



# Le Métis

EST. 1871



## President's Message



With treaty consultations still to come in the Interlake and Southwest Regions, as well as in Vancouver and a virtual date, we continue to gain momentum toward our historic Extraordinary General Assembly on June 3 and 4. We are getting so close to this important Assembly, and the excitement keeps building.

This is the essence of our democracy – our commitment to coming together when there are matters of importance to discuss. Much like the open-air Assemblies held by our Ancestors more than 150 years ago, we also encourage as many people as possible to share in this moment. We will never waver in our dedication to our rich democratic traditions, including Assembly.

Due to the outstanding engagement by Citizens, we are finding new ways to accommodate more Citizens who wish to be a part of the Assembly, as we gather to take our Nation into a new era.

People who can't attend in person will have options for their participation. If your health, child care, or other commitments prevent you from coming to the Assiniboia Downs, you can participate from home, virtually.

For those Citizens who have challenges with poor internet connectivity, or those who want to be around community and share in the excitement of voting, we will have satellite locations in all of our Regions. Each Region will host an event, similar to our Regional Meetings, for the two days of the Assembly, and will support Citizens who need to travel to the satellite locations to attend.

We will also have locations in Ottawa, Toronto, and Vancouver for our Citizens who live beyond the borders of our Homeland. One of the things we heard clearly as we consulted with our Citizens

Beyond Borders was the powerful feeling of being around community, and the sense of home they felt when they walked into a room of Red River Métis. I know Citizens in our Regions, who have ready access to community and kin, can understand how hard it would be to feel cut off from our people. Rest assured, we will continue to find new ways to help these Citizens feel connected, beyond the important work of consulting them on our treaty.

However you choose to participate, I encourage all who wish to be a part of your history. Truly, your participation honours your parents, grandparents, and all Red River Métis who have fought tirelessly to get us to this milestone, guiding our steps to this day.

I know this Extraordinary General Assembly will be much like our consultations, with Citizens wearing beaming smiles and feeling the buzz of excitement. I also know that many will be moved to tears, recollecting all the steps required to arrive at this turning point for our people. This is especially true of our Elders, who can remember when times were so much tougher. They know, as your President knows, that securing the future for our children and grandchildren has been the long-held desire of our continued governance, ever since our first treaty 153 years ago.

Our Youth know that this treaty is for them. They understand that we are dreaming greater dreams for their future than we dared dream for ourselves. All that any of us ask in return is that our Youth continue to keep the flame of our Nationhood alive, taking on the responsibilities of leading us into this new era. Those who attend this historic Assembly will tell the Youth of the future that they were present for this moment, and share the story of our treaty. I know these leaders of tomorrow will honour all those who set their feet on this path, as we in the older generations honour those who guided us.

Until we gather, I extend my best wishes to those Citizens who will honour our traditions by harvesting from our Homeland this season. As always, it's vital that Citizens follow our harvesting laws; make sure you have your harvesting card and remember to share the bounty of your harvest with Elders and vulnerable members of our community. Abiding by our harvesting laws and sharing with the community are important parts of how we honour our Ancestors and keep our culture and traditions alive. As you undertake the spring harvest, stay safe and remember – your Red River Métis Government has your back.

I offer my prayers to all our Citizens, friends, and neighbours, and my deepest condolences to those who have been caused to grieve. I express my solidarity for our Youth and Infinity Women Secretariat members who, on May 5, walked from the corner of Portage and Main to mark

Red Dress Day, the National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirited people. For all who participated in honouring our lost Red River Métis loved ones and all Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirited people, I thank you for your continued advocacy and your efforts to keep their memories alive.

### Red River Métis Ride of Hope

I want to draw Citizens' attention to the upcoming Red River Métis Ride of Hope, scheduled to begin Friday, May 19 in Hadashville and end in early June, with a small parade on a service road just outside of Winnipeg, at the sign marking the longitudinal centre of Canada.

Armand Jerome, a Red River Métis Citizen and cartmaker, along with his wife, Kelly, are the organizers at the heart of this ride. Their original goal was to complete a month-long Red River Cart ride to honour our Ancestors as part of the Manitoba 150 celebrations, which were cancelled by the pandemic.

When Armand and Kelly learned about the plight of the children in the Ukraine who'd been orphaned by the war, they decided to turn their long-postponed ride into a fundraiser for those children and the communities that protect them. I am proud of their determination to see this ride through, and am very moved by their thoughtfulness in making this a fundraiser. Citizens wanting to learn more about the event can go to the website for the ride: [themetisrideofhope.com](http://themetisrideofhope.com)

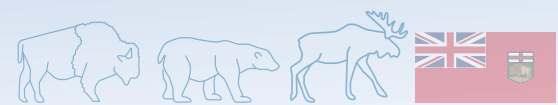
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President David Chartrand, LL.D. hon. O.M. ∞



# Red River Métis fiddling champion Jason Lepine inducted into Wall of Fame



Red River Métis fiddler Jason Lepine wears his traditional sash with pride during every performance.

Red River Métis fiddling champion and recording artist Jason Lepine was recently inducted into the Manitoba Fiddle Association (MFA) Wall of Fame. The induction took place in 2020, but due to the pandemic, celebrations were delayed until April 30, 2023.

Born and raised in Portage la Prairie, Lepine was born into a family of fiddlers, spanning generations. He first picked up the instrument at the age of seven, and his passion has only continued to grow from there. With the encouragement of his father, fellow inductee Gary Lepine, there was no shortage of music in his childhood home.

Describing himself as a “shy child,” Jason Lepine was able to break out of his shell through his love of performing. He participated in his first fiddle contest at the age of 12 in Bashaw, Alberta, and won first place in the beginner class. With the support of his friends and family, his confidence began to grow with his abilities. Self-taught, Lepine was able to learn the basics from his father, later following the tapes that filled his childhood home.

“I was given a special gift to play fiddle which I inherited from my dad,” he said. “I continued to share that gift of playing fiddle with many Youth and Elders.”

Red River Métis fiddling has a distinct style that connects Citizens with their history and the community. The freedom Lepine has found in playing pieces that are ingrained in Red River Métis culture has allowed him to not only grow as an artist, but has given him the opportunity to share his talents with many Red River Métis communities.

“I have so much passion for my culture. And, you know, I always perform with my sash on. I even have a little sash on the end of my fiddle, a little sash that hangs down,” he said. “I do my best to make sure I am just being myself. You gotta do what you do best and that’s what I feel that I can do.”

Throughout his career, Lepine has been able to participate in a wide variety of events and fiddling competitions, spanning across Canada and the United States. Along with his passion for performing, he also finds joy in judging fiddling competitions and teaching others how to play the fiddle.

“I’m doing my best to give back to others what was given to me,” Lepine said. “I try my best to keep the tradition of (Red River) Métis fiddling alive for many generations to come.”

Acknowledging his many accomplishments, the fiddler extraordinaire takes great pride in following in his father’s footsteps in being inducted into the MFA Wall of Fame.

“You know, without my dad introducing me and hearing all that music at all times of the day – it didn’t matter if I had school the next morning, he’d be playing the fiddle in the kitchen at like two o’clock in the morning,” Lepine said. “He’s working on his fiddles, you know, work on the different tones and sounds that he can get, of course, practicing all the different tunes, too. I definitely thank my dad for getting me started playing.”

Unfortunately, his father was unable to attend the induction due to an acute illness, but the passion for fiddling instilled by his father was apparent at the event. Lepine was able to honour his father, as well as the late Jean Snyder, a keyboard player who he credits as one of his biggest influences and supports.

“She was a cheerleader all the time,” he said. “And without that support of people that are going to cheer you on, things can change that you might not pursue.”

The support of his friends, family, peers, and fans has allowed the Red River Métis fiddler to grow into the artist that he is today. Lepine also acknowledges the support of the Manitoba Métis Federation by proudly featuring him in a variety of events over the years.

Lepine will be performing at Ste. Madeleine Métis Days on July 15. Stay tuned for more information surrounding the event.

## Community Photo

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



Good luck to our 25 Red River Métis athletes competing on both female and male Team Manitoba! Watch the National Aboriginal Hockey Championships at the Seven Oaks Sportsplex or virtually from May 8-13!



### About the Manitoba Fiddle Association

The Manitoba Fiddle Association (MFA) was first established as a non-profit corporation in early 1999. The MFA created the Wall of Fame to recognize the accomplishments of Manitoba fiddle players and their contributions to the fiddling community. Categories include Fiddler-Performers, Builder-Promoters, and Accompanists. In addition to showcasing Manitoba talent, the Wall of Fame features historical artifacts as well as information about fiddle music and its history.

Past Red River Métis inductees include legends Gary Lepine, Patti Kusturok, and the late Clint Dutiaume.



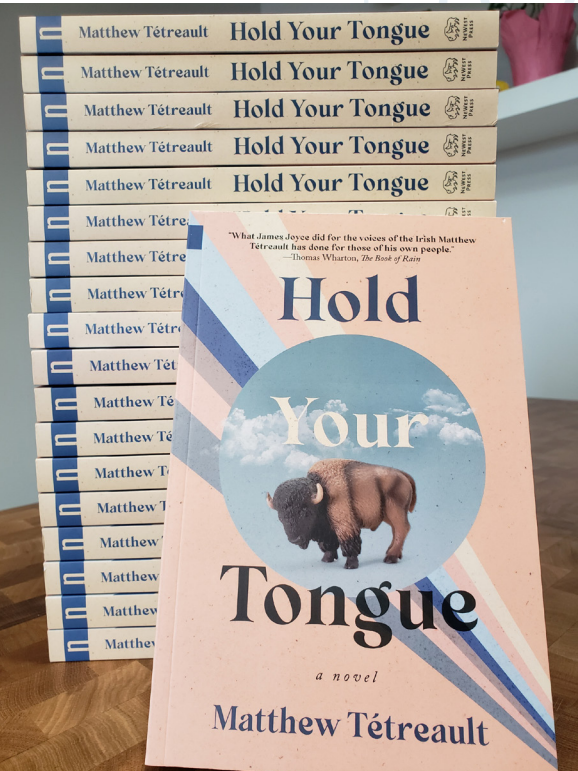
# Red River Métis author debuts first novel



Red River Métis Citizen Matthew Tétreault recently released his first novel, *Hold Your Tongue*.

Red River Métis writer Matthew Tétreault has spent years perfecting his first novel, and now his biggest work to date has landed on shelves.

The author released his book, *Hold Your Tongue*, at the beginning of May.



Tétreault uses French, Michif-French, and Canadian French in the predominately English-spoken story.

The story revolves around protagonist Richard learning his great-uncle Alfred has suffered a stroke.

As the book blurb reads, “Richard sets out for Ste. Anne, in southeastern Manitoba, to find his father and tell him the news. Waylaid by memories of his stalled romance, tales of run-ins with local Mennonites, his job working a honey wagon, and

struck by visions of Métis history and secrets of his family’s past, Richard confronts his desires to leave town, even as he learns to embrace his heritage.”

Tétreault’s path to releasing his first novel began at the age of 11 when he started reading fantasy novels and wanted to write one of his own.

The Red River Métis Citizen would pursue his interest in writing after high school by attending the Université de Saint-Boniface.

He recalled writing a fantasy novel in a Hilroy notebook when he was 18.

“That (story) never really went anywhere, but I always had the desire to write,” he said.

After graduating high school, Tétreault wanted to learn more, and pursued a BA in Creative Writing at the University of Winnipeg.

“I started writing short stories there, and my interest shifted from the fantasy genre, more toward literary fiction and stories of place and trying to represent where I’m from: southeast Manitoba,” he said. “So, I started writing stories set in that area, and from there, it kept going.”

The Red River Métis writer said *Hold Your Tongue* is the final version of what began as his Master of Arts thesis at the University of Alberta seven years ago. His thesis on the literary history of the Red River Métis earned him the Governor General’s Gold Medal for academic excellence.

“I wanted to explore language, history, and representing the complexities of Métis experiences among francophone families in southeast Manitoba,” he said.

Tétreault wasn’t satisfied with the depth of the connections he wanted to evoke and portray in the first draft of his novel.

“I wanted to learn more about Métis history, more broadly speaking across the Prairies, and try to bring some of those elements into the novel,” he said. “That’s why I decided to do a PhD in Métis literature at the University of Alberta.”

The author noted being able to do his research helped inform the revisions of the novel.

“Writing a dissertation alongside writing a novel is a bit of a challenge, bouncing back and forth between two big projects like that,” he said. “It was also fun, and I think they influenced each other. So, that was great.”

Readers can purchase Tétreault’s new novel, *Hold Your Tongue*, on publisher NeWest Press’ website or at bookstores. The Red River Métis author encourages readers to buy it locally.

“It’ll be in store as well, so at the McNally Robinsons in the Winnipeg area,” he said. “If you have other local bookstores, let them know you want to purchase it through them, and I’m sure they’ll order it.”

Tétreault is excited to have such an in-depth, unified story come out under his name.

“For something I’ve been working on for so long, to see the light of day, and then I’m able to share it with people now and talk to people about it and get their impression,” he said. “That’s something I’ve been looking forward to for a long time.”

A unique feature of the book is Tétreault’s use of French, Michif-French, and Canadian French in a predominately English-spoken story. He said there are a lot of amazing Red River Métis authors out there, but he found a lack of writing originating from southeast Manitoba.

“I’ve never seen the incorporation and the melding of French, (Michif-French), and English together in texts in a way that represented my experiences or the experiences of people in the Ste. Anne area,” he said. “It needs to be out there. People need to be able to see themselves in texts, warts and all – the celebration of existence.”

Now that his book is out, Tétreault is working on a Red River Métis literary western and horror novel set in the 19th century, south of the U.S.-Canada border.

He believes stories south of the U.S.-Canada border and stories from before the resistance periods aren’t fully represented in Red River Métis literature.

“I’m curious and excited to explore some of those stories, histories, and characters and restore those elements of the past through these literary, western, and horror tropes,” he said.

Tétreault is happy to be settled back in Winnipeg with his wife after attending school in Alberta for the past eight years. He hopes to become more involved within the Red River Métis community.

“I think being a little bit more active (in the Red River Métis) community would be nice,” he said. “Maybe I’ve learned a few things that might be worth sharing.”



Southeast Métis Employment and Training  
is seeking interested Métis applicants for the following opportunity:

## Administrative Assistant Program

Anticipated Start Date: September 2023

Location: Red River College Steinbach

**Eligible Trainees are Unemployed and Underemployed Métis Individuals who are:**

18 years of age or older

Motivated to pursue a career in the administrative field and determined  
to move forward with an employment & training action plan

**Participants will receive:**

Classroom instructions by certified instructors  
Bookkeeping and Accounting skills  
Office Professionalism  
Administrative Procedures  
Customer Service  
Event Planning  
Work experience Placement  
Financial Assistance for those that qualify

**Application Deadline: June 2, 2023**

\*\*\*Limited spots available\*\*\*

For more information and to apply for this opportunity, please contact:  
Skyler Thomas – Southeast Regional Coordinator  
Phone: (204) 754-3112 – Email: [Skyler.thomas@mmf.mb.ca](mailto:Skyler.thomas@mmf.mb.ca)

# Join The Team

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JUNE 3-4, 2023

**BUILDING A LEGACY**



**The MMF's Regions are  
busy working hard for our  
Red River Métis Citizens!**  
Look out for this upcoming event:

## Southeast Region

**The Red River Métis Ride of Hope**

May 18 – June 4

Hadashville to Lorette

[themetisrideofhope@gmail.com](mailto:themetisrideofhope@gmail.com)

[themetisrideofhope.com](http://themetisrideofhope.com)

Are you holding an event in your Region?  
Email us at [communications@mmf.mb.ca](mailto:communications@mmf.mb.ca)