



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Last week, our Treaty took another step on its journey to becoming the law of the land. Rebecca Alty, Minister for Canada's Crown-Indigenous Relations, introduced a "ways and means motion" that begins the process of creating the legislation that will see our *Red River Métis Self-Government Recognition and Implementation Treaty* become law, making the Red River Métis treaty holders.

This introduction of the ways and means motion is only a small step, and one that will be followed by the legislation being read into the House of Commons twice, with committee meetings and hearings between the readings, and many meetings and discussions with Members of Parliament from all parties. It is a small step, but it is a step forward; it's one that your Cabinet and I have been working diligently toward for a long time, ensuring all parties understand what this Treaty is, what it is not, and the significance it will have for our people.

The work of moving our Treaty forward will continue as the legislation goes through the necessary steps to become law. I will spend as much time as needed away from home and have as many meetings as needed to smooth the path forward for our Treaty. I do this work for our Citizens, and in recognition of the 156 years of waiting the Red River Métis have endured, while we continued to keep the flame of our nationhood alive. I do this work for the Elders who dreamed of a better future for their children, for the Veterans who fought for our rights, and for the inheritance of our Youth, who will be the next generation of Red River Métis fighters and dreamers. I will stand for all Red River Métis who have been patient and who have kept hope alive, for those who cried tears of joy at our Extraordinary General Assembly when we voted overwhelmingly in favour of this Treaty with Canada. I do it to honour our role as partners in Canada's Confederation and the founders of Manitoba.

We must never forget that, 156 years ago, our first efforts to treat with Canada through the *Manitoba Act* were rewarded with violence against our

people. The resulting Reign of Terror pushed us off our land and out of our collective way of life, as Canada did its best to rob us of our existence.

For standing up for ourselves and our First Nations relatives in 1870, our Ancestors paid a heavy price. We were chased off our land, our communities were broken up in an attempt to erase our culture and language, we were pushed to the margin of Canadian society – to the point that even some of our First Nations relatives forgot about our long, shared history. However, our people persisted, survived, and in recent decades, have begun to thrive despite the early efforts of Canada to make us disappear. Today, in 2026, because of our long fight and our refusal to disappear, we are poised to gain the Treaty we were promised, and the peace we sought.

Of course, we will have to continue educating individuals who do not understand or refuse to accept our existence and our right to the Treaty that was supposed to be ours in 1870. We know that both Prime Minister John A. Macdonald and Louis Riel understood that they were treating together. Macdonald himself wrote to the Queen to tell her that he was "treating with the halfbreeds," as per her instructions, in order to allow the transfer of our Homeland to Canada's ownership.

We have already heard that some individuals are whispering to legislators since the introduction of the ways and means motion. They are whispering that they believe our rights should be secondary to other Indigenous Peoples. This assertion is simply not based in fact. We know that there is no hierarchy of Indigenous rights in Canada, and no basis upon which to say that Red River Métis rights are lesser than any other Indigenous Nation. These individuals whisper behind closed doors because they know the facts do not support their views and they are afraid to make their comments in the public eye. They are afraid to have their untruths exposed, along with the jealousy that underpins their efforts to harm our Treaty and our rights.

It is a fact that we fought for our rights and suffered for them. It is a fact that we have been waiting 156 years for Canada to right the wrongs visited upon our people. It is also fact that we are among the last Indigenous Nations in Canada to see our Treaty brought into law. There is no legal, constitutional, or logical basis for the arguments being advanced by these whispering individuals. We are prepared to educate any and all who try to stand against our Treaty, in any forum and at any time.

There is no one we will face in opposition to our Treaty who will be able to turn us away from our purpose or defeat us, because we know our history well and understand that this Treaty is nothing more than what was promised to us. Many have tried to deter us from our purpose over the years, and we have defeated them all, one by one. Any who stand in our way now will find themselves not only on the losing side of this battle, but also on the losing side of history.

In 1856, Alexander Ross wrote a book called "The Red River Settlement." In it, he says: "Experience could not but have taught them, that however insignificant and powerless these people were while scattered by twos and threes about their distant parts, yet, assembled together in one place with one common interest, one common object in view, they must soon become formidable either as friends or foes."

This quote only affirms what we know to be true. We know who we are. We know who our Ancestors are, and we know their character, principles, and values. We stand today as a proud Nation, honouring the efforts, sacrifices, and suffering of those who came before us. We know that we cannot give up, because they did not give up. We are resilient, because they were resilient. We are determined, as they were determined. We will never give up on our Treaty, and we will stand up for ourselves as *Otipemisiwak*, the people who own themselves.

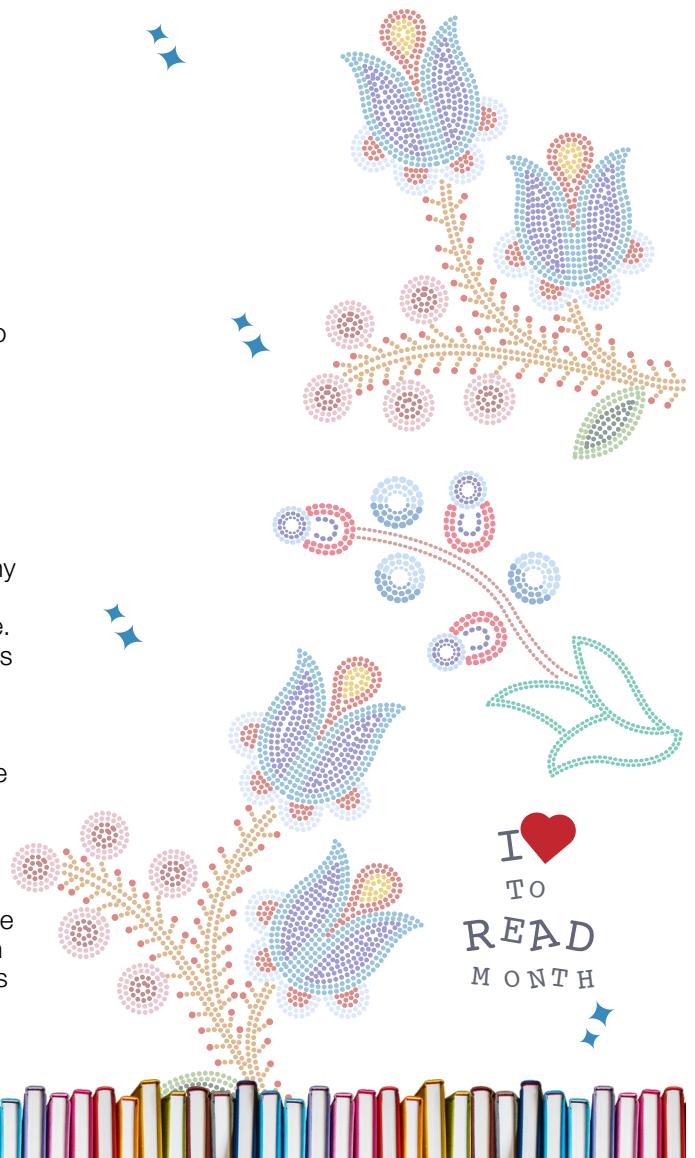
We are Red River Métis, and we will never again be pushed to the margins of Canadian society. Your Cabinet and I will do what we must to usher this Treaty into law, with the confidence that our Citizens stand united with us in this advancement, as we find our rightful place in Canada's Confederation.

I will keep sharing updates on the progress of our Treaty through Parliament, but I know its completion and passing into law will usher in a new era for our people, one that we will celebrate with tears of joy, music, laughter, and togetherness. It's no secret that the Red River Métis know how to celebrate, and this Treaty will be one of the biggest causes for celebration in our entire history.

Until we meet again, I offer my prayers to all our families, Citizens, friends, and neighbours, and my deepest condolences to those who have been caused to grieve. My heart is with the friends, family and community of our lost loved ones. I ask my people to send prayers to our families and help those who are grieving. I will keep you all in my prayers, as always.

Meeqwetch,

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



## SHOOTING FOR THE STARS: AN INTERVIEW WITH RED RIVER MÉTIS FILMMAKER MATTHEW SHOUP

MMF Spotlight sat down with award-winning Red River Métis filmmaker Matthew Shoup



**Matthew Shoup's love of filmmaking began in childhood with his sister and grew through his school years, leading to numerous awards and the launch of his production company, Quindent.**

A lot has changed for Matthew Shoup since he last sat down with *MMF Spotlight*. Once a teenager with a dream of showcasing his heritage, the Red River Métis filmmaker has since won numerous awards – recognizing his efforts in film on a grander scale.

The Joy Loewen Storytellers Award is presented by the National Screen Institute to “honour individuals from equity-deserving communities who courageously share their stories and inspire connection through their journeys.” Shoup was excited to be the inaugural recipient of the award.

“It was the first time this award’s ever been done,” said the filmmaker. “I didn’t know it existed before because it was brand new, so it was very exciting to learn about the award, and I think it’s going to be a very important award for future generations of emerging filmmakers.”

Shoup was recognized by the Manitoba Indigenous Youth Achievement Awards (MIYAA) in 2025 in the Arts-Visual category for his work as a Red River Métis filmmaker.

“It was an honour to be receiving the award alongside so many incredible young Indigenous People. Every recipient was so kind, humble, and amazing. It was such an incredible night of celebrating Indigenous youth and community,” he said.

The award, presented at the MIYAA award, was in recognition of his documentary, *Michif French: A Language of Our Own*. Exploring the unique

identity of the Michif language, the film is seen through the eyes of two generations of Red River Métis women – including his grandmother, Arlene Chapman.

Chapman’s Red River Métis pride has been a great inspiration to Shoup’s film career thus far.

“[The] documentary was really important to me, and something that I’m going to expand on in the future with more projects, because she grew up speaking [Red River] Métis French. It’s part of my family, so I really feel like it’s part of my responsibility as a filmmaker to try to draw eyes to the issues of it being such an endangered language,” he said.

Shoup often collaborates with other Red River Métis artists in the film industry, with most of his films featuring Red River Métis crew members, actors, and more.

“A lot of my short films or series showcase what it’s like to be a [Red River] Métis person in the modern day and how all our lives are so varied,” he said.

Noting that Red River Métis stories remain “underrepresented in film,” the Citizen sees this changing day by day.

“Every day, I’m hearing about new [Red River] Métis projects that are coming out by [Red River] Métis creatives. Especially the projects I’m hearing about modern-day [Red River] Métis [stories], and it’s amazing,” he said.

**“BEING A PROUD MMF CITIZEN IS IMPORTANT TO ME AS A FILMMAKER, AS IT FEELS LIKE THERE’S A COMMUNITY OF SUPPORT BEHIND YOU, A COMMUNITY OF PEOPLE WHO KNOW WHAT YOU ARE TRYING TO DO WITH YOUR FILMMAKING, AND THEY UNDERSTAND HOW IMPORTANT IT IS TO PROMOTE [RED RIVER] MÉTIS CULTURE. HAVING A GOVERNMENT LIKE THAT BEHIND YOU IS QUITE IMPORTANT.**

**- MATTHEW SHOUP**

With new projects come new opportunities to share the rich history of the Red River Métis.

"Even though we're relatively new people (la Nouvelle Nation), we have such a storied history. There's so much to explore, and it's going to be really exciting to explore that," he said.

For Shoup, a proud Citizen of the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF), being in a field like filmmaking requires great support – and he finds great comfort in knowing he has the backing of his National Government.

"Being a proud MMF Citizen is important to me as a filmmaker, as it feels like there's a community of support behind you, a community of people who know what you are trying to do with your filmmaking, and they understand how important it is to promote [Red River] Métis culture," he said. "Having a government like that behind you is quite important."

Driven by a desire to "bring Michif stories to life," the Red River Métis filmmaker believes film and television will be "instrumental in preserving and broadcasting [Red River] Métis culture and heritage."

"Everybody watches movies. Everybody watches TV shows," he said. "It's a new way of documentation and I think it's something really exciting that we can look at to bring it to wider audiences."

Looking ahead, Shoup hopes to keep promoting Red River Métis culture and language by making films "by us, for us." He also took the opportunity to offer guidance to the next generation of Red River Métis filmmakers.

"A piece of advice I'd give to young [Red River] Métis or Indigenous creatives who are looking to go further in their career and take their first steps is to not care about what people think," said Shoup. "You don't need it to make sense to them if it makes sense to you."

Like Shoup, the National Government of the Red River Métis sees the protection of the Michif language as essential due to its roots in Red River Métis culture – serving as a connection to land, traditional knowledge, and stories. Visit the [MMF's Michif Language Department page](#) to see what the MMF is doing to ensure the continuation, transmission, and celebration of Red River Métis culture, customs, and history through the Michif language.



*The filmmaker, pictured at the Manitoba Indigenous Youth Achievement Awards, hopes to bring more Red River Métis stories to the big screen throughout his career.*

## SHOP RED RIVER MÉTIS: MEET CHARLES COURCHAINE

**Charles Courchaine, owner of CJC Woodworking, has grown his passion for sustainable woodworking practices over recent years – and if you're any good at cribbage, you may have his work in your home! In 2024, the Red River Métis entrepreneur was commissioned by the MMF to create 10 beautiful cribbage boards that were given out at the Annual General Assembly.**

**You don't need to win a cribbage tournament to get your hands on one of the Citizen's custom boards – just head over to the Red River Métis Marketplace to explore a wide variety of CJC Woodworking creations.**

**Whether it's furniture, cribbage boards, or a charcuterie board, CJC Woodworking has just what you need. Visit [cjcwoodworking.ca](http://cjcwoodworking.ca) to see how you can shop Red River Métis today!**

