war he traded for the HBC at the headwaters of the Minnesota or St. Peter's River. After the 1821 amalgamation of the HBC and NWC, he helped establish the Columbia Fur Company with headquarters at Lake Traverse in the Minnesota Territory.

In July 1823, Joseph joined Major Stephen H. Long's Expedition to the source of the St. Peter's River. He was highly valued and was chosen by Colonel Dickson to command the Sioux contingent of the expedition at the rank equivalent to a captain in the British Army.

By the time the American Fur company bought the Columbia Fur Company, Joseph was established at Lac qui Parle and maintained an army of warriors known as the Tokadantee or "Prairie Dogs." This group later evolved into the Renville Rangers under one of his sons. The Lac qui Parle Mission was established in 1835 largely through the influence of Joseph Renville. A Native Christian Church was established there in 1837. Renville's greatest work was in assisting the missionaries at Lac Qui Parle to translate the Bible, books of hymns and other material into the Dakota language. Joseph died at Lac Qui Parle on March 18, 1846 and buried on a hill by the stockade.