



Le Métis



President's Message

Our March 2013 MMF Land Claim victory at the Supreme Court of Canada remains foremost in the minds of the Métis people. When I travel throughout Manitoba and, indeed, across the Métis Nation, everyone wants to know the status of our claim. We remember clearly the Supreme Court vindication of our long struggle for justice. That was a great start in moving forward and I offer an update.

As you will recall, the Supreme Court reaffirmed that Section 31 of the Manitoba Act set aside 1.4 million acres of land to be given to the Métis children. This is a constitutional obligation engaging the honour of the Crown to give the Métis children a "head start" over the expected influx of settlers from the east. This solemn promise was not kept. The Court held that this promise had not been implemented "in accordance with the honour of the Crown." This has been called the unfinished business of Confederation.

The Métis are the Founders of Manitoba. We are also Canada's Negotiating Partner in Confederation. I have said before, here and elsewhere, that Canada left the negotiating table back in the late 1800s and didn't fulfill what had been promised. Now, with our victory, various independent recommendations, and a commitment by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, we are confident Canada will finish the business of Confederation, right the wrongs and create a legacy for our children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren.

To quote again the Supreme Court: "So long as the issue remains outstanding, the goal of reconciliation

and constitutional harmony, recognized in s. 35 of the *Charter* and underlying s. 31 of the *Manitoba Act 1870*, remains unachieved. The ongoing rift in the national fabric that s. 31 was adopted to cure remains unremedied. The unfinished business of reconciliation of the Métis people with Canadian sovereignty is a matter of national and constitutional import."

Please take some time to read the MMF decision. You can find a copy of it at our MMF website on our Land Claim webpage. Go straight to <http://www.mmf.mb.ca/wcm-docs/docs/metis-scoc-judgment-march-8-2013.pdf> to see the court's decision. You will find other relevant information on the webpage including documents, video, and links to other sites. If you don't have Internet access, please call the MMF Home Office and we will make arrangements to assist you in getting more information.

Canada understands the importance of bringing this unfinished business to completion. The Ministerial Special Representative Douglas Eyford in his February 2015 independent report, called *A New Direction: Advancing Aboriginal and Treaty Rights*, made the recommendation calling on Canada to "establish a framework for negotiations with the Manitoba Métis Federation to respond to the Supreme Court of Canada's decision in *Manitoba Metis Federation v Canada* 2013 SCC 14."

Following this clear and straightforward recommendation, the federal government appointed Mr. Tom Isaac "to explore ways to advance a dialogue on reconciliation with Métis in Manitoba in response to the 2013 *Manitoba Metis Federation et al. v. Canada* decision [...]" As per his mandate, the MMF met with Mr. Isaac back in June 2015 over a three-day period - making presentations to share with him the MMF governance structure and to discuss our perspectives. Although appointed by government, his reporting is arms-length and independent. We look forward seeing to his report in the New Year.

The world is now watching Canada's next moves. In 2014, after an MMF presentation to the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the rights of Indigenous

peoples, James Anaya in his international address stated clearly that Canada must resolve Métis claims. He wrote Canada must undertake "active measures to develop a procedure for addressing outstanding Métis land claims, to avoid having to litigate cases individually, and enter into negotiations [...]"

Liberal Party Leader, now Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, no stranger to the Métis people, understands the need for the negotiations. At our 2013 Annual General Assembly, he made a welcome video announcement to nearly 3,000 delegates, saying, "The courts have provided much-needed clarity around your long-standing land claim. Now the federal government must sit down and, nation-to-nation, negotiate in good faith to reach a fair and equitable resolution to this historic injustice. And, I commit to you if this government does not, my government will."

Clearly there is energy and momentum to move our MMF Land Claim towards resolution. In the Liberal election platform, *Real Change: Advancing and Achieving, Reconciliation for the Metis Nation*, the new Government renewed its commitment to "immediately establish a negotiations process between Canada and the Manitoba Métis Federation in order to settle the outstanding land claim of the Manitoba Métis community, as recognized by the Supreme Court of Canada in *Manitoba Métis Federation v. Canada* (AG)."

Over a hundred and forty-five years have passed since the Métis agreed to bring our traditional homeland into Confederation. Over the same period we demanded justice. It is now time for negotiation and reconciliation. It is now time for the Partners in Confederation to take the next steps together into a renewed partnership. We are prepared to take those steps.

I offer my prayers for our friends and family members who have passed on and my condolences to those who have lost a loved one. My hopes are with those who are sick or shut in and I offer my best wishes to all.

Meeqwetch,

∞ President David Chartrand, LL.D. (hon), O.M.

Celebrating the Accomplishments of Louis Riel and his Provisional Government

On October 22, 2015, the Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF) and the Manitoba Government launched a new online learning resource tool for high school students at an event at the Manitoba Legislature Building in Winnipeg. The resource tool highlights and recognizes the contribution of the Métis people and the Legislative Assembly of Assiniboia's important role in Canadian history. Louis Riel and his provisional government formed the Legislative Assembly of Assiniboia in 1869. Their vision of equality for people, language and religion, were the key values which brought Manitoba into Confederation with Canada.

"From before Confederation the Métis people emphasized equality of people, language and religion," said MMF President David Chartrand, "The MMF is proud to be a part of this educational tool that highlights the contribution of the Métis Nation as Founders of Manitoba and Canada's negotiating partner in Confederation."

In December 1869, the Legislative Assembly of Assiniboia, negotiated and formalized a List of Rights that provided the framework for the Manitoba Act 1870. This Act created the province of Manitoba and brought it into Confederation with Canada. A majority of the members elected to the Legislative Assembly of Assiniboia were Métis equally representative of English and French speaking people. It was the first democratically elected government formed by aboriginal people in the region that would become Manitoba and the first of its kind in what would become Western Canada.

"The Legislative Assembly of Assiniboia was the first and only democratic-elected government of its time and it was formed by Aboriginal people," said Joan Ledoux, MMF Minister of Education, "This government was composed of Métis, French and English members that sought to recognize the rights of all people equally. It was also the first government that mandated both the French and English languages be used in the Assembly and the workings of the government and court systems."

This new online resource tool will be used to promote a greater understanding in the Manitoba High School Curriculum of the significant role the Métis played in the formation of the province of Manitoba. It aims to give students a greater appreciation for the evolution of Manitoba, and of the conscientious efforts of those involved who worked diligently to secure our place in Confederation.



Top: Sessional Journal of Legislative Assembly of Assiniboia.
Bottom Left: High school students participate in live demonstration of the new learning resource.
Bottom Right: Student speaker Hayden Liberty and Elder George Fleury.

"This history is not new to the Métis Nation. We have always taught our Métis Children about our rightful place in history," said Minister Ledoux, "We have always celebrated Louis Riel as the Founder of Manitoba and a Father of Confederation."

The MMF and Manitoba Government began working on this project in 2010, as part of the province's Manitoba Métis Policy. The Policy was created and developed by the MMF and Manitoba Government with the goal of working together to strengthen the capacity of the Métis community. One of the goals listed within the policy is to promote and express a greater understanding of Métis culture and history.

"Since gaining recognition in 2010, we have worked in partnership with the province to create a resource that will assist all of us in educating our youth on the vibrant history of the Métis Nation, Manitoba, and Canada," said Minister Ledoux, "After 5 years of research and collaboration we have an interactive learning resource to share with the world."

As an acknowledgement and celebration of Louis Riel and his provisional government's accomplishments in the Legislative Assembly of Assiniboia, the launch of the project fell appropriately on October 22, Louis Riel's birthday.

"The Métis people played a pivotal role in Manitoba's history and political development, so

it's fitting that we're launching this new learning resource on the birthday of Louis Riel, founder of this province and leader of the Métis people," said Education and Advanced Learning Minister James Allum. "Students here in Manitoba and across Canada will benefit from this engaging resource, which will help to redefine our perception of the accomplishments of Métis people."

High school students present at the launch participated in a live demonstration of the new learning tool. Members of the public at the event were able to view the actual Sash that was worn by Louis Riel during this time as well as the Sessional Journal of the Assembly of Assiniboia that records the momentous occasion of ratifying the Manitoba Act 1870:

"Hon. Mr. Schmidt seconded by Hon. Mr. Poitras moved that the Legislative Assembly of this country do now, in the name of the people, accept the Manitoba Act, + decide on entering the Dominion of Canada, on the terms proposed in the Confederation Act. - Carried amid loud cheers..." - Sessional Journal (pp 51-52)

To view this new learning resource and to learn more about the Legislative Assembly of Assiniboia, please visit:

www.legislativeassemblyofassiniboia.ca

MMF Citizenship Beyond Borders

The Manitoba Métis are highly mobile, and dispersed across and beyond the Métis Nation Homeland. We are a community based on identity, history, family, economic, and other relationships. Our families and lands go well past the historic and present-day borders of Manitoba.

Our people do not want their families split up by arbitrary and artificial borders. We will not be defined by boundaries not Métis-made nor of Métis-choosing. To overcome these obstacles, our Citizens declared it is no longer necessary to be a Manitoba resident to be an MMF Citizen. Our people will remain united.

The Manitoba Métis Community is home no matter where we live. Our siblings, children, and cousins have over the years moved outside the province. Many are denied identity cards. Others live where there is no Metis Government. Others are loyal, will always call our Community home, and not apply elsewhere.

At the 2014 Annual General Assembly a constitutional amendment was unanimously passed dealing with citizenship residency. Now to join the MMF the applicant needs connection to the Manitoba Métis Community. To do this, the applicant shows he or she was born in, lived as a

child in, or currently lives in, a place represented by an MMF Region and Local, or has a direct ancestral connection to a place represented by an MMF Region and Local.

With the new approach the applicant demonstrates he or she belongs to the Manitoba Métis Community. Being a Manitoba Métis is key – he or she is no longer required to live in the province. This means our Métis relatives outside the province can join the MMF and be a certified Citizen of the Manitoba Métis Community.

The following are important considerations:

Harvesting: The new citizenship residency rules are not applicable to the Metis Harvesting Initiative. Métis Harvesters will still need to be resident in Manitoba, and hunt, fish, and gather according to the Metis Laws of the Harvest and provincial agreements.

Voting: Currently under the MMF election bylaw, citizens are not required to have residency in his or her Local or Region but must return to the Local or Region in which he or she is a member to vote in elections. This does not change and “non-residents” will be able to vote following current election bylaws.

Programs and Services: These will continue to be delivered by the MMF according to the funders’ contribution agreements’ terms and conditions and will respect agreement-specific geographic restrictions or requirements.

Applications: There are two ways for non-residents to apply: one is walk-in applications. In this way the non-resident applicant personally meets with the Local and brings the signed application into the Region for processing. This can be done, for instance, while visiting family or on vacation in Manitoba. This is no different from the current resident application. The second way is a mail-in-application with the non-resident applicant mailing the application to the Local in the care of the Region.

Again, with this new MMF Citizenship approach, residency in the province of Manitoba is no longer a requirement. What is important is being a part of the Manitoba Métis Community, a community beyond borders.

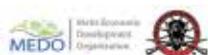
For more information, or if you have any questions, please contact the Central Registry Office in the MMF Home Office at 204-586-8474.



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Got Bison?

Bison have always been, and remain, a significant and historical part of Métis culture and history. They have been an important staple to the Métis way of life, dating back to the Métis Red River settlement and North American fur trade days. The Métis were known for their highly organized buffalo hunts which operated twice a year during the spring and fall season. The great bison herd of Grand Coteau du Missouri and the Red River of the North, and great bison herd of the Saskatchewan River, were the two main herds the Red River hunters would hunt.

The Métis used the bison for food, clothing, cooking and more. Nothing was ever wasted. Meat from the bison was used along with fat and berries to make pemmican. This was then traded to the North West Company, and later the Hudson's Bay Company. The Métis would also trade buffalo robes made from cured buffalo hide.

In 2003, the Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF) was gifted a dozen female bison courtesy of the Demare family. The MMF subsequently purchased a bull. The herd was intended to be an important and sustainable contribution to the MMF's cultural programs. It was also hoped the bison could be used as a seed herd for further expansion and to possibly create an economically viable bison farm.

In April 2009, the MMF had 33 bison in the herd. At that time, the bison were transported from



MMF Bison (June 2008)

Elphinstone where they were originally kept, to Rosa, Manitoba. During the move 13 were sold to a feedlot in Hamiota, and six were butchered for meat. Seven bison were lost to an anthrax outbreak in 2010. One bull yearling and two bulls were also butchered for meat in 2010. One cow was butchered in 2011. There are currently nine bison remaining in the herd now located in St. Malo, Manitoba.

The MMF has been donating bison meat to the Selkirk Friendship Centre every year to celebrate a community feast. Proposed arrangements for further activities involving the MMF Bison include a 'hide tanning workshop' for 2016.

For more information on the MMF Bison, please contact the Natural Resources Department of the MMF at (204) 586-8474.



MMF 2015 Halloween

Employees at the Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF) celebrated with Halloween festivities on October 30, 2015.

The celebrations included an afternoon potluck for all MMF staff and prizes for best individual costume, most original costume. A prize was also awarded to the department with the best Halloween decorations.

Halloween 2015 at the MMF was a great success!



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