

President's Message
May 4, 2016

This June will mark an important anniversary for the Métis Nation. June 19th will be exactly two hundred years since the Battle of Seven Oaks. This was a day when the Métis, led by Cuthbert Grant, took a stand against oppression and showed the world we will defend our way of life, our livelihood and our families. It was also connected to the first time our Métis National Flag was flown – a defining moment for the Métis Nation.

In the aftermath of the Battle, the Métis were portrayed as renegades and outlaws. However, the British government's own independent investigator, Lieutenant Colonel William B. Coltman, concluded the Métis led by Cuthbert Grant only fired in self-defense after Governor Semple and his men fired on them. They had rode out to meet Grant and his men with guns to prevent them from carrying goods to their trading partners on Lake Winnipeg.

To commemorate the life of this important Métis Leader, the Manitoba Metis Federation and the Métis National Council will be hosting a number of events during the week of June 19th. The celebrations will include a planned exhibit of the Coltman Report at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, a special unveiling at the site of the Battle of Seven Oaks, and other exciting activities including a special announcement from our Métis Government.

As a matter of fact, we have a number of exciting events and important announcements coming up in the next month. This is on the heels of an historic time in Ottawa when the Supreme Court reaffirmed the federal government has a constitutional and jurisdictional responsibility for the Métis Nation. I am presently in meetings with the federal government to fully understand the far reaching implication and implement the full promise as presented by this ruling.

With all the great things happening in our Nation, many Citizens are experiencing a deepening and renewal of their Métis Pride! This is wonderful and satisfying to see. I have instructed our Central Registry Office to prepare to welcome our Métis Citizens Home. Already many numbers of our Métis People are for the first time taking the necessary steps to be registered and recognized as Citizens of the Métis Nation. This is important and commendable. Becoming a Citizen of the Métis Nation is about more than a card – it will help you shape our governance and access Metis specific economic, education and other important opportunities.

This is an important time in our Nation's history. The work we do today will influence our Nation for generations to come. As a Métis Citizen, you'll have a voice in setting our Nation's course for the future. Contact our Central Registry Office today at (204) 586-8474 or visit www.mmf.mb.ca/membership.php to apply for Citizenship or to make sure your Citizenship card and information is up to date.

I also want to encourage you to keep an eye out for something special taking place at the end of May. You will not want to miss this. Keep an eye on our website, social media and *Le Metis* for more details as the end of the month draws closer.

Finally, this past week I had a great meeting with the new Premier of our Province – the Right Honourable Brian Pallister. I had opportunity to congratulate him on a well-run election campaign and assured him the Manitoba Metis Federation and the Métis Citizens of Manitoba stand ready to partner with his government as we move our mutual interests forward. The Premier also assured me the Métis Citizens of Manitoba are important to him and his Cabinet. He has committed to developing an open, transparent and respectful government-to-government relationship with the Manitoba Metis Federation.

In closing, I offer my best wishes for those who are sick or shut-in. May they be blessed with healing, health, and peace. I pray for and share my heartfelt condolences and deepest sympathies for all our neighbours, friends, and families who have lost loved ones. May they be comforted during their difficult time.

Meeqwetch,