



Le Métis

∞ EST. 1871 ∞



YOUR RED RIVER MÉTIS GOVERNMENT'S BI-WEEKLY NEWS.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

For many years, our people have gathered at Louis Riel's gravesite on the anniversary of his execution, a judicially sanctioned murder pre-determined by John A. Macdonald and his government. In the early years when many continued to misunderstand Louis Riel's life and legacy, we gathered quietly, by ourselves. In more recent years, we have been joined by leaders from many other governments and dignitaries from many cultures, communities, and backgrounds.

This year was our first commemoration of his sacrifice and his execution since he was officially recognized as the first Premier of Manitoba. This is something the Red River Métis always knew to be true, but is now recognized by so many more.

It's clear that Canadians have a much better understanding of the unjust way Louis Riel was treated by Canada. This was known by many of the people who were gathered in the courthouse on the day he was found guilty. Even the entirely white, English, Protestant jury that was put in place to try a French speaking, Catholic and Métis man understood that what they were pronouncing was wrong on many levels. Reports from the trial suggest that the foreman of the jury, Francis Cosgrove, was openly weeping when the verdict was announced, and he pled for mercy on behalf of all six jurors. Another member of the jury later wrote to Canada to say: "Had the Government done their duty and redressed the grievances of the half-

breeds of Saskatchewan...there would never have been a second Riel Rebellion, and consequently no prisoner to try and condemn."

Riel himself knew what he was facing, and before the verdict, during his last statement to the court, he said: "I have acted reasonably and in self-defence, while the government, my accuser, being irresponsible, and consequently insane, cannot but have acted wrong, and if high treason there is it must be on its side and not on my part."

These are true facts of history that were buried for many years. In Quebec, it is recorded that there was an initial protest of 6,000 people on the day of his execution, followed by a later protest of 50,000 people, who rose up in protest when they heard of the execution of Riel. Then Prime Minister, John A. Macdonald, was adamant that Riel should be executed, "though every dog in Quebec bark in his favor." Some historians and political observers have suggested that the strong reaction by the people of Quebec to the murder of Riel fundamentally changed attitudes in the province against Macdonald's party, attitudes which still persist in some parts of the province today.

Like Riel and Quebec, the Red River Métis of today have an impact that stretches well beyond our own Nation and the colonial borders that were imposed on us. We have built bridges to communities in the country of Colombia and beyond. We are growing our partnerships with industries, municipal and provincial governments, and First Nations from across Canada. Our economic footprint continues to grow, for the betterment of all our people. We are not standing where we would have if our treaty with Canada, in the context of *The Manitoba Act*, had been honoured. But there is not a doubt in my mind that we are closer to that promise than we have ever been.

While it's easy to focus on the injustice that was done to our historic leader, our true purpose for gathering to commemorate him every November 16 has always been to honour and acknowledge Riel's life. We can never forget that the Red River Métis owe a debt of gratitude and deep respect for everything he sacrificed for us. We can never forget that his advocacy paved the way for the advancements we have achieved today. Standing in front of his final resting place, paying tribute to him through my remarks, it was not lost on me that our newest building acquisition at 333 Main Street, with our Red River Métis Government's logo occupying a strong position in the downtown skyline, shines down on Riel's gravesite. In a way, it's like we are now watching over him in his resting place, just as he has always watched over us.

I am confident that Riel rests easier, seeing the progress we've made. But as Pierre Elliot Trudeau once said, in 1968: "We must never forget that, in the long run, a democracy is judged by the way the majority treats the minority. Louis Riel's battle is not yet won."

We have made great progress, but we still have work to do. This includes signing our modern-day treaty, assuming full responsibility for our kids in care, and gaining access to health care for all our Citizens, no matter where they reside. We also find ourselves still carrying the burden of explaining who we are to people who do not know us, or who have been deliberately misled by those seeking to steal our identity for their own gains. It is my hope that there will soon come a day when everyone knows who the Red River Métis are, without us having to educate them. That is one of the reasons why it was so fitting that *The Louis Riel Act*, which was passed into law in 2023, was brought in as an education bill. Through it, we have a pathway to ensuring that our true history is taught to all students.

Let us all renew our commitment to our cause, remembering Louis Riel's words: "Pray that God may preserve the little Métis Nation and cause it to grow . . . and remain faithful to its mission." I ask all Red River Métis to commit these words to their hearts and continue to keep the faith – let us remain the Nation of the Red River Métis, who are a community and a people, just as we have always been.

I send my well wishes to Citizens who are honouring our traditions by harvesting from our Homeland to feed family and community. Stay safe and remember – your Red River Métis Government has your back.

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 we help those who are grieving. I will keep you all in my prayers, as always.

Meeqwetch,

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

RED RIVER MÉTIS VETERANS REMEMBERED ON 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF INDIGENOUS VETERANS DAY



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2024 marks the 30th anniversary of the Province of Manitoba's recognition of Indigenous Veterans Day. It was first celebrated as a province in Winnipeg on November 8, 1994. Emcee and MMF Minister Will Goodon said over the years, he's heard many people question why Indigenous Veterans Day exists.

"To be clear, Indigenous Veterans Day is not a second Remembrance Day. It was not intended to duplicate the formal routine of Remembrance Day. It was created to give Red River Métis, First Nations, and Inuit people a space to celebrate and express our gratitude for our Indigenous Veterans in our cultural ways," said the Minister. "It was created to help revitalize our Veteran's pride in their identities by showing them how much they are appreciated by our communities."

The ceremony commenced at 11 a.m. with a military flyby with a Bell 412CF helicopter from the 3 Canadian Forces Flying Training School in Southport. After the flyby, a military parade and entry of the colour guard was led by Red River Métis Veterans and members of the Portage la Prairie Legion. The guard was accompanied by Red River Métis Youth Corporal Alexina Nault, who played the bag pipes.

During his speech, serviceman and MMF Cabinet Minister John Fleury said the Red River Métis were some of the fiercest fighters when they put on their uniform.

"When I put the uniform on, I didn't put it on because I was Métis, and I didn't put it on because

I was young. I put it on to ensure someday - and I had none at that time - that my children and grandchildren would be able to share and experience the rights and privileges we have today," he said. "That's what going to war is all about, keeping tyranny from our shores, and we've been very successful in doing so."

Red River Métis musicians took to the stage to remember our Veterans. Johnny Dietrich and Melissa St. Goddard played the national anthem and "God Save The King," while St. Goddard played "The Last Post and Rouse." Red River Métis Youth Ayden Tichbourne and Minister Andrew Carrier read *Commitment to Remember and In Flanders' Field* in French and English.

Throughout the ceremony, many dignitaries gave moving remarks about Red River Métis Veterans, including MMF Minister and service man Andrew Carrier; Mayor of Portage la Prairie, Sharilyn Knox; Vice President of the Royal Canadian Legion Manitoba and Ontario Provincial Command, Gail Conrad Davey; Canadian Armed Forces Lieutenant Colonel, Joe Doubrough; Infinity Women Secretariat Spokeswoman, Anita Campbell; and MMF President, David Chartrand.

In his speech, President Chartrand talked about the fight he and the MMF have undertaken to support Red River Métis Veterans and get an apology from the national level.

"The seven little alphabets they wanted more than anything, more than money, was for them to say, 'I'm sorry.' That's all they wanted. It took 75 years for this country to say those seven little alphabets," said the President. "Imagine that. Why in the hell didn't they say it in 1946-50? Seven little alphabets. 'I'm sorry for treating you the way I did, for fighting for me and doing what you did for us.'"

St. Boniface MLA and Red River Métis Citizen Robert Loisel attended the ceremony on behalf of Premier Wab Kinew. In an interview with MMF Spotlight, he said it was an honour to celebrate Indigenous Veterans Day with the MMF, as his grandfather was a World War 2 Veteran.

"I think today is very touching because we recognize our Indigenous Veterans who gave so much to this country, a country that maybe did not reciprocate as much as it could have," he said. "I think events like this today remind us that we are on the road to reconciliation and that Métis people who have been here for hundreds of years, who (have been) instrumental in forming the province of Manitoba thanks to Louis Riel, have always had Manitoba and Canada in their hearts."

Progressive Conservative MLA for Portage la Prairie, Jeff Bereza, also attended the ceremony on behalf of opposition Interim leader Wayne Ewasko. He said he was honoured to join the ceremony.

"All I could think of was the sacrifice that people like (Colour Party member) Joe (McNabb) went through," said the MLA. "And for the Métis people still not to be recognized for their contribution in the wars to help make this country a better place is just an absolute wrong, and I will continue to work to make sure that becomes right."

President Chartrand encouraged Red River Métis Citizens to teach their children about the importance of November 8 and 11 so they never forget what Red River Métis Veterans do for our country.



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MMF President David Chartrand and Red River Métis Veteran Joseph Courchaine share a moment together after gifting the President a beaded poppy pendant.

“Because maybe not so far away, there will be a different war that will come. We can’t let that happen, we can’t risk our innocent children to be killed for somebody else’s madness,” he said.

One highlight of the ceremony was Red River Métis Veteran Joseph Courchaine gifting a hand-beaded poppy medallion to President Chartrand to wear at Indigenous Veteran events. He reflected on what November 8 means to him.

“It’s remembering the people that fought for my freedom and died, so I could be free and enjoy what I’m enjoying today,” said Courchaine. “It was uplifting

to see so many people here today honouring Red River Métis Veterans. We owe them all the gratitude.”

To end the ceremony, patrons enjoyed refreshments and listened to performances by the Métis Prairie Steppers, Melissa St. Goddard, The Sharpe Sisters, and Johnny Dietrich.

In his concluding thoughts, President Chartrand reminded us that November 8 is a proud day for Red River Métis to remember the many fierce men and women who fought, and continue to fight, for Canada.



“WHEN I PUT THE UNIFORM ON, I DIDN’T PUT IT ON BECAUSE I WAS MÉTIS, AND I DIDN’T PUT IT ON BECAUSE I WAS YOUNG. I PUT IT ON TO ENSURE SOMEDAY - AND I HAD NONE AT THAT TIME - THAT MY CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN WOULD BE ABLE TO SHARE AND EXPERIENCE THE RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES WE HAVE TODAY. THAT’S WHAT GOING TO WAR IS ALL ABOUT, KEEPING TYRANNY FROM OUR SHORES, AND WE’VE BEEN VERY SUCCESSFUL IN DOING SO.” - MMF CABINET MINISTER JOHN FLEURY.



“That’s why they remember us. That’s why World War 1 defined us as a country,” said President Chartrand. “Don’t just think about the ones that died. Of course, we have to pray and remember them, but once you sign your name on that paper, you’re willing to give up your life, and that means you’re willing to go and give your life to die for the freedom of others.”

Laying of wreaths:

The MMF thanks those who placed wreaths during the service, including from:

- ∞ Infinity Women Secretariat
- ∞ Veterans Affairs Canada
- ∞ Premier Wab Kinew and the Province of Manitoba
- ∞ Interim Leader of the opposition, Wayne Ewasko
- ∞ The Canadian Armed Forces
- ∞ CAF 17 Wing
- ∞ The City of Portage la Prairie
- ∞ The Royal Canadian Mounted Police
- ∞ Portage la Prairie Legion Branch 65
- ∞ Royal Canadian Legion Manitoba and Ontario Provincial Command
- ∞ The Hong Kong Veterans Commemorative Association
- ∞ The Red River Métis Veterans Department
- ∞ MMF St. Eustache Local
- ∞ MMF Portage La Prairie Local
- ∞ Southwest Regional Office
- ∞ Winnipeg Métis Association
- ∞ Southeast Regional Métis Corporation
- ∞ The Pas Regional Office
- ∞ The Red River Métis Government on behalf of Red River Métis Veterans

A DAY OF COMMEMORATION: HONOURING LOUIS RIEL, THE FIRST PREMIER OF MANITOBA



Every year, November 16 marks a day of commemoration for the execution of Manitoba’s founder, Louis Riel. As the First Premier of Manitoba, his actions, words, and sacrifices continue to hold immense importance today. His resilience in times of adversity motivates us in our pursuit of the constitutional harmony promised to us in the 1870 Manitoba Act.

This year, we honoured Louis Riel as a Father of Confederation through our annual commemoration ceremony. Citizens, Cabinet Ministers, and delegates gathered in front of the St. Boniface Cathedral, home of Louis Riel’s final resting place, to honour his remarkable life and legacy. The observance of this historic moment in Manitoba’s history gave Citizens’ the chance to come together and reflect on the historic steps that have brought us to this point, with anticipation of the bright future that lies ahead for the Red River Métis.



— Red River Métis —
MARKETPLACE
is back at

205 Eaton Avenue, Selkirk, MB
For our Christmas Pop-Up!
Open Monday to Friday | 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Open starting November 12 at 1:00 p.m.
Season ending December 24



**THE MANITOBA MÉTIS FEDERATION
WOULD LIKE TO THANK**


Designing
places that
make life
better.

number TEN
architectural group


Winnipeg, MB — Victoria, BC




**FOR THEIR SUPPORT AT THIS YEARS
ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY!**



**THE MANITOBA MÉTIS FEDERATION
WOULD LIKE TO THANK**




**Strengthening our Ties with
Indigenous Communities**




Honouring the Traditional Stewards of the Land
Spanning nearly 20,000 miles across Turtle Island (North America), CN respectfully and gratefully acknowledges that its railway operates within or adjacent to almost 230 reserve lands of more than 120 First Nations and Métis communities in Canada and 7 tribal reservations in the U.S.
In collaboration with Indigenous communities, CN's priority is to strengthen ties, cultivate and develop mutually beneficial relationships, and create economic opportunities to work toward reconciliation.


CN's guiding principles
Everyday, in all aspects of our business, we seek to implement our commitments to the following areas:




Cultural Awareness and Employee Engagement




Economic Reconciliation



Environmental Stewardship and Safety



People and Employment



Community Engagement and Relationships

We invite you to communicate with the CN representative in your region to find out more about collaboration opportunities in these areas:

Rail safety presentations

Procurement and Supply Management

Sponsorships and donations

Career opportunities

Internship opportunities

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Learn more about CN's commitment to reconciliation: cn.ca/indigenous-relations



**FOR THEIR SUPPORT AT THIS YEARS
ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY!**