



Le Metis



President's Message

Two weeks ago, I was in Cormorant, The Pas, and Barrows to meet with trappers, and the families of trappers, who commercially trapped as license-holders or badge-holders in the Summerberry Fur Block from 1940 to 1964. As you may recall from previous updates on the Summerberry negotiations, the commercial trapping livelihood was destroyed in the 1960's when the rising waters of the Grand Rapids Hydroelectric Dam flooded the Marsh and destroyed much of the muskrat habitat.

Starting back about 75 years ago, the Marsh was one of the World's best muskrat trapping areas. The Manitoba Government ran the Summerberry Fur Block like a business. All the furs caught by the trappers were given to the government for sale and, along with stipends, the trappers shared in the commercial market success. The Grand Rapids Dam's flooding of the Marsh brought this to an end nearly 50 years ago.

Many of the Summerberry's trappers were from five "core" communities: Grand Rapids; Easterville; Moose Lake; Cormorant; and The Pas. In addition to these, other trappers were invited to participate from places like Camperville, Duck Bay, Barrows and elsewhere. The group outside the "core" was made up of what has been called the "invited" communities.

I had earlier negotiated an agreement for compensating the commercial trappers from the two "invited" communities of Camperville and Duck Bay. In that agreement just over 170 trappers, those living and those who had passed on, were represented. In the end, nearly

700 cheques were issued to the beneficiaries of the agreement. Those beneficiaries were the trappers themselves or their surviving spouses or children.

The Summerberry trappers, now Elders, from Cormorant, The Pas, and Barrows had heard of the work we had done on successfully resolving the compensation claim for Camperville and Duck Bay. They approached me to ask if I could help in getting compensation for their Summerberry trapping losses and if I could lead the negotiations on behalf of the trappers and their families. I want to thank them for requesting that I assist as the MMF President. I am honoured that they asked me.

For nearly 50 years the trappers waited for justice. Sadly, because of the delay, many trappers died without any recognition of their losses. Before starting our negotiations two years ago, there had been little done towards compensating the commercial trappers of Cormorant, The Pas, and Barrows, and others, who had lost their trapping livelihood in the Summerberry Fur Block. Their wait is coming to an end. Having received their approvals at our recent meetings, I am pleased to say we are very close to concluding an agreement.

Reaching these agreements take time. I have been told that the Primrose trappers' compensation negotiations took over 10 years. We have been able to do this in 2 years. The 50 years of injustice and the age of the remaining trappers, some being more than 80 years old, mandated that we move without delay. Our agreement details are now being finalized while the legal paper-

work is being done. After a half-century our Metis trappers' hardships will finally be recognized.

I have been asked by Manitoba Hydro to extend our agreement to cover those from other communities who trapped commercially in the Summerberry. There are now over 1,100 names on the trappers list to be compensated. These trappers are from all over northern Manitoba and even from the south part of the province. These include Metis and Non-Metis trappers, such as those who were once Metis and now status, as well as other Manitobans. We are pleased we are able to work with Hydro to ensure all trappers are compensated.

I again want to offer my gratitude to the trappers and their families for their belief in my ability to reach an agreement. I wish to thank the Elders Committees led by Ron Fenner, Ovid Lavallee, and Fred Boucher. My success is due to them and a great team that also I want to thank: MMF Vice President Judy Mayer and MMF Minister Jack Park as well as Marc LeClair, Marci Riel, Jolene Mayer, and Al Benoit, and our other technical support. I also recognize and thank Manitoba Hydro's President and CEO Scott Thomson, and Vice President Ruth Kristjanson for making this agreement possible.

I offer prayers and condolences for all who have lost family and friends. Please pray for the good health of those who are sick or shut-in. I ask that you give each other a hug. Best wishes to all.

Believe in yourself – Believe in Metis!
Meeqwetch,

President David Chartrand, LL.D

Le Metis – The Voice of the Metis

Recently the Communications team at the Manitoba Metis Federation undertook a journey of discovery into the roots of Le Metis. We began our quest at the Centre du patrimoine/St Boniface Historical Society located in the heart of historic Saint-Boniface. Here we found a treasure trove of historical artifacts and documents of the Metis people in Western Canada.

During our visit we had the privilege of meeting the Centre's Executive Director, Mr. Gilles Lesage, who was kind enough to provide us with a tour. He showed us such rarities as a hand written letter by Louis Riel in which he instructs Reverend Joseph-Noël Ritchot

to inform the Canadian government that he desires the new province he founded be called "Manitoba".

However, our primary reason for this visit was to learn about the original incarnation of Le Metis. We discovered Le Metis was first published by Joseph Royal on May 27, 1871. The lead article declared the newspaper would "defend the good cause...based upon the eternal principles of right and justice."

Le Metis primarily concerned itself with the Metis community and defence of Metis land rights. For many, it was the only source of information for people living in the Red River Val-

ley and the North West.

Le Metis was published every week until its last issue on September 29, 1881 when it was succeeded by Le Manitoba. The execution of Louis Riel on November 16, 1886 was covered extensively by Le Manitoba. Mr. Lesage pointed out to us how each page and column in this issue was bordered with black as an acknowledgement that a great and important leader had died.

Just as the original Le Metis declared in 1871 it would strive to defend the good cause of right and justice, Le Metis today is dedicated to

acknowledging, advancing and defending the rights of Metis citizens.

Issues of the first Le Metis can be found at the Centre du patrimoine/St Boniface Historical Society in Saint-Boniface. You may also read issues online at:

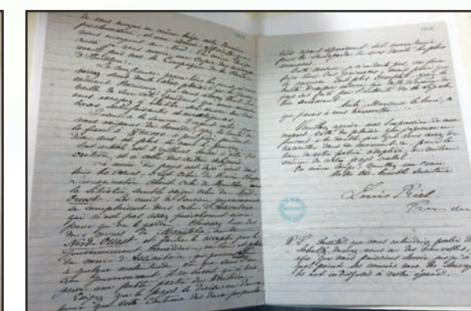
<http://manitobia.ca/content/en/newspaperslist>

And as always, the current version of Le Metis can be found online at the Manitoba Metis Federation's website

http://www.mmf.mb.ca/le_metis.php



Headline of the premier issue of Le Metis, May 27, 1871.



Handwritten letter by Louis Riel suggesting the province be named Manitoba.



Gilles Lesage of the Centre du patrimoine points out black borders around the Le Manitoba coverage of the execution of Metis leader and founder of Manitoba, Louis Riel.

Health Care Aide Training Opportunity

The Manitoba Metis Federation Southwest Region in partnership with Louis Riel Vocational College is seeking applications from individuals interested in entering into a career as a Health Care Aide.

Training will be offered in Brandon, MB and is 6 months in length. Anticipated start date is April 2015.

Spaces are limited. Program delivery is dependent on funding approval and a required minimum number of qualified participants.

For more information about this opportunity, please contact Julie at Southwest Metis Employment and Training

(204) 725-7520 or julie.parenteau@mmf.mb.ca

Individuals who meet the following criteria are encouraged to apply:

- Unemployed or Underemployed Metis, Non-Status, or Inuit who reside in Manitoba
- 18 years of age or older
- Minimum of Grade 12 or equivalent
- Mature Student
- Successful completion of Entrance Exam
- Willing & able to provide clear and recent Criminal Record, Child Abuse Registry and Adult Abuse Registry Checks
- Able to obtain immunization & health records
- Demonstrate a barrier to employment

Application Deadline: March 27, 2015



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