



Le Métis



President's Message

But still no effort has been made to include the MMF in the preparation of an EIS. I assure you, the MMF will persist in the fight to protect our Métis rights and the waters we cherish. We must and will perform our due diligence when it comes to this project.

With this in mind, I firmly believe that "Métis Votes" is our chance to tell Manitobans what is important to us. And I will vote, to tell them I care deeply about health care, housing, healthy Manitoba ecosystems, sustainable fishing, and the Rights of the Manitoba Métis Community.

"Métis Votes". Keep the date: September 10th, 2019. It is easy to remember – because it is a full year before we should be going to the polls.

Once again I must express my gratitude to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. This federal government actively shows its recognition of the important contributions the Métis have made to Manitoba and Canada. Over \$5 million in funding from Crown Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada will go towards the creation of a Métis National Heritage Centre (MNHC). Once again this Prime Minister shows what reconciliation in action looks like. Imagine if everyone knew the full history of the Métis? This is our goal.

The MNHC will be a heart for the Métis, and put in motion the sharing of our language, culture, and the incredible contributions our people have made to the very fibre of Manitoba and Canada. In the MNHC, our artifacts will no longer be scattered. They will have a home. When our story is fully known, we won't have to fight provincial leaders for basic respect. Knowledge is power and the MNHC will be a place of strength. We, the Métis, turn our adversity to strength. This is history. This is fact.

Finally, Ste. Madeleine Métis Days were an inspirational example of the resiliency of the Métis people. On the 80th anniversary, and on the very location that our people were driven from their homes, not only did we come together in reflection and remembrance, we came together to celebrate

our culture with music, dancing, and an historical tour that moved us all greatly.

We must never forget what happened in Ste. Madeleine. This is very recent history that we must all learn from. I hope all Manitobans will take the time to learn about the wrongs inflicted on these Métis families. Remember, these Métis families lost their homes to feed cattle.

The MMF will continue to pursue both the Province of Manitoba and Canada to return these historic and traditional lands in and around Ste. Madeleine back to the Manitoba Métis. We look forward to Canada's assistance and support in repatriating the hearths and traditional lands back to our Community.

In closing, 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. I pray for your continued strength in trying times.

Meeqwetch,

Great leaders have vision. Great leaders guide the group to success. But destructive leaders, those who place themselves ahead of others, put everyone and everything in jeopardy. And this is what we're dealing with in Manitoba. Our current provincial leadership is leading us all down a dangerous road. We are in jeopardy.

Here are the facts: over one year ago, the federal government issued guidelines to the Province to consult specifically with the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) and Aboriginal groups about the Lake St. Martin Outlet Project. There are three, yes, *three* directives in total so far from the federal government which have instructed Manitoba to consult with us. And the disgraceful news is, there has been no consultation with the MMF.

The province has a Duty to Consult. This duty arises out of the principle of the "honour of the Crown" to act honourably and in good faith in its relationships with Métis and Aboriginal peoples. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) must be prepared with us in regards to this – or any project that might affect us – which would reflect our perspectives, concerns, and expertise. And in this case we have critical input.

There was significant harm to fish during the interim operation of the emergency outlet channel for the Lake St. Martin Project. This directly affects our Manitoba ecosystems, and the livelihood of Métis fishers! There is also the heightened risk of spreading invasive species like zebra mussels.

∞ President David Chartrand. LL.D. hon. O.M.

MMF Receives Funding for Métis National Heritage Centre

On July 12, the Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF) and the Government of Canada unveiled new funding for the construction of a Métis National Heritage Centre in Winnipeg. The centre will be the first of its kind in Canada and will showcase the history of the Métis Nation, highlighting the rich heritage and contributions of the Métis People to the development of Canada.

“I am so pleased this heritage centre will be in the Birthplace of the Métis Nation and the Heart of the Métis Nation Homeland,” said MMF President David Chartrand. “This is our home. This is our land. As Partners in Confederation, and as neighbours and friends, I look forward to the day when I can welcome visitors from Manitoba, and indeed from around the world, to this centre of excellence, where they can truly understand the contributions of the Métis People to this province and to all of Canada.”

Crown Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada is funding up to \$5.1 million towards the construction of the Centre.

“The Government of Canada is pleased to invest in the construction of a Métis National Heritage Centre,

which will foster reconciliation between Canada and the Métis Nation,” said Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs, Carolyn Bennett. “We are proud to work with the Métis Nation to ensure their rightful place in Canadian history.”

The Métis National Heritage Centre will provide Métis Citizens with an opportunity to tell their story. It will also provide Canadians with an opportunity to learn about the heritage, language, culture, methods of governance, and contributions of the Métis Nation before, during, and after Confederation.

“This initiative represents this federal government’s continued commitment to work in partnership with the Métis People, to advance reconciliation and self-determination,” said President Chartrand. “By teaching our history to other Canadians, we are able to reaffirm our place in Confederation and the rights that come with it.”

The location of the Métis National Heritage Centre has not been determined, but the MMF is looking at options near Upper Fort Garry and Bonnycastle Park. The MMF hopes to complete construction by the end of 2020.



Claiming Place: Ste. Madeleine Metis Days

It's not on the map, but white signs emblazoned by a Métis sash led the way down winding gravel roads to what was once the thriving Métis village of Ste. Madeleine. The settlement was established in the 1880s by homesteaders from the Red River area. No one there was wealthy but by all accounts, there was much contentment and happiness. People worked the land with all their might, and in their downtime, they danced and made music just as hard. Once, there was a post office, a school and a church.

But around the time that the Depression hit, sandy soil changed to dust, and the people struggled. Then in 1938, Ste. Madeleine was designated as land to be seeded to pasture, and under the federal government's Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act, the well-established residents of the village of Ste. Madeleine were driven off, and their houses, school, and church burned, and their dogs shot. A community that had been there for 50 years was ruptured, traumatized, left rootless. What happened at Ste. Madeleine is a story that is only now being told.

Flash forward to a hot summer weekend, July 2019. Beyond the last snake in the gravel road, a huge white tent shimmered under a blazing sun. Fiddle music swirled across the vast expanse of prairie overflowing with RVs and tents. The Métis were back in Ste. Madeleine.

On the outdoor stage, before a large audience, Elder George Fleury officially opened the events with a prayer in Michif. There was a deep significance in his presence: a Ste. Madeleine boy, forced to see his family dogs shot, his home burned, and his parents weep as their community was eradicated before their eyes. Other former Ste. Madeleine residents sat with Elder Fleury in a centre place of honour. And behind them, the Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF) cabinet was out in full force. President Clément Chartier of the Métis National Council joined MMF president David Chartrand to warmly welcome the crowd. Then the party started.

Ste. Madeleine once again became a place of music, jigging, beading, weaving, games, bannock making, and storytelling. The smell of wood smoke permeated the air, and bannock, soup, and fresh fried pickerel were shared by all. Despite the horror of what happened to the Métis on that very spot in July 2019, there was a prevailing sense of joy. So many Métis people, from toddlers to Elders, were together in one place, celebrating. The three-day event was a sharing of joy and culture.

The small Ste. Madeleine cemetery is scattered with graves, most of which are unnamed and marked only by plain wooden or metal crosses. A tiny rustic bell tower marks the spot where the church once

stood. MMF President David Chartrand called Ste. Madeleine "a spiritual place", and one could sense the power of his statement as people wandered slowly among the graves and considered the resilience of a people who could make their way back there.

On the final day of Ste. Madeleine Métis Days, the church bell was rung to call the crowd to congregate. The open-air service was accompanied by live singers and guitar music. It was sweetly fitting to hear the occasional dog barking and child laughing in the distance. Despite the injustices of the past, the Métis were back, strong together, and claiming their rightful place.



By Metis, For Metis: Citizen-run Vendors at Ste. Madeleine

Attendees of Ste. Madeleine Métis Days were well-equipped to shop 'til they dropped, with a number of vendors and food options to check out at the three-day event in eastern Manitoba. From Buff's Meaty Goodies to a bullet soup-and-bannock hut, citizens were well-fed, and had their choice of many Métis-owned pop-up shops to browse.

Andrea Allerton, a citizen of the Ste. Madeleine local, was in attendance with her business, currently known as Cuddly Tushies – though she may be facing a name change in the near future.

"I (used to) just sell kids' clothes, reusable baby diapers, et cetera – but then last year I really expanded into jams, jellies and pickles," Allerton said, "so I'm not really sure what we're gonna be called."

Expanding into the jarred goods market was a move that paid off well for Allerton. The weekend's most-sold items, she said, were her wild-picked jams and jellies – particularly ones made with Saskatoon berries, buffalo berries, cranberries and choke cherries.

Allerton's main pit stops are farmer's markets across the Prairies – including in Virden, Minneota, Oak Lake Beach and sometimes Brandon.

The granddaughter of the Ste. Madeleine local's secretary-treasurer, Allerton said she enjoys the pace of Métis events compared to the hectic rush of farmer's markets.

"At a farmer's market they're only looking for a couple hours, so everybody's gotta get through really fast because they want to see everything and be gone," said Allerton. "Whereas here, I'll have somebody come shop, look around, disappear for a couple hours and then come back, looking around again, and at the end of the day they'll buy several jars of something, because they've been thinking about it all day!" Meanwhile, Rachel Campbell's jewelry and fashion pop-up was set up just outside the main tent all weekend, displaying her famous \$5 rings, Métis-branded accessories, and clothes.

Campbell, a gemologist and goldsmith by trade, previously owned several permanent businesses,

including Mtlwrx Jewellery & Gift Shop on Taché Avenue and a few stores at The Forks. After closing them down for good, Campbell began traveling with her business to various events. Her wares can also be found year-round in the MEDOCare Pharmacy store at the MMF headquarters in Winnipeg.

As for what Campbell enjoys most about setting up shop at Métis community events: "the people!" "Everybody's really friendly; they're very kind," Campbell says. "I like the way they treat their elders – they're very respectful. And it's comfortable here! I feel safe, and you know everybody."



Ste. Madeleine Church Service Draws Hundreds

Over 400 attendees of Ste. Madeleine Metis Days showed up for the church service on Sunday, July 21.

Deacon Conrad Plante, coordinator of the Archdiocese of Winnipeg's Westman First Nations Ministry, guided citizens through a Catholic service at the relics of Ste. Madeleine's Roman Catholic church. "It's a privilege and an honour to be here today," said Deacon Plante, "to celebrate with you this beautiful celebration."

Leah LaPlante, Vice-President of the Southwest Regional Office of the Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF), gave the first reading from Genesis 18. Will Goodon, Minister of Housing & Property Management, gave the second reading from Colossians 1:24-28.

Next, Deacon Plante told the story of Jesus at the home of Martha and Mary from Luke 10:38-42. He spoke of the lesson of the service: the power of friendship, and the importance of welcoming others into your life.

John Fleury, Minister of Métis Employment & Training and a board member for the Southwest Regional Office, said a Prayer of Intercession before the Eucharist was performed.

Then, Deacon Plante welcomed a fiddle player, Oliver Boulette, to speak on the importance of the fiddle to the Métis Nation.

"The Creator has given all Indigenous people a musical instrument," said Boulette. "He gave the Inuit, the Dene and the First Nations the drum; he's given some South American Indigenous people the accordion; and he gave us the fiddle. We all use our instrument to celebrate, to mourn, to socialize, to honour, and to pray. We've been socializing all week, and today I'm going to use it in prayer."

He performed a slowed-down version of the Red River Jig – "because we're in church," Boulette said. Next, Barb Emmerich, accompanied by Elder Verna Demontigny, a Michif speaker and translator, read her poem "Kish Kishin," inspired by the Ste. Madeleine tragedy.

"This is a poem that came to me while I was at this gravesite," Emmerich said.

Following a story from Deacon Plante, the procession returned to the festival grounds for a few more hours of celebration.

