



# Le Métis



## President's Message

This past Monday we celebrated the 10th year since the children of our province voted to name February's Manitoba Family Day to Louis Riel Day. This day is a provincial holiday and does not replace the November 16th Riel Day when the Métis Nation mark the death and celebrate the life of our Métis leader. This February saw the Manitoba Métis Federation and the St. Boniface Museum welcome all Manitobans to a free day of entertainment and cultural programming at the museum – a location that is arguably one of the most ideal settings to celebrate Louis Riel and his life's work.

The Manitoba Métis Federation has many artifacts such as Riel's sash, field telescope and beard hair on loan to the Museum. People who visited the museum on Louis Riel Day had excellent opportunities to discover interesting facts about the life of Louis Riel and recognize his contributions to Manitoba and Canada. His life's work led to the creation of the

Province of Manitoba, as well as the establishment of constitutional protection for language, rights, and equality in government.

During the day, the Louis Riel Institute hosted bilingual historic bus tours built around the life and legacy of Louis Riel. Stops included the Upper Fort Garry site where Riel and his Métis provisional government drafted the Métis List of Rights that became the framework for the *Manitoba Act, 1870*. The Métis, as Canada's negotiating partners, created the province of Manitoba and brought it into Confederation. The tour concluded at the resting place of Louis Riel located at St. Boniface Cathedral.

During this time of celebration of Louis Riel, the question of whether or not Canada should pardon or exonerate him was again raised. Some think he should be pardon. Others are calling for him to be exonerated. Pardon and exoneration, while different, will lead to a similar result: an excusing of what happened in 1885. A pardon would admit a traitor's guilt on behalf of Riel – which the Métis Nation will never allow to happen. He was only guilty of protecting his people, their lands and their rights. On the other hand, an exoneration would simply hide the guilt of Canada and excuse them for murdering Riel. Both are a dishonour to the man, his legacy, the work he did and the sacrifices he made.

Just this past week the Manitoba Métis Federation participated in a round table to discuss the question of exonerating Louis Riel. CBC French radio hosted the discussion "2017, le 150e anniversaire de la Confédération est-il l'occasion d'innocenter le chef métis Louis Riel?" and broadcasted it live in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. It was also made live in Alberta online through the CBC Radio Facebook page "ICI Manitoba". Mona Buors, MMF Associated Minister of Heritage, Culture, Sports and Youth, represented the Métis Nation.

During the discussions, Minister Buors stated the Métis Nation is not interested in exoneration – in excusing Canada for their actions against Louis Riel. An exoneration would simply mean that Canada

is exonerated. It fixes nothing for Riel. He is still dead. It does not recognize his important work or the sacrifices he made. Canada cannot escape the judgement of history. If Canada wants to reconcile and make things right, there are better and more important way this can be done. Exoneration is NOT one of those ways.

One way Canada can help reconcile this grievous wrong is to finally recognize Louis Riel for who he was – a Father of Confederation. Place a statue of him on Parliament Hill with the other Fathers of Confederation. Then, follow this up with an admission of guilt on behalf of Canada and make an apology to the Métis Nation for murdering this great man and Métis visionary.

Finally, address the important issues facing the Métis Nation today – ignore them no longer. These issues include, but are not limited to, keeping the constitutional promise made in 1870, the ongoing health crisis Métis face in Manitoba as revealed in a joint study the MMF did with the University of Manitoba in 2013, provide supports for the advancement of the Métis culture including language, and invest in economic development initiatives for the Métis.

It is time for all levels of governments to stop treating the Métis like third class citizens. It is time for the federal government in particular to keep to the words of our Prime Minister when he has repeatedly stated that his government's relationship with the Métis is of prime importance and to fulfill their campaign promise for a renewed nation-to-nation and government-to-government relationship with the Métis Nation.

In closing, I offer my thoughts and prayers for those who are shut-in or are having difficult times through failing health, sickness or loss. May you find company, encouragement, and help through your connections with family, friends and community. I wish you the best as we head into the brighter and warmer days of Spring.

Meeqwetch,

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

## A Check Stop Like No Other

Drivers passing through a check stop at Lower Fort Garry historic site on February 1, 2017 were greeted with an extraordinary delegation of Royal Canadian Mountain Police (RCMP). Past and present policing uniforms and transportation – including a Métis Red River cart – lined the roadside. The aim of the check stop was not to hand out citations, but rather to check valid drivers, remind them about road safety, and gift them an RCMP lapel pin to celebrate the first ever RCMP Day. The first of February in 1920 marks the date Canadian Parliament passed legislation joining the Canadian Dominion police force with the Northwest Mounted Police, forming today's RCMP.

In November 2016, the Manitoba Government passed legislation officially naming February 1, 2017 as Manitoba's inaugural RCMP Day. The Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF) was invited to participate in the day's celebrations at Lower Fort Garry as a way to highlight the positive working relationship between the MMF and the RCMP. The MMF's Minister of Natural Resources and Agriculture, Alfred Anderson, was on hand to help mark this important day.

"I'm very pleased the RCMP got in touch with the Manitoba Metis Federation to be part of this celebration," said Minister Anderson. "We're making history again. We've moved ahead together tremendously and this is all part of it; we're looking forward to future partnerships."

The partnership between MMF's Metis Justice Institute (MJJI) and the RCMP began with the appointment of a representative from the RCMP "D" Division Aboriginal Policing Services as Metis Liaison Coordinator. The Metis Liaison Coordinator, stationed at the MMF Home Office, works to educate and provide cultural awareness to RCMP personnel. The Coordinator also helps develop communications strategies and processes that enhance a respectful, trusting relationship regarding policing priorities specific for Métis Citizens and villages. Through this partnership, the Coordinator works with the Manitoba Métis Community to help identify and address gaps in policing initiatives, prevent potential conflict, and improve policing services to keep Manitoba's Métis safe.

Some initiatives the Metis Liaison Coordinator has assisted with include: implementing the Métis Community Justice Project in Thompson, The Pas, and Dauphin; attending MMF Local meetings to provide information about the partnership between MMF and the RCMP; and improving community knowledge of RCMP activities to develop transparency and resolve misunderstandings. The Coordinator also works with the RCMP Recruiting Department to increase the number of Métis applications to the RCMP in both officer and civilian roles. Due to its success, the



Interlake Region Vice President Alfred Anderson shakes hands with RCMP officers at the recent inaugural RCMP Day on February 1, 2017. The date marks 97 years since the joining of the Canadian Dominion Police force and the Northwest Mounted Police.

Memorandum of Understanding between MJJI and the RCMP extended the Metis Liaison Coordinator position for another two years last winter.

The MMF extends a heartfelt thank you to our partners in the RCMP for the opportunity to make history together on the very first RCMP Day in Manitoba. The RCMP's Manitoba East District Advisory Commander, Glen Reitlo, sported beautiful hand-beaded Métis mitts and wore an authentic buffalo skin coat, which commonly kept officers warm during frigid months in the 1950s.

"I would wear this every day if I could," Sgt. Reitlo admitted. "I can't feel the cold at all with this on."

Métis Infinity flags waved cheerily from the Red River cart at the roadside, inviting drivers to view other transport methods the RCMP have used through history. RCMP transportation on display at the check stop also included a dogsled, snowmobiles, and a classic highway patrol cruiser.

The inaugural RCMP Day celebration was held in communities throughout Manitoba, and of course on the highway – so if you were pulled over on February 1 and asked to show your license while passing Lower Fort Garry historic site, know that you were part of history in the making.

## Employment Opportunity

The Manitoba Metis Federation is seeking to fill one full time position:

### Chief Financial Officer

Position is located at the MMF Home Office in Winnipeg, MB

View full job details online at [www.mmf.mb.ca/employment.php](http://www.mmf.mb.ca/employment.php)

**Deadline for application is March 1, 2017**



**Manitoba Metis Federation**  
Believe in Yourself - Believe in Metis

# A Bittersweet and Heartfelt Farewell from Metis N4 to Dawson Bay

After three years of partnership and success in Dawson Bay, Metis N4 Construction is leaving the community with a bittersweet and heartfelt farewell. The support camp for Bipole III hydro transmission line operations, managed by Metis N4 - the Manitoba Metis Federation's (MMF) construction arm - is relocating from Dawson Bay to southern Manitoba. Throughout its years in Dawson Bay, the camp's work with the community saw an incredible response according to Jack Park, the Chairman of Metis N4 and the MMF's Minister of Energy and Infrastructure.

"The community support the camp received during its time there was overwhelming," said Minister Park. "Under the leadership of Mayor Darlene Parker, they were more than happy to work with us as we set up our operations, and continued with our project."

Metis N4 worked directly with the Dawson Bay community to make sure that community members and the town council were happy with how the camp and operations were managed, keeping everyone safe and ensuring community expectations were met. Camp workers living at Dawson Bay also helped stimulate the local economy, creating valuable demand for supplies. The Dawson Bay community, in turn, returned the friendly and cooperative collaboration with an outpouring of support.

The camp at Dawson Bay offered a number of training opportunities and programs through the MMF's Metis Employment and Training (MET) department. Training was provided to about 120 Métis people during the camp's time, including summer students. These training opportunities included hospitality, housekeeping and maintenance, culinary and cooking, chainsaw operation, and heavy equipment operation.



The camp at Dawson Bay closed on January 31, 2017 to prepare for relocation. Minister Park explained that although Metis N4 would have been delighted to stay, their work on the Bipole III line near Dawson Bay is complete. The next section of the line Metis N4 will work on is located in southern Manitoba near Portage la Prairie. Plans are to relocate the Dawson Bay Camp to a site close to Treherne, Manitoba. At the same time, Metis N4 will also relocate a portion of their Winnipegosis camp to the new site at Treherne, which will combine with the relocated infrastructure from Dawson Bay to create one large camp.

The new camp near Treherne will be operational as of March 1, 2017, and will offer many of the same training opportunities as the one at Dawson Bay. This time, opportunities will focus on hospitality, culinary and cooking, and housekeeping training, and to a lesser extent on chainsaw operation and heavy equipment operation.

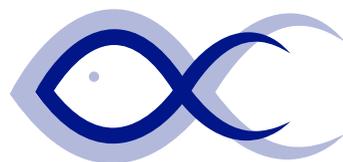
Minister Park, Metis N4 Construction CEO Marc LeClair, and the MMF extend a warm and enthusiastic thank you to Dawson Bay for their support and partnership over the past three years. Minister Park emphasized the critical importance of Dawson Bay's wonderful community in hosting the camp during this leg of Metis N4's work on the Bipole III line. In the near future, the Metis N4 executive team and MMF representatives plan to visit Dawson Bay and express their thanks and gratitude to the community personally.

Any individuals interested in learning more about the camp's relocation can contact Jack Park at the Metis N4 Office at 204-586-8474 ext. 226. For those seeking information about training opportunities at the new camp, please contact Andrew Boryskavich in the Metis Employment and Training Department at 204-586-8474 ext. 356.

## Fisheries Consultations

The Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF) is conducting province wide consultations with fishers and related stakeholders in response to the Province of Manitoba's announcement to move toward open market fish sales. The MMF is holding community-based consultations in various regions and is inviting all commercial fishers, community members, associated business and leadership to participate in the meetings.

Please call Carole at (204) 586-8474, ext. 324 to register or visit [www.mmf.mb.ca/fish.php](http://www.mmf.mb.ca/fish.php) for up to date information.



### Upcoming Consultations

Winnipeg	
Indian & Metis Friendship Centre 45 Robinson Street	February 28 6:30 pm
St. Laurent	
St. Laurent Parish 119 Parish Lane	March 2 6:30 pm
Thompson	
MMF Thompson Regional Office 171 Cree Road	March 6 6:30 pm

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