

## Fur Trade Period Dress – Brigade Paddling Wear

This few words and series of links should be of help to brigade participants who are unsure of what to where, and how to acquire appropriate dress to support the pageantry and color of our arrivals in communities.

From the North West Journal: [What Voyageurs Wore](#)

[The Voyageurs](#) – from the National Film Board (available in English & French... FREE online)

Jas Townsend & Sons are a North American supplier of historical costumes: [Patterns](#), and [Clothing for purchase](#).

Historical sites such as the Fort Edmonton gift shop can be a source of Sashes (or Ceinture Fléchée), or you can make your own with [instructions here](#). And often the classic toque made from part of sash can also be purchased. But for paddling a colorful headband maybe what you want, or for arrival ceremonies... an old top hat can add to the display.

On-line Sash sources:

[JC Ricard](#)

[Etchiboy](#)

[St. Boniface Museum Store](#)

Given that blue jeans were a product of California Gold rush, they are not really appropriate wear. Wool pants, corduroy, cotton were all common pant materials of the 19th century. A trip to "Value Village" maybe all you need to find appropriate colorful pants and shirt... add a sash, and toque or headband and you should be ready for your first arrival ceremony.

On Brigade days with arrival ceremonies, participants tend to paddle in their regular garb, and carry arrival ceremony accessories in their day pack. We try to plan brigades so that there will be at least a ten to fifteen minute stop a kilometer or two upstream of the arrival community... this gives the stragglers a chance to catch up and all to dress up.

A common question of new paddlers is what to wear on the feet. On warm days sandals can be appropriate and on most days the light wet suit booties designed for surf/sail/paddleboards/WW kayaking work well. These can be purchased at most paddling stores in the Edmonton area, or at MEC across Canada. Many paddlers also like to use paddling gloves to protect the hands, blisters are common, most of us are not use to long days of paddling. And some folk, depending on the seats of the canoes, like to wear biking shorts to protect the butt.

And at all times paddlers should have in their day bag, a good rain coat and pants, and a warm vest. Sunscreen, snacks and/or lunch, and drinks are all good to have in your pack too.