

ORIGINS OF THE NORTHERN LIGHTS

by Mike Hirst

Four point six billion years ago the earth formed. Willie the Walleye was there. Back in those days Willie was hailed as a world class herdsman. He has been known to wrangle all six continents together into a supercontinent and then spread them all back out again. Willie was a great teacher. He taught one of the first colonial single celled organisms how to photosynthesize. This aided in producing the earth's oxygen rich environment that promoted the abundance of life on the planet.

Willie's most enlightening contribution to the earth was the creation of the Northern Lights. Willie always thought the evenings were so dark. Willie's intentions were not to make such a lasting impression as the Aurora Borealis. Instead, Willie wanted to show off and celebrate victory over his arch nemesis and Baudette Bay Pond Hockey rival Ned the Northern. Ned was always swimming around bragging of the time that Ned's Northerns had bested Willie's Walleyes on the pond. It never happened the way Ned told it, but it still got to Willie all the same. One night Willie had had enough of Ned's fraudulent account of the Cretaceous-Tertiary (K/T) extinction Pond Hockey Game. The game had to be called due to mass extinction. Ned claimed it as a victory. It was really a 2 - 2 tie late in the third period.

Willie was sick of all the Tulibeas telling tales of Ned's Northerns Pond Hockey victory as the meteor showers rained down on the planet. So Willie went on a little journey. He swam through Kenora to Lake Winnipeg, out to Hudson's Bay, under the Arctic and through to China. He had heard the Indians tell tales of their ancestors and the magic powder they possessed that made the most spectacular explosions, much like the explosions Willie witnessed 65 million years ago at the K/T extinction event. Willie was able to strike a deal with a local China man.

That winter, Willie's Walleyes squared off against Ned's Northerns. Willie really wanted to rub it in when the Walleyes zamboned the ice

with the Northerns. Willie's team scored six goals and shut out the Northerns that year. After the game Willie busted out the fireworks. Ned was headed for a muskrat hole to go sulk in after another disappointing loss, but he never got the chance. Willie lit the rocket, but having no pyrotechnic experience it went skipping across the ice heading straight for Ned. The rocket caught Ned by the gills and launched him into the sky. As it exploded, it lit the phosphorous-rich Northern body and made the sky dance with lights. Ned eventually returned to his home on the Rainy River, but part of him would always remain in the atmosphere, ignited by Willie's antics.

Ever since that day the Aurora Borealis, or as Willie likes to call them the "Northern Lights", is a reminder to Northerns everywhere that Wall-eyes are the best hockey players on the bay.