



# Le Métis



## President's Message

This weekend the Manitoba Métis Federation will be hosting its inaugural Government Summit at the Hotel Fort Garry - just a stone's throw away from where Louis Riel and his Métis provisional government created the province of Manitoba and ushered it into Confederation with Canada.

As we progress towards full self-government, there are important matters that need to be considered, discussed and understood. During the Summit, we will be hearing from experts in law, governance and organization. However, this will not be a time of simply hearing from outside voices. We have selected delegates from locals across the seven regions, within the province of Manitoba, to come together and discuss how we will face the changes and promises of this brighter time for the Métis Nation.

The Métis are a grassroots people. We work together at the local level to overcome challenges, make plans

for the future and to help each other move forward. We are not a government from the top down. The Métis government instead takes direction from its citizens. The elected leadership, including me as your President, are offered direction and advice from you, our Métis Citizens. It is you who helps direct and set the course for the Métis Nation.

As your democratically elected leadership, we fulfill our mandate. This mandate is set by you through your involvement in your locals and regions. It is shaped by your involvement in our annual general assemblies and democratic elections. We are guided by what you share with us.

There are a number of ways in which you can interact with your Métis government. First, every Métis Citizen can connect through their Local. Locals are found all across the province of Manitoba. A complete list of our community locals can be found here: [http://www.mmf.mb.ca/docs/MMF\\_Locals\\_Map\\_Dec\\_2015.pdf](http://www.mmf.mb.ca/docs/MMF_Locals_Map_Dec_2015.pdf).

Métis Citizens can also access their Métis government through one of the seven regional offices found throughout the province of Manitoba. Regional office information can be found here: [http://www.mmf.mb.ca/regional\\_offices.php](http://www.mmf.mb.ca/regional_offices.php).

Métis Citizens can also contact their Métis government directly via its website located at <http://www.mmf.mb.ca>, telephone at (204) 586-8474, social media via its Facebook page located at <http://www.facebook.com/ManitobaMetisFederationOfficial/> or Twitter located at [http://twitter.com/mbmetis\\_mmf](http://twitter.com/mbmetis_mmf). For communication on land claims negotiations and other areas of current and future needs or focus, we invite you to send your thoughts to [ideas@mmf.mb.ca](mailto:ideas@mmf.mb.ca).

Access to your Métis government is just a short visit, call or click away. Opportunities to be a part of your Métis government are plenty. From participating in your meetings, voicing your ideas and concerns during community consultation, participating as a

delegate at important gatherings, accessing training resources, to working as an employee with your Métis government, it all begins with you. I encourage you to get involved. Join your local and attend the meetings. Write your elected representative. Access the programs and services provided to you as a Métis Citizen.

Regular elections, local meetings, regional assemblies, annual general assemblies and ongoing consultations and committees are critically important to our Métis democracy. Our Métis government is both deliberative and participatory. These are rare traits in any government but our traditional democratic structure ensures all important dialogue and direct participation of our people.

If you are interested in Métis leadership, become active at your local level. Learn to serve and lead right in your own community. Develop your skills and when the opportunity comes, run for any of the various service opportunities that exist at the local and regional level. We need committed people like you to invest in your community. We need the insights, skills and experiences you bring. I've said it often and it bears repeating. Together we are strong. When we stand united, we can overcome any challenge or obstacle thrown onto our path to success.

I look forward to sharing with you in the days and weeks to come what we have learned and discussed during our inaugural Government Summit. These are exciting times for the Métis Nation. It is a time for us to be diligent and wise. The winds are blowing favourably for us, but we must still take care and set our course so we may take full advantage of every opportunity that comes our way. With your help, input and support, we can be confident in our plans as we work toward the future of our Métis Nation.

I offer my hopes for our Métis people who are sick and shut in. I also offer my prayers for those who have departed and my condolences to their family, friends and neighbours. My best wishes to all.

Meeqwetch,

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[www.mmf.mb.ca](http://www.mmf.mb.ca)

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

# Journée Louis-Riel Day 2017

This year's Louis Riel Day celebrations saw the Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF) and the Saint-Boniface Museum proudly partner to welcome all Manitobans for a free day of entertainment and cultural programming at the Museum. On Monday February 20, 2017, over one thousand eager visitors walked through the doors to honour Louis Riel and his life accomplishments.

"In Riel's last will and testament, he asked that his papers and belongings be brought back to Saint-Boniface. This we see really is the birthplace and spiritual home of Louis Riel," says historian Dr. Philippe Mailhot, who can be seen every Louis Riel Day in the Riel Exhibit at the Museum answering questions and offering information to those who are passing through.

Dr. Mailhot worked for the Museum from 1986 to 1989 as a Curator and Assistant Director, and from 1989 until November 2014 as the Museum's Director. "We were fortunate to have a number of major donations, acquisitions, and items on loan from the MMF, enabling us to turn our Louis Riel exhibition into something that has a national significance."

The MMF has a number of artifacts on loan to the Museum such as Riel's sash, field telescope, and beard hair. Those who visited the museum on Louis Riel Day had the opportunity to see these items in person and discover exciting historical details about Louis Riel and the Métis people.

"Louis Riel Day is an excellent opportunity for all Manitobans to discover interesting facts about the life of Louis Riel and recognize his contributions to Manitoba and Canada," explains Mona Buors, MMF Associate Minister for Heritage, Culture, Sports



MMF Minister Mona Buors stands next to Louis Riel's sash in the Riel Exhibit at the Saint Boniface Museum. The sash was originally given in thanks to Margaret Halcrow who helped hide Riel after the Battle of Batoche. It was later donated to the MMF.

and Youth. "His life's work led to the creation of the Province of Manitoba, as well as the establishment in law for the protection of language, rights, and equality in government."

During the day's festivities, the Louis Riel Institute (LRI) launched the first bilingual historic bus tours built around Louis Riel's life. Stops along the tour included Riel House, Elzéar Goulet Memorial Park, and the Upper Fort Garry site. The Upper Fort Garry site is where Riel and his Métis provisional government composed the Métis List of Rights, which then became the framework for the Manitoba Act, 1870 and brought the province of Manitoba into Confederation. The tour concluded at the resting place of Louis Riel located at Saint Boniface Cathedral.

"When a holiday is proclaimed after one of our own to celebrate his life and achievements and we happen to have the greatest collection of artifacts belonging to Louis Riel, being able to dedicate a day to him is special," says Vania Gagnon, Director of Saint-Boniface Museum. "We're honoured to do it and we love opening our doors and giving access to anybody who's interested in celebrating Riel."

Other activities at the Museum included cultural displays, Métis musicians and artists, storytelling, beadwork demonstrations, and sales by LRI's *Flower Beadwork Circle*. Guests also indulged in hot chocolate and bannock being served at the event, enjoying the holiday with family and friends as they immersed themselves in learning about and celebrating the life and legacy of Louis Riel.



## Hiding in Plain Sight: the Métis Nation' Exhibition (Paris, France)

The Hiding in Plain Sight: the Métis Nation exhibition was created through collaboration by Library and Archives Canada (LAC), the Métis National Council (MNC), and the Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF). *Hiding in Plain Sight* showcases a selection of archival documents relevant to the Métis Nation through history, including textual records, photographs, artwork, maps, stamps, and sound recordings. The exhibition highlights the Métis as the second largest Aboriginal group in Canada, a distinct Nation with a unique language – Michif, as well as the Founders of Manitoba and Canada's negotiating partners in Confederation.

LAC, MNC and MMF hope the traveling exhibition will help raise awareness and foster a better understanding of the history and culture of the Métis Nation, as part of the ongoing healing and reconciliation process between Canada and the Métis.

Most recently, the *Hiding in Plain Sight* exhibition was recognized internationally, being featured at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Paris, France.

Mona Buors, the MMF's Associate Minister of Heritage, Culture, Sports & Youth, was on hand at UNESCO in Paris on behalf of MNC. She spoke at the *Hiding in Plain Sight* exhibition launch on February 2, 2017, addressing about 100 invited guests.

Minister Buors outlined the meaningful title of the exhibition, highlighting how the Métis Nation's contributions are largely invisible or criminalized through history, either intentionally or accidentally – a result of their fight to protect Métis rights and identity. She also described the renewed journey Canada and the Métis Nation have embarked on toward reconciliation and Nation-to-Nation partnership, thanking UNESCO and LAC for their interest and

efforts in bringing this important exhibition to France.

At the exhibition launch, Minister Buors had the opportunity to meet and converse with representatives and government officials from various countries including: Flavia Shlegel, UNESCO's Assistant Director-General for Natural Sciences; Dr. Guy Berthiaume, Librarian and Archivist for Canada; Elaine Ayotte, the Government of Canada's Ambassador and Permanent Delegate

to UNESCO; Caroline Guimond, the Embassy of Canada's Migration Minister-Counsellor; and several international ambassadors, including Shen Yang, China's Ambassador and Permanent Delegate to UNESCO.

International representatives from France and other countries showed a strong interest in the exhibition, many asking enthusiastic questions to learn more about the Métis Nation's history and culture.

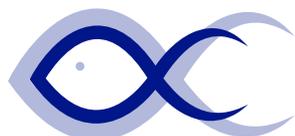


From left to right: Flavia Schlegel, UNESCO's Assistant Director General for Natural and Exact Sciences; H.E. Michael Worbs, President of UNESCO's Executive Board; MMF Minister Mona Buors; Dr. Guy Berthiaume, Librarian and Archivist for Canada; and Elaine Ayotte, the Government of Canada's Ambassador and Permanent Delegate to UNESCO.

## 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

The Pas	
The Pas Metis Association Inc./ The Metis Club Hall, 1515 Gordon Ave.	March 13 6:30 pm
Mafeking	
Mafeking Legion Hall 201 Pine Avenue	March 14 6:30 pm
Duck Bay	
Duck Bay School 65 Gov't Rd Allowance	March 15 6:30 pm

## Sarah Ballenden 1818-1853

It has been proven many times throughout history that women were essential to the longevity of our unique Métis culture. However, we don't often hear the stories of all the Métis women who came before us. Thanks to the creative work of Maureen Hunter and the Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre, an upcoming play will explore the past life of one particular woman's experience living in the Red River Settlement. The play centres around Métis woman Sarah Ballenden, highlighting her life in the Red River Settlement and the relentless gossip she endured that tarnished her reputation in the 1800s.

Sarah (McLeod) Ballenden led a very interesting life and proved herself to be a strong and resilient Métis woman. Sarah was the daughter of Alexander McLeod, a Chief Trader in Rupert's Land, and his half-breed (Métis) wife. Having grown up at trading posts in the Mackenzie River and Columbia districts with her siblings, she was immersed in the fur trade lifestyle from an early age.

In the 1830s, Sarah was sent to the Red River Settlement for her education where she met John Ballenden, who was a Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) clerk. After getting permission at the young age of 18, she and Mr. Ballenden were married in December of 1836. The two very much enjoyed their life in the Red River Settlement during this period, as having a mixed-blood wife was more widely accepted at this time. When her husband was transferred to Sault Ste Marie, Upper Canada in 1840, Sarah accompanied him, though she became unhappy and homesick.

A short 8 years later, Mr. Ballenden was transferred back to Red River and was promoted to Chief Factor of the HBC. Sarah was enthusiastic to return home, unknowing of what was to come. On the long journey west back to the settlement, her husband suffered a stroke. During this tough time, Sarah stayed with her husband, providing her complete attention and care as he fully recovered.

Upon returning to the settlement with her husband in renewed health, Sarah took a position as chatelaine of Upper Fort Garry. During this time, Sarah possessed a very active social role within the community and often planned events and dinner parties. With her husband's prestigious position with the HBC, she was well liked by the men he worked with as well as their wives. In 1850 Sarah's life began to change as rumours of an affair with another man began to swirl around the community. The many individuals who brought forth such rumours were put on the spot, and a trial ensued.

The play Sarah Ballenden 1818-1853 begins April 19th, 2017 and continues through May 13th, 2017. To book your tickets today call the Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre at (204) 942-6537 or visit their website at [royalmtc.ca](http://royalmtc.ca). Tickets start at \$26.50.

**SARAH BALLENDEN**  
1818-1853

BY  
**MAUREEN HUNTER**

**APR 19 - MAY 13**

**BUY NOW!**  
**CALL 204 942 6537**  
**VISIT ROYALMTC.CA**

## Employment Opportunity

The Manitoba Metis Federation Communications Department is seeking to fill the following positions:

### Communications Specialist, Social Media Coordinator, Translator, and Webmaster Specialist

Positions are located at 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 24, 2017



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