



# Le Métis



## President's Message

The Season for Peace, Joy and Goodwill to all people is upon us. All around us we hear and join in with familiar Christmas Carols and long standing Holiday Traditions. It is, as the song goes, the most wonderful time of the year!

For many, it is a time of frantic shopping, gift-wrapping and gift-giving, and office parties. Of course these are important, but often in the rush other more important things are forgotten. The Holidays are also occasions to reflect on our experiences over the past year, to spend time with family and friends, and to help others who are in need both here at home and abroad.

Recently, as we reflected upon the Christmas Season, one of my staff shared with me a story from his home community. During one Christmas morning, a little boy came to his house to visit. When the young boy was asked what Santa had brought him for Christmas, he burst into tears and said "Santa forgot to come to my house." The young boy came from a single parent home and his Dad could not afford to give him a gift at Christmas. My staff person went into his house and spoke to his kids. They decided to give the young boy one of their gifts. The toy was wrapped and the little boy was told that Santa had left a present for him under their tree by mistake.

This story breaks my heart. No child should have to face Christmas morning disappointed that Santa forgot them. No parent or grandparent should have to look at their children and tell them that there is no magic, no gift and no Santa this year.

The Métis have a time honoured and rich tradition of sharing. The Métis welcomed many of the immigrants who came from outside Canada and assisted them in their settlement here in Manitoba. Transporting the Mennonites by Red River Cart from their boats to their first homes is but one example. Our welcome of the Icelanders to the shores of Lake Winnipeg in the mid to late 1800s is also well known. This tradition is upheld even now by our Métis Citizens. For example, each year, Glorian and our family work with the Metis Child and Family Services to provide a family in care with all the fixings for a magical and fun filled Christmas.

I know what it is like to have very little. Growing up, we were very poor. My Mom worked hard every year to make sure each one of her children had a gift for Christmas morning. She knew the importance of making her children feel loved and appreciated. Her care and concern also extended to everyone who came to her home. Every Christmas she made sure she had enough food to feed her family and any other person who came to our home during the Holidays.

Out of the depths of my Mother's love for her children and her community, she gave. Her kindness and compassion left a mark on me. Her efforts, support and instruction has helped me become who I am today. Without my Mom's guidance, I would be a lesser man. Her lessons of generosity and love for everyone has taught me to do whatever I can for others as well. She has guided me, and still guides me today, as your President.

In the Spirit of this Season I invite you to join me and my family in making this Christmas extra special for families in need. The President's Office will be collecting donations to help provide a happy Christmas to Metis Child and Family Services children. If you would like to help make this Christmas extra special for a child in need, call Amanda in the President's Office at (204) 586-8474. We can connect you with a family that you can bless this year. If you aren't able to support a whole family, don't worry! You can still

help make the Holidays merry for a family. Some of our staff and friends provide money towards a Christmas hamper. We can take whatever donation you give and use it to provide a jolly Christmas dinner and gifts for the Children.

Remember, there are many other ways you can give this year. For some people in our community, Christmas can be a difficult time for all kinds of reasons. Maybe you have neighbours far from home and family. A visit and a greeting can help push away the darkness of feeling alone during the Holidays. Maybe your neighbour is an Elder. Why not help them out by shoveling their walkway, dropping off some Christmas goodies or just visiting for some tea and conversation? We all have the ability to make this Christmas a time of Peace, Joy and Goodwill.

And, we must never forget the Métis who heard the call of service from their country and humanity. They made personal sacrifices, and for many the ultimate sacrifice, during World Wars I and II, Korea, Afghanistan, other conflicts, and our peacekeeping missions. We thank our veterans for standing strong - for keeping peace, defending democracy, and protecting families, here and overseas.

The magic and meaning of Christmas is, of course, in the celebration of Jesus. It is also about love, peace, and helping others. I do hope that you are able to spend this special time with your family, friends and neighbours. My wish is that we are able to bring the gift of joy, now and into the future, to all those who have touched our lives over this past year.

I offer my best wishes for those who are sick or shut-in. May you be blessed with healing, health, and peace. I pray and share my heartfelt condolences and deepest sympathies for all our neighbours, friends, and families who have lost loved ones. On behalf our MMF Board of Directors, staff, and citizens, I wish everyone a Merry Christmas, Happy New Year, and Wonderful Holiday Season.

Meeqwetch,

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



Traditional Métis beadwork.

## A Beadwork Tradition

The Métis are well known as the “flower beadwork people” for their stunning beaded floral designs. To carry on the beadwork tradition, Louis Riel Institute (LRI) has created a Flower Beadwork Group that meets every Wednesday evening from 5-8 pm. During these meets, group participants are able to share ideas, patterns, techniques and their knowledge to keep the traditional craft alive.

Since the days of the North American fur trade, the Métis have always been known for their creative and stunning beadwork designs. The designs are typically compositions of European flowers. Examples of the traditional craft can often be seen set against a tan hide or dark felt background in a flowing symmetrical pattern. They are also distinctive from patterns found among other Indigenous groups. These creations were so impressive that, as trade goods, these articles were distributed throughout both North America and Europe.

The designs were used to decorate jackets, vests, bags, leggings, gloves, and sashes. Beadwork designs were also used to symbolize the valued relationships the Métis had with their animals. Elaborate decorative designs would also adorn equipment such as horse halters, bridles, martingales, blankets, pad saddles, pouches and whips. The colours and patterns used in the designs also helped identify family or clan.

Today Métis floral designs are still to decorate popular items such as moccasins, mukluks, jackets, gloves, bags, and jewelry. Christi Belcourt, a modern Métis artist, also incorporates the traditional craft and floral design in her paintings. Recently, she has received interest from Valentino, an Italian fashion line, looking to feature her floral designs and patterns.

Jennine Krauche, a local Master Beader, was one of the few Métis beadworkers 10-15 years ago who offered and taught lessons in the traditional craft. Up until recent years, this traditional craft was almost never heard of anymore.

“Recently, I have noticed a great resurgence of Métis beadworkers. In the past, the idea of getting together to do beadwork was to have the younger people

observe and learn from mothers and grandmothers,” states Krauche. “What I find interesting now, is that in some beading groups the young are now teaching the old.”

With the renewed interest in the traditional craft, LRI has brought together a group of 32 experienced and beginner beadworkers of all ages for their weekly Flower Beadwork Group.

“Beadwork workshops, or get-togethers are not just about keeping our art of beadwork alive. It is also about keeping our Métis culture alive as well,” explains Krauche. “It is like beadwork itself - it all starts with a single bead, but the group of them tells a beautiful story.”

Beadworkers of all levels are welcome to join this diverse group. Those who have experience with the craft are encouraged to bring in pieces of their own.

“We share a lot of stories, and you get to chat and laugh with other people who are interested in the same thing as you,” says LRI Bead Group Coordinator, Louise Gordey. “It’s a nice feeling just to be in a room with other people who love what you love.”

LRI provides beginners wanting to learn the craft with a starter pack. However, beginners should give advanced notice of their attendance to ensure enough supplies are prepared and available.

The group functions on a drop-in type basis and operates year-round. Participants have the option of starting a brand new project or completing a previous project they may be working on. The group is currently on break until after the Holiday Season. The Beadwork Group resumes January 6, 2015

If you are interested in learning the traditional beadwork craft, or have questions about the Beadwork Group, please contact Louise Gordey at 204-984-9480 or email [lgordey@mmf.mb.ca](mailto:lgordey@mmf.mb.ca).

## 2015 MMF Annual Open House

On December 4, 2015, the Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF) hosted their Annual Open House at the Home Office located at 150 Henry Avenue in Winnipeg. Members of the public were given a 'Passport' when they arrived and they were encouraged to visit each department of the MMF. As they visited and interacted with each department, their passports were stamped. Guest who had their passports stamped by every department were entered for a chance to win a prize.

During the Open House, the Louis Riel Institute also celebrated its 20th Anniversary. MMF Education Minister Joan Ledoux and Manitoba Deputy Minister of Education Gerald Farthing cut a celebratory cake to share with guests.

Also during this Festive Time, MMF Minister of Finance Anita Campbell presented Kai Madsen of the Christmas Cheer Board with a \$5000 donation. This continues a tradition that President Chartrand started to help make sure every family is able to celebrate Christmas.

The MMF would like to thank everyone who visited for helping make the 2015 Annual Open House a huge success.



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Indigenous Scholars Speaker Series

# ARE THE METIS TREATY PEOPLE?

*An Examination of the Manitoba Act  
as a Treaty with the Metis Nation*



**DR. ADAM GAUDRY**

Assistant Professor, Indigenous Studies,  
University of Saskatchewan.

**JANUARY 6<sup>TH</sup>, 2016**

12:30–1:30 PM  
Convocation Hall  
University of Winnipeg



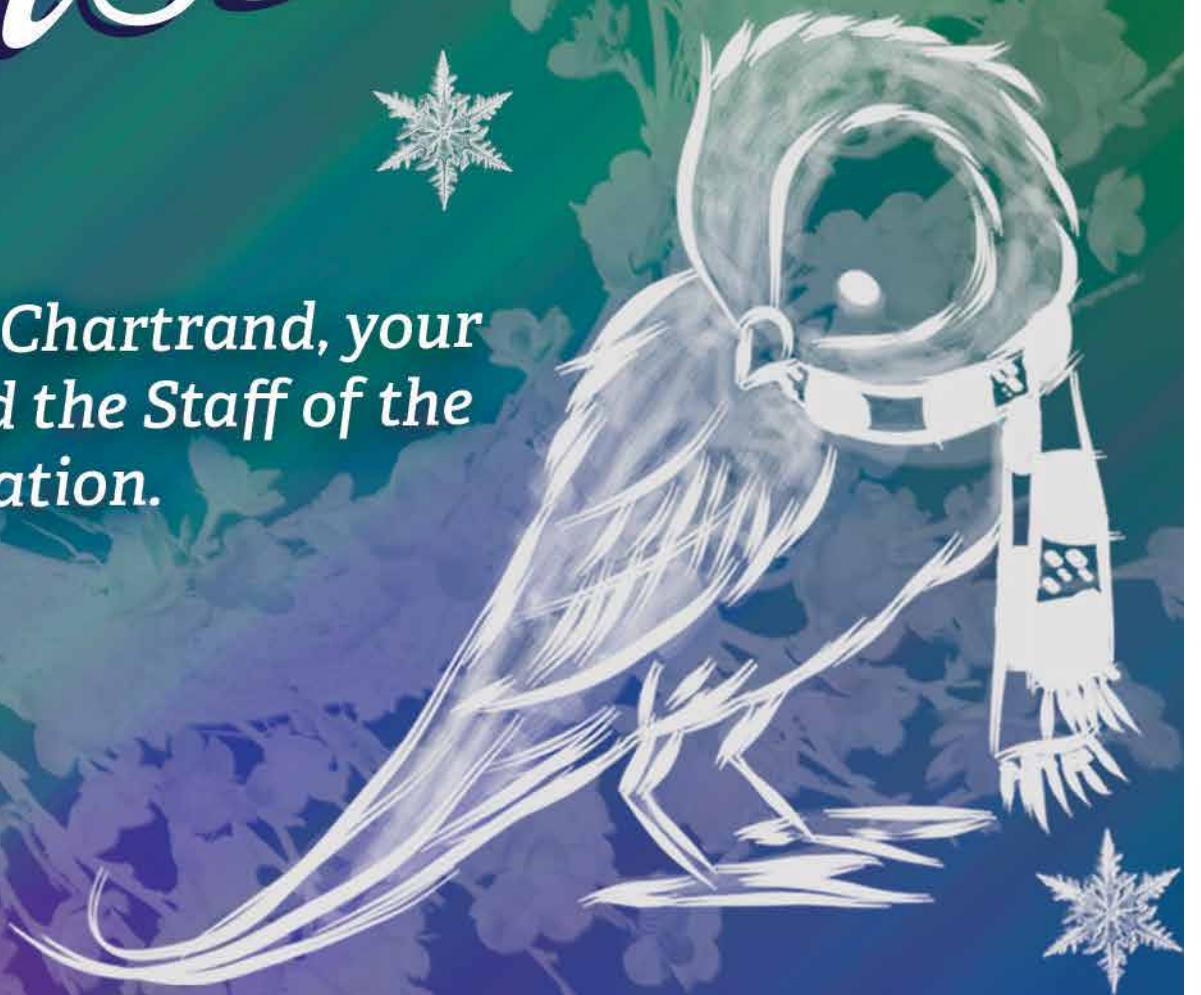
THE UNIVERSITY OF  
WINNIPEG

**HOSTED BY:**

Wab Kinew, Associate Vice-President of Indigenous Affairs at UWinnipeg,  
in partnership with the Louis Riel Institute.

# Merry Christmas

*From President David Chartrand, your  
Métis Government and the Staff of the  
Manitoba Metis Federation.*



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