



*Le Métis*  
EST. 1871



Our Nation recently spent time reflecting on the contributions of our service men and women, both on Indigenous Veterans Day and on Remembrance Day. On November 8, the Manitoba Métis Federation hosted our first National Indigenous Veterans Day ceremony at the Royal Aviation Museum of Western Canada, led by our Minister for Red River Métis Veterans, Shawn Nault, and his team. The event was well attended by community members and Veterans, and I know Citizens truly showed our respect for all Indigenous Veterans and those who did not make it home.

Over the course of the last 20-plus years of advocating for our heroes to be recognized by Canada, I have been privileged to speak with many Veterans and hear their stories. Even though each has their own experiences in war, they all shared one, simple message – they want their service to be remembered, and they want the valour of their fallen comrades to be remembered. This was a great fear of many soldiers who went to war, that their deeds and sacrifices would not be remembered.

This is one of the reasons why I always make time to visit the final resting places of Canadian and Red River Métis soldiers who went overseas and made the ultimate sacrifice in defence of freedom and democracy.

Visiting the graves of the fallen not only honours their individual legacies and sacrifices, it also honours the wishes of our Veterans, whose stories and memories I carry with me wherever I go.

Our heroes' graves are well cared for in the countries they liberated. Their final resting places are beautiful and respectfully tended, with gardens and green spaces for visitors to spend time in quiet reflection. This care and respect are apparent in the gravesites I've visited all over Europe, including France and, most recently, the town of Anzio, Italy earlier this year.

## *President's Message*

I can remember one of the times I was visiting our fallen soldiers in France, in a graveyard for Canadian soldiers. While there, I witnessed a young family of four going through the graveyard, stopping to pray from time to time. In talking with them, I learned that they were locals and not related to anyone they were visiting. In fact, the parents brought their young children to the graveyard on a regular basis to visit different people's resting places and pray for the soldiers. The father told me it was a tradition taught to him by his father, as a way of expressing gratitude for the soldiers who liberated their community, and he wanted to pass it on to his children. It touched me so much to see that locals were finding ways to ensure that our soldiers' efforts and sacrifices are never forgotten.

This is what our Veterans asked for, and I hope those who have already gone on to their new homes in the next world can see that their wishes are being honoured.

On this side of the ocean, it's just as important that we continue to educate our younger generations about the costs of war, so they also remember our heroes.

On November 11, I joined the community of St. Eustache to pay tribute to the service men and women from that area, both Red River Métis and non-Métis. The gathering took place in front of the war memorial that your Métis Government and the St. Eustache Local partnered to install in the community in 2017.

St. Eustache is a strong Red River Métis community that saw many people – Youths at the time – volunteer to serve, leaving their families and laying their lives on the line to fight for a cause they believed in.

I was happy to see military personnel and Legion leadership in attendance at the Remembrance Day ceremony, along with members of the community and their leadership. There was also a very strong Youth presence, with a wreath laid by two young boys on behalf of all Youth from the RM of Cartier. If there is a way to prevent a world war, surely it is by making sure our children have an understanding of the loss and pain that result from global conflicts.

While we have not experienced a global conflict in many years, we cannot forget that there are still wars going on in our world today. It has been heartbreaking to watch Ukraine forced to fight against the aggression of a tyrant like Russia's Vladimir Putin. Last year at this time, no such conflict existed. This war doesn't just affect Ukrainians or Russians – the whole world is feeling the consequences of Putin's aggression, as we see trade disruptions and gas and food price volatility. Your Métis Government has supported and aided our Ukrainian friends during this time of crisis, donating

\$50,000 in humanitarian aid and flying their flags on all our governmental buildings, so no one who sees them can forget their fight. We will continue to help, regardless of whether or not they are still in Ukraine fighting, or here in the safe haven of Canada. The horrific events in Ukraine should serve as a reminder to us all that war can happen quickly, and lives can change overnight. Even if the Ukrainians currently living in Canada and Manitoba are allowed to return to their home country after this war is resolved, their home has been forever changed. Ukraine will take decades to recover from this senseless war and it will never be as it once was.

So while we honour our service men and women, including Veterans and the fallen – from the Red River Resistance to world wars and modern-day peacekeeping missions – let us not forget the people who are forced to fight for their rights and freedoms today.

Just as we honour and remember those who have fought or are still fighting in global conflicts, we equally remember and honour the men and women of our own Nation who fought for our existence and our rights in our Homeland, before Canada became the country we know today.

November 16 is the day we honour our historic leader, Louis Riel, on the anniversary of his murder by execution. His trial was planned by Canada, held in the Northwest, and used an archaic English law from the year 1352 to seek his conviction. There's no doubt that the guilty verdict was a foregone conclusion before the trial even began. Louis Riel paid with his life because he stood up for the values and beliefs that our country now cherishes.

No one who would stand against our Nation should ever forget that the Red River Métis of today carry the bloodlines of our fighters, leaders, and organizers. We are the inheritors of our Nation's spirit, and we will protect every success and every victory they paid for in blood. We will never forget that these successes and victories came at an unbearable cost to our Nation, our community, and our families. We have been landless and homeless in our Homeland for generations, paying the price for the arbitrary acts of Canada against our people.

Our Nation has always survived and persevered because we are united in our remembrance of our ancestors' sacrifices, and the debt we owe them. We have continued to honour the values that made our Nation strong, and we cannot help but continue to gain strength together. When our ability to determine our own destiny is respected, and we are able to shape our own future, we are a people of peace. It is only when our right to self-determination is challenged that our fighting spirit emerges in full force.



Be proud of the legacy left to us, and be strong in your identity, knowing in your heart and mind that we are Louis Riel's little Nation. We are Otipemisiwak – the people who own themselves.

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 Veterans, Citizens, friends, and neighbours, and my deepest condolences to those who have been caused to grieve.

Meeqwetch,

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

## Red River Métis Veterans honoured on Indigenous Veterans Day



Red River Métis Veterans Minister Shawn Nault takes the podium to speak on Indigenous Veterans Day.

The Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) commemorated Red River Métis Veterans during its Indigenous Veterans Day ceremony on November 8.

The ceremony was held at the Royal Canadian Aviation Museum of Western Canada and featured music, poems, prayers, speeches, and wreath layings.

The province has recognized Indigenous Veterans Day since 1994 to protect Métis, Inuit, and First Nations Veterans' legacies and sacrifices they made for the rights we have today.

The ceremony commenced with a fly-by from the Royal Canadian Air Force with a CC-130H Hercules and a March of the Colours by the St. Laurent Legion Métis Branch.

In his remarks, Shawn Nault, Minister of Red River Métis Veterans, emphasized that Red River Métis Citizens have always been proud Canadians and patriots.

"Patriotism and loyalty are deeply rooted within our Nation. It is what has encouraged thousands upon thousands of Métis from across the Homeland to enlist and proudly serve in Canada's military," he

said. "We heavily enlisted in every single conflict that Canada has been a party to since World War I. We are proud of this history. Traditional Métis skills such as trapping, hunting, scouting, tracking, and guiding made us Métis very successful soldiers."

To add a Métis flair to the ceremony, Morgan Grace played "O Canada" and "The Last Post" on the fiddle, followed by a two-minute moment of silence. Current serving Red River Métis Citizen Private Alexina Nault played the bagpipes to march the Colour Party in and out, as well as "The Lament" and the first verse of "Amazing Grace."

Student Olivia Gamblin recited the Soldier's Prayer, Veteran and Minister Jack Park recited the Remembrance poem, and Veteran Ed Sutton recited the Veteran's Prayer.

Many other Red River Métis Veterans, MMF Cabinet Members, and dignitaries attended the ceremony, including Terry Duguid, Member of Parliament for Winnipeg South, MLA James Teitsma, as well as representatives from the Hong Kong Veterans Commemorative Association, the St. Andrew's Society of Winnipeg, and the City of Winnipeg.



Private Alexina Nault leads the Colour Party out at the Indigenous Veterans Day Ceremony.

Colonel David Grebstad, who is considered to be the highest ranked serving Red River Métis Citizen, flew out from Ottawa to attend and speak at the service. He said it was an important day to mark during Remembrance Week.

"It was important for me to come here to mark the contributions that Métis Veterans have made. Not just to Canada, although that's terribly important, but to the Métis people. The words that stick out in my mind are struggle and sacrifice," Colonel Grebstad said. "Métis Veterans have been there throughout the history of the Métis people and Canada's history. They never shied away from a fight, and they were always willing to step forward and count among those brave souls who were willing to sacrifice for our freedoms and to stand up to injustices."

During the service, wreaths were laid on behalf of President David Chartrand and Cabinet, Veterans Affairs Canada, the Government of Canada, the Manitoba Government, the St. Andrew's Society of Winnipeg, the Portuguese Veterans Association, and the United Kingdom.

After the ceremony, patrons took part in a tour of the museum and refreshments. The MMF also hosted a similar remembrance service in Brandon.

"On Indigenous Veterans Day, we honour our Veterans who made the ultimate sacrifice so that we could live in a country where our rights and freedoms are protected," said Minister Nault in a press release. "These are our heroes – today, tomorrow, and forever."





Members of the Portuguese Veterans Association prepare to lay a wreath at the ceremony.



The Manitoba Métis Federation honoured Red River Métis Veterans at the Royal Canadian Aviation Museum of Western Canada on November 8.

# Community Photo

Le Metis' Community Photo section invites Métis Citizens to send in photos to be featured in our newsletter. If you have a photo that celebrates the Métis Nation, send it to [communications@mmf.mb.ca](mailto:communications@mmf.mb.ca) and you may see it in print!



I might be mini but I have major Red River Métis pride!





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Julianne Sanguins

[jsanguins@mmf.mb.ca](mailto:jsanguins@mmf.mb.ca)



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Employment  
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**Unemployed and Underemployed Métis individuals from the  
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**Application Deadline is December 16, 2022**

For more information and to apply for this opportunity, please contact:

**Tiffany Desjarlais, Project Officer, Phone: (204) 646-4091**

Email: [tiffany.desjarlais@mmf.mb.ca](mailto:tiffany.desjarlais@mmf.mb.ca)