



Le Métis



President's Message

Despite the great things happening in and for the Métis Nation regarding reconciliation, recognition and acknowledgement of our constitutionally protected rights, there is still much work to be done and much knowledge to share with our Métis Citizens, other Aboriginal peoples and Canadians in general. Recent remarks made in the media only serves to underline the ignorance and rhetoric being spread in the public concerning Aboriginal rights.

I am a little disappointed Premier Pallister would take the approach that existing misconceptions and prejudiced attitudes by an ill-informed section of the population regarding Aboriginal constitutional rights amounts to a 'race war'. Such rhetoric as this is inflammatory. It only serves to sow division and distrust between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

And it isn't only the Premier. Just recently councillors and reeves from the southwest part of Manitoba chose to take the low road of innuendo and misinformation by falsely claiming Métis hunters were overhunting and abusing our right to provide food for our families. However, when pressed for proof, none could be found.

Our Métis harvesters are not overhunting. Our Métis harvesters follow the Métis Laws of the Harvest safely and responsibly. These laws were prepared through

consultation with our Harvesters and our Elders. They have evolved from laws that began more than a century ago with the Laws of the Hunt that Métis Buffalo hunters created, respected and followed. Our existing laws respect the resources we harvest and have been developed with an eye for responsible and sustainable conservation. These laws will continue to adapt to our changing environment and reality as Métis Harvesters, Elders and their duly elected Métis Government work together to ensure our resources continue meeting the needs of our family and Métis community.

Let me be clear. We will not take direction from others on how we exercise our constitutional rights as the Métis Nation. We will not permit them the opportunity to try and extinguish or prevent the rights of our Métis Harvesters through rumour and innuendo based on false claims and baseless accusations. Their accusations are not based in safety concerns or conservation efforts. There are simply no facts to not support any claims that they have made to suggest it is Métis rights-based harvesters who are the problem with night hunting or overhunting. Your Métis Government and I, as its President, will fight to protect our constitutional rights as Métis Citizens.

Speaking of Métis rights, I am travelling to Ottawa this week for a Summit meeting between Prime Minister Trudeau and the Métis Nation. The MMF, as one of the five governing members of the Métis Nation, will be signing an agreement with Canada. We will outline a number of important issues and priorities that the Métis Nation will meet about with the Government of Canada throughout the year. We anticipate this being a productive meeting. While the MMF has been advancing reconciliation on a number of issues related directly to the Manitoba Métis - also known as the Red River Métis - we will also be

working with the other governing members of the Métis Nation to ensure a more secure recognition extends all across the Métis Nation Homeland.

I look forward to sharing more good news on reconciliation and acknowledgement of Métis rights in the areas of governance and self-determination. I have said it often before, and I say it again, Our Time Has Come!

.....
Let me be clear. We will not take direction from others on how we exercise our constitutional rights as the Métis Nation.
.....

We are part of a mighty Métis Nation. We have endured many difficulties, losses and persecutions. We still have battles to fight, and let us remain vigilant. Many have given their lives, their families and their reputations to fight on our behalf. Let us honour them by our faithfulness to their vision for our lasting place in this great country.

Finally, I wish to give my thoughts and prayers to every Métis Citizen in Manitoba - particularly those who have cause to grieve or who are sick. Continue to support and encourage one another. Be well. Be safe. May your homes and villages be strengthened through the harmony of family and unity of purpose.

Meeqwetch,

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

Traditional Hide Tanning in the Contemporary World

Hide tanning has been an essential part of Indigenous life for thousands of years, passed down through generations as both a tradition and an unconventional form of artistry. For the Métis, bi-annual buffalo hunts in the 1800s sometimes yielded over a million pounds of meat and hides. Tanning buffalo hides was a primary source for the Métis in crafting clothing and household items, which they also sold in the fur trade as part of their livelihood. Today, the option of buying tanned hides commercially has unfortunately led to a loss of knowledge about traditional, at-home tanning methods.

Carl Froese, owner of Winnipeg shop Manitoba Buckskin, is bringing the craft of hide tanning into the modern world. Froese makes all natural, tanned buckskin leather using a combination of traditional methods and processes learned from different communities and people, including Métis and First Nations. He works with buffalo, deer, elk, moose, caribou, and muskox hides. The hide tanning techniques Froese uses honour historic methods and styles.

"It's an important tradition of the place where we live, it's a way to honour these animals, and it's a unique art that is not as common or well understood as it should be," explains Froese.

There are various methods Froese uses for tanning hides. One method begins when Froese removes the meat, fat and membranes with a fleshing knife. He

washes the hide and stretches it on a frame to dry. Once dry, the hide still has hair on one side, which is scraped off along with the outer skin layer. The hide is then smoked for a few days. When it is removed from the smoke, grease and animal brains are applied to the hair side and left to soak into the hide overnight until dry. The hide is then cooked on low heat for a few days, which makes it easier to soften. After soaking in water for a few hours or overnight, the hide is scraped and stretched repeatedly until it dries and softens into leather. For the finishing touch, the hide is smoked again until it reaches the desired shade of colour.

Through Manitoba Buckskin, Froese also offers hide tanning workshops for those who are interested in learning and breathing new life into the craft. On January 14, members of the Louis Riel Institute's *The Flower Beadwork Circle* attended a workshop, where they were able to learn and participate in the process of tanning two buffalo hides they acquired from a rural Manitoba farmer.

The group, who meet weekly to keep the craft of Métis beadwork alive, plan to use the finished hides for educational purposes in school presentations and cultural exhibitions. Froese and *The Flower Beadwork Circle* members hope to see renewed interest in learning how to tan hides at home, which results in better quality hides than those made commercially.

"The buckskin leather we make is very strong,

very durable, and water resistant. It's a unique and beautiful textile to work with," says Froese. "It also has a superior quality to any commercial leather because it hasn't been chemically broken, meaning the integrity of the skin structure is retained."

In history, the Métis and other Indigenous groups honoured the animals they hunted by using as many parts of the animal as possible. If more people today learned how to tan hides at home, this would allow hunters to take advantage of another useful part of the animals they harvest each season. In turn, if a larger number of knowledgeable hide tanners existed, artisans like members of *The Flower Beadwork Circle* who work with animal hides would have a larger range of high-quality textiles to choose from. By learning the hide tanning process in modern times, it is hoped this will prevent the tradition from becoming a lost art of ages past.

If you are interested in learning the traditional craft of hide tanning, or visiting Manitoba Buckskin, please visit www.manitobabuckskin.com for contact and location details. *The Flower Beadwork Circle* also invites members of the community who are interested in seeing the tanning process, or participating in scraping the group's two buffalo hides, to please contact Louise Gordey at 204-586-8474 or lgordey@mmf.mb.ca.



Carl Froese, owner of Winnipeg shop Manitoba Buckskin, demonstrates his methods of hide tanning during a workshop on January 14, 2017.



The Manitoba Metis Federation Signs Partnership Agreement With Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre

The Manitoba Metis Federation's (MMF) Minister of Provincial Education, Joan Ledoux, recognized the life of Sarah Ballenden during a partnership agreement signing with the Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre (RMTTC) for the upcoming play titled 'Sarah Ballenden' early last week.

She said, "This is a celebration of all powerful and Métis women in Manitoba. It is a celebration which goes beyond the walls of the theatre centre, not only to celebrate the life and times which Sarah faced, but go beyond what greatness awaits Métis women today."

The partnership agreement was signed on January 16th, 2017 by Minister Ledoux and RMTTC Artistic Director, Steven Schipper, at the Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre in Winnipeg.

Camilla Holland, Executive Director of the RMTTC, wished to thank the MMF, the Louis Riel Institute and

the RMTTC for crafting not only the play, but also the partnership agreement.

The play tells the tale of treason and the personal cost Sarah endures in defence of allegations made against her honour, but most of all it tells the tale of family, and how Sarah rose above it all. With only her wits and tough Métis nature, Sarah was able to find her way through the mire of corruption, lies and greed. Set during the times of the developing Red River Settlement and Selkirk Colony, the Hudson Bay Fort of 1835 will come to life on the John Hirsch Mainstage.

Playing the heart-wrenching leading role is known actress Sera-Lys McArthur, who starred in films such as *Skye and Chang*, *Hard Core Logo 2*, *The Lost Angel*, and *The Wolf of Waubamuk Woods*.

A feast for the eyes and food for the soul, the play is sure to vindicate and set right the dark actions which

have resonated through time, over a century ago.

The play will run from April 20th until May 13th, featuring full visibility featuring the talents of:

John Bluethner as The Major;
Paul Essiembre as John Ballenden;
Toby Hughes as Christopher Foss;
Tom Keenan as Augustus Pelly;
Kevin Klassen as Adam Thom;
Sera-Lys McArthur as Sarah Ballenden;
Tracey Nepinak as Mrs. Cochrane/Dr. John Bunn.

To learn more about the play and to reserve your tickets, please visit: <http://www.mtc.mb.ca/Current-Plays/Sarah-Ballenden.aspx>



Royal MTC Artistic Director, Steven Schipper, and Manitoba Metis Federation Minister of Provincial Education, Joan Ledoux, show off the signed partnership agreement for upcoming play 'Sarah Ballenden'.



Find the latest
news online



ManitobaMetisFederationOfficial



@MBMetis_MMF



ManitobaMetisMMF



www.mmf.mb.ca

SARAH BALLENDE

1818-1853.



*“I
won’t be
lied about.”*

Play performances:
April 20 - May 13, 2017
Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre

To learn more and to get your tickets, please visit
<http://www.mtc.mb.ca>