



Le Métis  
EST. 1871



## President's Message

Canada sent military from Ontario (then known as Upper Canada) to "quell the uprising".

But, we were never an uprising. We were a people and a Nation, with a shared purpose to protect the land we belonged to and keep our families safe from the hatred and racism that poured into our Homeland from the east.

Before he was killed for his defense of our rights, Louis Riel already knew that the treaty that was The *Manitoba Act* was not being honoured by Canada:

**"The Government had not properly fulfilled its obligations in the treaty with the Manitoba Métis. The Government neither protected them nor gave them justice".**

- Louis Riel, Memoirs

**"When the Government of Canada presented itself at our doors it found us at peace. It found that the Métis people of the North-West could not only live well without it . . . but that it had a government of its own, free, peaceful, well-functioning, contributing to the work of civilization . . . It was a government with an organized constitution, whose jurisdiction was all the more legitimate and worthy of respect, because it was exercised over a country that belonged to it."**

- Louis Riel, Memoirs

In 1870, our Ancestors were an undeniably self-governed people, who invested in and abided by our own laws.

Together, our Ancestors worked in collaboration and stood together to ensure our people and our territory – the historic Northwest – would be preserved and protected. We stood our ground when Canada attempted to take our Homeland without consultation and consent. Our dedication to our people and our lands resulted in the new province of Manitoba.

Now, all these years later, we can reflect back on the results of Canada's failure to respect our ways in the Northwest. Borders were established without respect for the territories of the First Nations and the Red River Métis. With these borders Canada proceeded to divide our families and to take ownership of our lands, without any concern for the impact on us. This same attitude is clearly still in effect today, with governments and bureaucrats trying to scare our people away from our traditional harvesting practices.

Even though our Homeland never belonged to the Hudson's Bay Company, it still sold the Northwest to Canada for £300,000. Following that transaction,

In fact, the complete disregard for the Métis is precisely what was hoped for by John A. Macdonald, then Prime Minister of Canada. He wrote that the Métis "[...] will be altogether swamped by the influx of strangers who will go in with the idea of becoming industrious and peaceable settlers."

And still, we did not give up. The political and legal battles we have undertaken over the years clearly showed that what was done to us was wrong and justice was needed. They show that the federal and provincial governments failed to uphold our rights. Our prosperity was stolen. The future promised to our children was stolen, as was the territory where our Nation was born.

It took three decades to see justice prevail in May of 2013, when the Supreme Court of Canada recognized the country's failure to live up to its end of the treaty. Canada stole the prosperity that we once owned. Canada forced us into the working poor in the country we helped create. This is the same condition where many of our families – far too many – remain today.

In 2016, the Daniels decision should have ensured that we were protected and made clear that the federal government had a fiduciary responsibility to the Red River Métis. No longer could any government be in denial. No government could pretend that it did not know this responsibility existed. But I am still fighting for that recognition and inclusion.

Still, these victories represented change – change for the betterment of our Nation. Now, we are in a new era for the Red River Métis, due in large part to the 2021 signing of our *Self-Government Recognition and Implementation Agreement* with Canada. This important document upholds our right to self-government, which we never gave up.

In spite of the many hardships we've faced, we never gave up on our vision for our Homeland – the whole of the Northwest. Our rights were denied in 1870, but today, we are growing stronger and asserting ourselves. We are opening the provincial borders and have removed the boundaries that were placed upon us by provincial governments that locked us from our Northwest homeland and limited our rights and freedoms. We are embracing our Citizens beyond borders and welcoming Red River Métis home.

We are, as we have always been, a self-governed people. The MMF is the National Government of the Red River Métis. Under my leadership, we will strongly defend and protect our people, no matter where our Citizens live in the world.

Through it all, we never gave up. Your words and direction are my guiding light. Our Cabinet have continued to fight for what's right and what's just, so the next generation can have a better future. We are working toward gaining jurisdiction for our kids in care, new healthcare legislation, and economic transfers to create opportunities. This time of change also includes our Red River Métis Self-Government Treaty, this is the second chapter of a story that began with the *Manitoba Act*, our peoples' first treaty in 1870.

As we grow and gain strength, many things will change for our Nation. These things must change, in order for us to restore what was taken from us, and for us to find our rightful place in Canada's confederation.

I know many great historic leaders and Métis Champions of the past smile down on us with pride, seeing that we never gave up on our dreams. It's only fitting that we have renewed our negotiations with Canada to renew promises of 1870.

Until we meet again, I offer my prayers to all our Citizens, friends and neighbours, and my deepest condolences to those who have been caused to grieve.

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



# Red River Métis Youth reflects on filmmaking journey



Seventeen-year-old Red River Métis Citizen Matthew Shoup aims to get a perfect shot while filming one of his documentaries.

Matthew Shoup, a Red River Métis Youth from Winnipeg, has been working hard to perfect his art of filmmaking.

The 17-year-old was recently involved in the Gimme Some Truth Documentary Festival, which includes lectures, workshops, and special film screenings. Shoup described his experience on being selected for the *Gimme 10 in 30! Challenge*.

“There are 10 participants chosen via a random lottery, and then they’re chosen to make a 10-minute documentary in 30 days. Then, once those 30 days are up, it’s screened at the festival,” he said. “It’s fun because it gives you that time limit, and you don’t have forever to work on it, so you’ve got to keep going no matter what.”

Shoup created a documentary called *Michif French | A Documentary About The Dying Métis Language* for the festival, which featured an in-depth look at the dialect of Michif spoken mainly in St. Laurent and southeastern Manitoba.

“It primarily deals with my grandmother’s own experiences with this. She grew up speaking (Michif French), and I have a teacher at school, Madame Behrendt, (who) also grew up speaking it and can still speak (Michif French). So, I reached out to both of them and asked if they would like to help me with this and be interviewed,” he said. “They graciously agreed, and I’m thankful to both of them for sharing their knowledge and time. The film breaks down what Michif French is and experiences with it throughout time and why it is an endangered language.”

The filmmaker was elated by the positive reception it received at the festival.

“I think it turned out pretty good, for being (filmed in) 30 days, and I think that people enjoyed it at the screening and (it) got a lot of good feedback afterwards. People were coming up to me and giving me feedback and everything. It was cool.”

Shoup acknowledged that many Indigenous languages have gone extinct, and he felt responsible as a Red River Métis Citizen to help keep this language alive.

“Everybody will have different ways of doing that, but I have my way of filmmaking, and that’s what I do. I’ll be doing this for the rest of my life, trying to preserve this language through film,” he said. “I think that’s very important, especially since it was the language that my grandma grew up speaking. I think it’s important to preserve that language.”

The Red River Métis Youth is currently in grade 12 and aspires to attend the University of Winnipeg to continue to hone his passion for filmmaking. He recalled wanting to get into the industry since middle school.

“I wanted to be an actor, and I realized that you had to be in some films if you wanted to be an actor, and so I realized nobody’s going to cast me in their films,” said Shoup. “So, I decided to make my own (films), and I fell in love with making the films more so than being in them, and it spiralled from there.”

Shoup has produced multiple works on his YouTube channel, including a short documentary which gained international attention called *COVID/CHOIR*.

“It details how my school’s choir program dealt with the COVID-19 pandemic, and that one did very well. It screened internationally at a bunch of different film festivals,” he explained of the documentary’s premise. “I (also) have a film called *Yours* (that was) screened at the Winnipeg Reel Pride Film Festival. It won the Audience Choice Best Film and the Jury Choice for top emerging filmmaker, which was an incredible honour.”

Shoup described himself as a proud Red River Métis Citizen and said his Red River Métis heritage has become more important to him throughout the years.

“I’m still young, but when I was younger, my grandma would tell us, you’re Métis, and we do Métis things. She would carry on those traditions with us. I never really understood how important that was and how lucky I am to be able to have that because those traditions could have been lost, and a lot of them were, but we still have some of them, and I’m lucky to have those,” he said. “I’m very proud to be Métis, and I want to do everything I can to make our ancestors happy for everything they fought for.”

Shoup’s documentaries like *COVID/CHOIR*, *Michif French | A Documentary About The Dying Métis Language*, and other works can be located and viewed on his YouTube channel.



# Red River Métis Youth set to Represent Manitoba at 2023 Canada Winter Games



Speed skater Aaron Riehl leads the pack during practice in Selkirk to prepare for the 2023 Canada Winter Games.

Red River Métis speed skater Aaron Riehl is ready to make an impact at the 2023 Canada Winter Games.

The 17-year-old from Garson is one of 207 athletes who will compete for Team Manitoba at the games, which takes place from February 18 – March 5, 2023.

Riehl said he started speed skating around six and a half years ago.

“I started because I thought it was cool, and I had quit hockey, and I still liked skating. So, I needed something nice to do on the ice.”

Riehl will be among 3600 of Canada’s best amateur athletes headed to Prince Edward Island to compete at the games. The speed skater is poised to compete in the men’s short track event and will serve as an alternate skater in the men’s long track event.

The Red River Métis Citizen noted when the 2022-2023 speed skating season began, some of the competitions he competed in would be used as measuring sticks to qualify for the games.

“We knew from the start of the year that we had to fight with the other skaters from Manitoba. So, as soon as I finished the last race at the Prairie Challenge (in Portage la Prairie) this year, I knew I was going for short track as (the) first seed,” he said. “I knew I was going to be the long track alternate when I finished competing in the Fall Classic in Calgary this year.”

Specifically, Riehl will be racing in the 500m, 1000m, 1500m, team relay, and 3000m points races. The Red River Métis Youth said he’s happy to compete in the games and represent his province.

“I’m very proud to be able to represent Manitoba at the (2023 Canada) Winter Games. I wasn’t exactly

surprised,” he said, “we knew going into this year that we were having to compete and when we would have to go (to the games), and I knew who my competition was, so I knew where I should be.”

Riehl has worked hard to make his Canada Games appearance a reality. He often practices in Selkirk and Winnipeg upwards of three times a week, with some of the practices starting at 6 a.m. He said he enjoys skating, and attending these practices does not feel like a chore.

“It feels like something I want to go out and do, but there’s still some mornings where you’re like, ‘man, I don’t want to get up at 4:30 a.m. to go to training on the other side of the city,’ when I don’t even live in the city,” said the speed skater. “It takes dedication and people to keep you in line, like my parents to help me.”

The speed skater had a phenomenal season last year and reflected on some of his most memorable competitions, like the 2022 Youth Long Track Championships.

“I went in with pretty high expectations of myself, and I managed to meet some of them,” he said. “Then, last year at the short track championships, I did better than I expected, and I was able to pick up a medal I didn’t expect to be able to grab.”

The Manitoba Métis Federation has played a part in making Riehl’s dreams come true. The Youth recently received funding through the Believe - Elite Athletic and Artistic Support Program, through the Métis Employment and Training Department, to help him continue to achieve excellence in his sport. He talks about how this helps him.

“Competitions are not paid for events. You have to pay so you can go to them. The grant is (also) going



Riehl poses for a photo with short track speed skating coach Anne Mushumanski.

to be for new equipment and stuff like that. Some of my equipment’s pretty worn out or very old now,” said Riehl. “It’s (also) going to be used to so I can go to some competitions in Calgary at the end of the year that I otherwise wouldn’t have been able to go to.”

Riehl recently learned about his Red River Métis roots and said he’s still adjusting to it.

“When I figured out I was (Red River) Métis. I was a bit surprised. I didn’t mind it at all. I liked that there was more to me than just being some kid from the country who drives a pickup,” he said. “I like that I’m Métis. I like that I get to do so much for Manitoba, and then I get to bring along a second representation with the (Red River) Métis community.”

Riehl hopes he can make the A-side finals in the 2023 Canada Winter Games and would be thrilled if he brought home a medal.

“I’m not expecting to go out there and be competing for wins through the events. Some of the people who are (competing) there are 20 years old, and I’m 17, so those people have had a lot more time to develop and have been skating for way longer,” said Riehl. “I’m expecting to go out there and try and compete for medals and have a little bit of fun with it.”



# **PRESERVE THE PAST. BUILD THE FUTURE.**

We encourage Red River Métis Citizens and our fellow Manitobans to use this special day to discover and celebrate the legacy of Louis Riel, the founder and first Premier of Manitoba.

The leadership of Louis Riel and the Provisional Government stood strong for the Northwest, with a vision of inclusivity for all, and the protection of Red River Métis rights, identity and culture.

As inheritors of Louis Riel's legacy, the MMF government, under David Chartrand's leadership, continues to work diligently to keep this vision alive.

On behalf of Citizens, staff and elected officials, the MMF – the National Government of the Red River Métis – wishes all Manitobans a safe and enjoyable Louis Riel Day with family and friends.

To our Citizens – be proud of who we are and keep your family strong.

**[mmf.mb.ca](http://mmf.mb.ca)**



**Manitoba Métis  
Federation**  
*Believe In Yourself - Believe In Métis*

## **FEBRUARY 20 LOUIS RIEL DAY**

