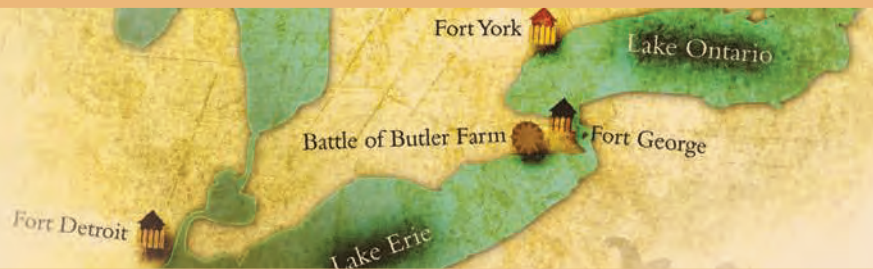




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Our Métis Ancestors & The War of 1812

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AROUND THE MNO

Georgian Bay Métis Council marks Year of the Dragon

On February 17th, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Georgian Bay Métis Council (GBMC) participated in the Penetanguishene Winterama parade. The theme of the parade was the “Year of the Dragon”, so the council came together and assembled a dragon using an old canoe, cardboard, and garbage bags. The amount of citizen participation was astounding. The float was filled quickly with eager people willing to give up their time to show their pride in the Métis Nation. The parade was enjoyed by all and the GBMC hopes to be part of Winterama for many years to come.



▲ Pauline Saulnier and Brenda Laurin hold a dragon infinity flag made by Brenda Laurin.

▲ Council also assembled a dragon using an old canoe, cardboard, and garbage bags.

The moose are taking over T-Bay

World's biggest garden gnome spotted in Thunder Bay

“In my whole life in Thunder Bay, I have never seen a new-born baby moose. This one was not even a half a mile from my house. The mother picked a quiet neighbourhood in Thunder Bay and had her baby in the front yard, at 5:30 A.M.,” said MNO citizen Cam Burgess.

“Debbie and I were out bike riding when we came upon the pair. The lady across the street from this house told us she saw it being born. We saw them at 5:30 P.M. so the little one was 12 hours old. What an awesome place we live in, to see such a sight!”



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Opinions expressed in the following commentary are solely those of the writer and do not reflect the policies of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) or the viewpoints of MNO officials or staff.

Victims of Sixties Scoop seek justice in the courts

In the last issue of the Métis Voyageur we carried a letter to the editor, “Victims of Sixties Scoop Seek Redress in Courts”, which we mistakenly did not credit to Ruth Robbins (see pages 2 and 21). Please accept our apology for this omission. In that article Ruth makes reference to an unpublished letter which she sent to the Toronto Star. This is that letter:

In response to *The Toronto Star* article “I will never give up” by Linda Diebel written on behalf of Marcia Brown and the 60's scoop class action suit which includes First Nations, Inuit and Métis.

By Government documents I am Red River Métis. I was removed from my home in Caramat in 1964 and brought to Thunder Bay where I was made a Crown Ward of

Ontario and grew up in the provincial private institution Children's Aid Society.

It does not surprise me that Prime Minister Stephen Harper and his Conservative Government is fighting this 60's scoop class action suit. Historically each generation the Conservative Government was in parliament we see the unkindness shown towards aboriginal people. In 1885, Métis lost our way of life and our right to be included as aboriginal people in Canada's Constitution. In 1885 the Conservative Government under the leadership of Sir John A. McDonald was in parliament. It appears the patterns and belief systems of this government have not changed when it comes to aboriginal people otherwise Stephen Harper would be for this

class action suit instead of against it. In 1885 our Red River Métis families signed documents called Half-breed Scrip which extinguished our aboriginal title. In 1982 Métis finally regained our standing and now are included in the Canadian Constitution as aboriginal people where we belong.

It is difficult for an aboriginal person of the system to talk about “loss of identity” without mentioning our own history which we have studied. In 1885 my ancestors were involved in the Rebellion at Duck Lake where Louis Riel and eight Indians were hung. These Indians belonged to Chief Big Bear's and Chief Poundmaker's group. This is important history because it shows the close relationships between First Nations and Métis and the ways we

supported one another throughout history. Over this Rebellion we witness the identity loss for both Métis and First Nations. Many of the bloodlines of the aboriginal people in this time period were the same.

The identity loss I experienced as a child removed me psychologically from many feelings that most people experience. I have no idea what the feelings would be to have an aunt, uncle, father, grandparents or many more relationships. I am 55 years old and have never attended a family funeral. I do not know what the feeling would be. This is not because no family members passed away. This is because once I was removed from my family and separated from sib-

THE MÉTIS VOYAGEUR

SPRING 2012, No. 70

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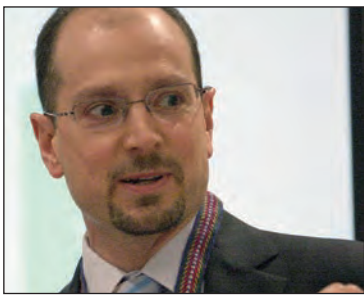
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**The next
Voyageur deadline:
May 1st, 2012**

**PUBLICATION #:
PM 40025265**

MÉTIS NATION NEWS



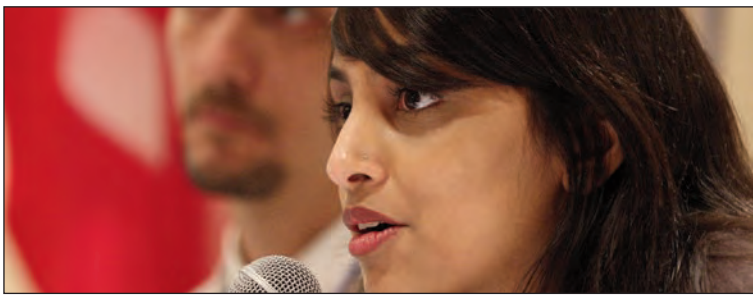
▲ Dr. David Urbach, University of Toronto



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▲ Storm Russell, MNO Senior Policy Analyst

MNO releases findings of major Chronic Disease study

Métis Nation of Ontario calls for immediate attention to higher rates of chronic disease in Métis population

Anyone who is part of a Métis community can attest to the terrible toll of chronic diseases, like diabetes, cancer, respiratory and cardiovascular illnesses, on our people. Most Métis also recognize that the frequency of these health problems in our communities is greater than it is outside of our communities and that there are barriers to treatment and preventative services faced by Métis that are not faced by others.

To help address this reality, on March 20, the MNO released the findings of a landmark research initiative studying chronic diseases within the Ontario Métis population. The findings demonstrate significantly higher incidences of chronic diseases in the Ontario Métis population than in the general population. It was also found that some Métis have less access to treatment than individuals in the general population. This is the first Métis-specific study of its kind in Ontario and was carried out by the MNO in partnership with the Institute for

Clinical Evaluative Science (ICES) through funding from the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC). The study represented over five years of intensive research utilizing the MNO Citizenship Registry and provincial health administrative databases that are managed by ICES. The findings represent irrefutable scientific evidence that there is a need for Métis-specific wellness and health strategies.

During the March 20 release, MNO President, Gary Lipinski, placed the chronic disease findings within the wider context of the MNO's work to advance Métis rights and issues. He stressed two points in the MNO *Statement of Prime Purpose* that relate directly to the findings:

- to provide care and support necessary to meet the fundamental needs of the citizens of the Métis Nation;
- to promote the improved health and wellness of the individual, the family and the whole Métis community.

President Lipinski explained: "The Métis Nation of Ontario was created to advance the issues and concerns specific to Métis people [and] Métis people have a Métis-specific set of data requirements that are unique compared not only to other Canadians and Ontarians, but also to other Aboriginal peoples. [By identifying these requirements in the findings] we are continuing to advance the *Statement of Prime Purpose*."

As the findings were released, the tremendous value of the MNO's partnership with ICES was highlighted. Prior to the release, Dr. David Henry, the President and CEO of ICES, said that stated the "scarcity of published information on chronic disease burdens and health care trends among the Métis--the results of the research--are of concern from a public health perspective." Saba Khan, an Epidemiologist in Primary Care and Population Health, represented ICES at the release of the findings. She stated: "The partnership with the MNO is a true partnership with the MNO setting the agenda for what we do, asking the right questions, providing data that is secure, identifiable, optimized and anonymous. This has been a very rewarding partnership for ICES and we look forward to further work to explore in greater detail the health needs of Métis people in Ontario."

THE KEY FINDINGS ABOUT CHRONIC DISEASE WITHIN THE MNO INCLUDED:

- ∞ Prevalence of diabetes among Métis citizens in Ontario was **26% higher** than in the general Ontario population;
- ∞ Métis with diabetes were 86% more likely to be hospitalized due to a heart attack or pre-heart attack than people with diabetes in the general population;
- ∞ Métis were 18% less likely to receive care from a diabetes specialist;
- ∞ **Less than half of Métis with diabetes are receiving the recommended eye care;**
- ∞ Métis seniors were more likely than other seniors to use insulin and less likely to try to control their diabetes through diet alone;
- ∞ **Rates of heart attack** and pre-heart attack and congestive heart failure were **1.8 and 1.3 times higher** among Métis compared to the general Ontario population;
- ∞ The re-admission rate for congestive heart failure was over two times higher among the Métis than the general Ontario population;
- ∞ The prevalence of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) was over 1.6 times higher among the Métis; and
- ∞ **Asthma rates were 1.2 times higher** in the Métis, with the greatest differences seen in young people aged 18 to 24 years

“**Métis people have a Métis-specific set of data requirements that are unique, compared to other Canadians and Ontarians, but also to other Aboriginal peoples...**”

Copies of all the MNO Research on Chronic Diseases can be found on the MNO website at: www.metisnation.org and detailed summaries are featured on p. 25-28.

continued on page 24

ENHANCING
MNO PARTICIPATION
IN MANAGEMENT OF
FISH AND FISH HABITAT

THE Aboriginal Inland Habitat PROGRAM

Over the past number of years, the DFO, through the Aboriginal Inland Habitat Program (AIHP), has provided resources to enhance the ability of the Métis Nation of Ontario to participate in management of fish and fish habitat and further develop relations between the Métis Nation of Ontario and DFO.

Inland habitat management involves the implementation of techniques and tools on both large and small scale. For our part, the MNO will concentrate on building on the strides it has made, through its current AIHP, in governance and empowering communities by moving toward enhanced Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge collection from Métis knowledge holders and integration of the ATK into an aquatic habitat management framework.

The MNO's work under the AIHP has continued to build on MNO's efforts to increase its capacity to engage in aquatic habitat initiatives and manage aquatic habitat. The MNO conducted ATK collection initiatives, including the collection of ATK relevant to aquatic habitats and training for MNO citizens in the collection of ATK. The work also included Community Council aquatic habitat projects by both initiating new project work plans and initiating projects proposed and planned by MNO Community Councils during 2010-11.

During the past year initiatives included:

- Community Council fish habitat initiatives (Thunder Bay Métis Council and Kenora Métis Council)
- Traditional knowledge collection
- Captain of the Hunt – Youth knowledge transfer and traditional knowledge collection training

These initiatives, as well as other initiatives undertaken through AIHP in previous years, have allowed the MNO to increase its capacity in fish habitat management. This has positive implications in the areas of consultation, habitat management, and the Métis way of life. Over time, working through programs like the AIHP, the MNO and its communities will continue to grow stronger because of this important foundational work.

The MÉTIS Way of Life

Rights-bearing Métis communities throughout Ontario have deep connections – social, cultural, spiritual, and economic – to their traditional territories.

These connections lie at the core of Métis identity and culture. The health and well-being of the land directly correlates with that of the Métis people, whose history and future are tied to it. These territories include areas where there was historical settlement, presence and occupation by Métis, as well as historical use, including cultural, social, spiritual and economic activities (including harvesting).

Throughout these Métis traditional territories in Ontario, Métis have constitutionally protected Aboriginal rights that are grounded in their historical and ongoing customs, practices and traditions to the land. Métis live, work and

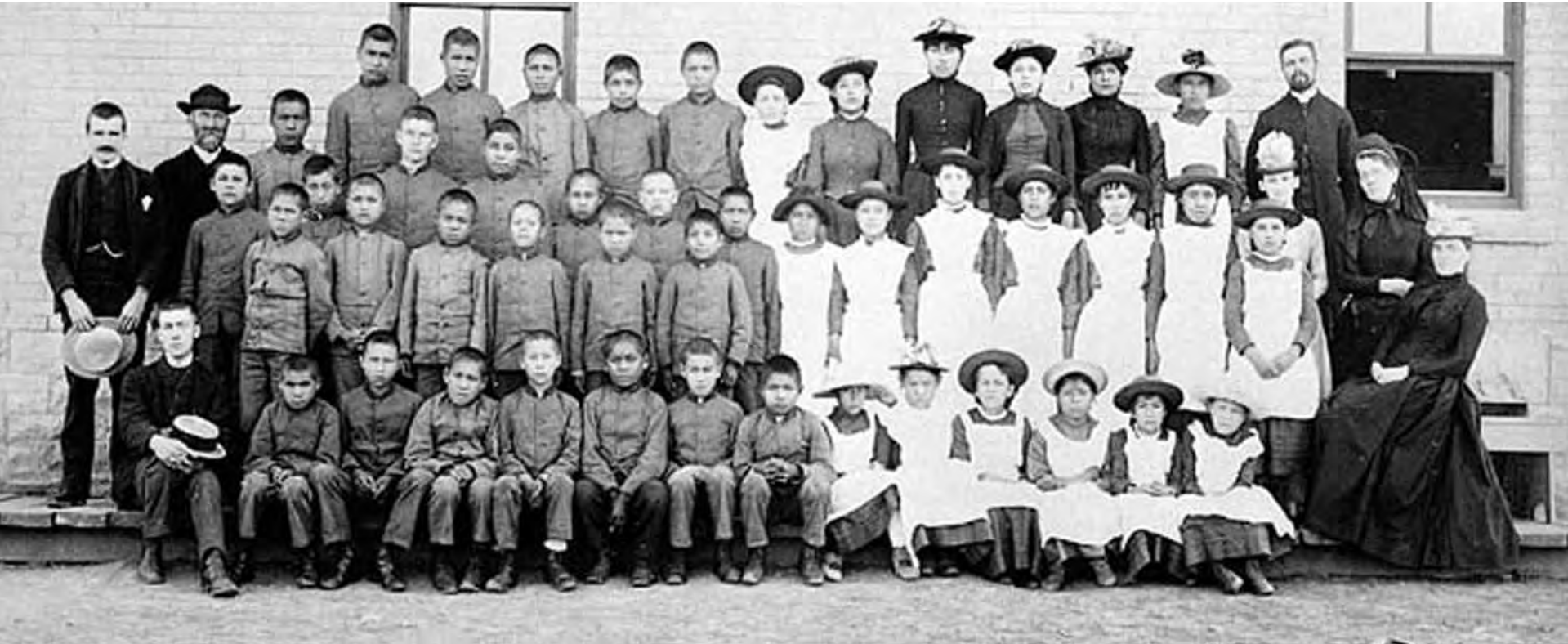
harvest throughout these territories and rely on them for their individual as well as their community's overall cultural, social, spiritual, physical and economic well-being. These territories are inextricably connected to a Métis community's shared identity, culture and history, as a part of the Métis Nation in Ontario.

Although the Métis way of life is difficult to define in words, its meaning is easily felt and experienced by those who practice it. It is, quite literally, a way of living, a way of looking at the world and placing oneself in it. It constitutes a unique worldview that is framed by the teachings of our knowledge holders. It represents all aspects of "being Métis", including a tightly integrated relationship to the environment for food, spiritual and cultural fulfillment, medicine and ceremony. It also includes language (*Michif*), music, traditions, history, as well as family and community connections.

Although harvesting is only one aspect of the Métis way of life, it is one that is tremendously important to many Métis. Like their ancestors, Métis people in our communities rely on the living world around them for food, medicine, and spiritual fulfilment. Fish are harvested by line or net for food. Large game like moose and deer are hunted for meat and hides. Plants are collected for food, medicine or use in ceremony. Upland and migratory birds, as well as small game such as rabbits, are harvested for food. Trapping and commercial fishing are also important activities. These are only a few examples of how harvesting is important to the Métis way of life; there are many more.

Visit the MNO Lands, Resources & Consultations page @ metisnation.org





▲ Residential school students and staff around 1901 at St. Paul's - Middlechurch, Manitoba.

A Bitter Legacy

Métis Nation files intervention to the United Nations on Métis survivors of the Residential School System

Seeking recognition for Métis survivors who endured emotional, physical and spiritual abuse in Métis residential, day and boarding schools continues for the Métis National Council.

"This is one issue that I will not put down until it has been settled," says Métis National Council (MNC) President Clément Chartier. "There is a real misconception in Canada about the Métis' place in this horrific

piece of Canada's history; I can assure you that Métis experienced the same brutalities and the stripping of self-identity, as those recognized under the *Indian Residential Settlements Agreement*."

Another step was taken on January 30, 2012, by filing an official intervention to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) in Geneva, Switzerland. This intervention provides the position of the Métis Nation on Canada's nineteenth and twentieth reports of Canada to the CERD and highlights the continued discriminatory effects on Métis citizens of the residential school system imposed by the federal government of Canada.

It also explains the exclusionary policies and legislative measures imposed on addressing the full

scope of the legacy of the residential school system by the Crown and describes the reality that Métis children suffered inexcusably for decades in these 'schools'.

The document outlines how the Métis have been excluded in all accounts during the process of recognition and compensation criteria set out by Canada and provides the following recommendations to the CERD.

"It is recommended that the CERD urge Canada to accept its jurisdictional responsibility to the Métis and to address the discriminatory impacts of the residential school system on Métis survivors and their descendants. These negotiations must lead to fair compensation for Métis survivors and their descendants at least equal to compensation currently available to other Indige-

I can assure you that Métis experienced the same brutalities and the stripping of self-identity, as those recognized under the Indian Residential Settlements Agreement.

nous peoples in Canada. Specifically, it is recommended that the CERD urge Canada to initiate amendments to the 'Settlement Agreement' to provide for at least equal access to its compensatory schemes for Métis survivors and their descendants.

"It is further recommended that the CERD urge Canada to initiate amendments to the mandate of the 'Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada' to specifically

include the Métis on an equal basis to First Nations and Inuit peoples."

This battle is far from over, but the MNC is determined to ensure Métis survivors and their stories are heard and that every individual has the closure they deserve. Only then will the Métis Nation, as a whole, have an opportunity to heal from a legacy that began by imposing a childhood that no child should ever endure.

Métis National Council President receives Diamond Jubilee award

Métis National Council (MNC) President, Clément Chartier, is among 60 winners of the inaugural Diamond Jubilee Awards, celebrating the 60th anniversary of Queen Elizabeth II's accession to the throne.

Governor-General David Johnston, accompanied by Prime Minister Stephen Harper, awarded 60 inaugural medals, several of them to Aboriginal people or those working on indigenous issues. Chartier won "for his leadership as President of the Métis National Council, and for advocating for Métis and indigenous rights," according to the Governor General's website.

"It is an honour to have been selected to receive the Diamond Jubilee Medal," Chartier said in a statement. "This medal recognizes the achievements and dedication to building a better Canada—to be recognized for pushing the Métis



▲ President Chartier receives Queen Elizabeth II's Diamond Jubilee Medal.

rights agenda forward is very special, but there is much work yet to do on this issue."

The medals were given out in a private ceremony at Rideau Hall.

A long way from Reconciliation

Efforts continue for recognition and compensation for Métis residential and day-school survivors

The Métis Nation continues to seek recognition and compensation for the thousands of Métis residential and day-school survivors not included in the Indian Residential School Settlements Agreement. The challenge facing the Métis Nation is the continued exclusion of the Métis residential/boarding schools from the *Settlement Agreement*, the Government of Canada's apology, and the mandate of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) whose interim report

was released on February 24, 2012.

"Reconciliation requires more than just one party at the table," said Métis National Council (MNC) President, Clément Chartier. "We made it clear that we would not be participating in the work of the TRC in the absence of some party taking responsibility for what happened to our children in the residential or boarding schools set up for Métis children."

President Chartier also expressed concern that the interim report's reference to a meeting of TRC commissioners with the MNC leadership may imply that Métis residential schools were included in the commission's mandate and the Settlement Agreement itself. "We met with the TRC to tell them we would not be participating in its work until such time that responsibility was

assumed by the government and/or the church organizations involved and a settlement concluded with respect to Métis residential schools."

The MNC President said he fully supported initiatives to compensate and reconcile with the victims of Indian residential schools but wanted the TRC to be clearer in its reporting so that Canada and the international community will understand that there are many Métis people and boarding schools excluded from Canada's acknowledgement of past harms.

"I am at a total loss as to why Canada would turn its back on the Métis children who suffered the same or similar abuses in those institutions as suffered by First Nations children in Indian residential schools," concluded Chartier.

FEDERAL RELATIONS

MÉTIS NATIONAL COUNCIL
RALLIEMENT NATIONAL DES MÉTIS

Steps in the right direction

A Message from the Métis National Council President on Métis-Crown Relations

The recent First Nations-Crown Summit in Ottawa between Prime Minister Harper and the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) is a significant step in the right(s) direction.

The Métis Nation leadership over the past two decades has been pushing for a distinctions-based approach in our dealings with the federal government. We achieved some success based on this approach in the Charlottetown constitutional round in 1992, resulting in the negotiation of the “draft Métis Nation Accord” that was ready for signature by Prime Minister Mulroney, the Premiers of the provincial governments westward from Ontario, and the Métis Nation leadership. Unfortunately, this accord fell with the defeat of the Charlottetown Accord in the fall of 1992. However, we have not looked back since and continue to press for the right of the Métis Nation to represent its peoples’ interests.

With the signing of the “Métis Nation Protocol” in September, 2008, between the Métis Nation and the federal government, significant strides have been made in firming up the Métis Nation-Crown relationship. In particular, through the “Métis Economic Development Symposium” (MEDS) process, we have been able to advance Métis engagement in economic development through direct meetings between the federal Aboriginal Affairs Minister, the five Aboriginal Affairs Ministers of Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia, along with the Métis Nation leadership.

Our next goal in enhancing this relationship is a meeting with the Prime Minister and our Métis Nation leadership, and later with the Prime Minister and the five Premiers, to address the priorities of the Métis Nation.

OUR MÉTIS LANGUAGE | MICHIF SPEAKERS GATHER IN TIMMINS

Michif

A language for today and tomorrow

By **France Picotte**, MNO Chair and **Dr. Chris Paci**, Manager, MNO Education & Training

Michif continues to be one of the languages spoken in Ontario today. Thanks to funding from the Aboriginal Languages Initiative, Canadian Heritage, and the Ministry of Education, Michif speakers from across Ontario gathered for a day of sharing and discussion. The state of the Michif language spoken in Ontario is largely unknown outside of the Michif Committee. The committee has been around a number of years, functioning as a key group of dedicated volunteers with passion for the language. The day long gathering was an opportunity to share and celebrate Michif as a language for today and tomorrow.

Historically, many of the Michif speakers were reluctant to speak in public. “We are pretty sure that we have more than two dialects but how many is still unknown. This gathering of speakers is but a



minute example of what I suspect to be in existence in Ontario,” said France Picotte, Chair of the Métis Nation of Ontario. The Michif language is a language of survival and of necessity. In the early days, before the formation of Canada, Michif facilitated communication between diverse peoples, aided Métis mobility (across different cultural and linguistic landscapes) and contributed to the survival of our ancestors.

▲ Michif Committee meeting, February 27, 2012.

There are many questions about the state of Aboriginal languages: What do we need to do to ensure these languages are not lost with the current generation of speakers? What were those things that contributed to the development of the languages? As the Métis Nation continues to grow in Ontario what do we need to do to ensure the viability of Michif? Métis peoples’

ability to communicate with diverse peoples continues to be instrumental in the development of Ontario and Canada; the same values that were important in the past are of importance today and in the future. The Métis Nation of Ontario is committed to supporting Michif--gathering, preserving and propagating all the languages spoken by Métis.

2012 NATIONAL ABORIGINAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD | DR. JANET SMYLIE

MNO citizen receives National Aboriginal Achievement Award

Dr. Janet Smylie was one of the first Métis doctors in Canada and has partnered with the MNO on three health research projects. An expert in the field of Indigenous health, Dr. Smylie has practiced and taught in urban, rural, and remote communities. She began her career at the Ottawa General Hospital as a family medicine resident and in 1996 went on to be a physician with Anishnawbe Health in Toronto.

Internationally, she has worked with public health researchers in New Zealand, Australia and the United States to study and improve health systems for Indigenous populations. A past director of the Indigenous Peoples Health Research Centre in Saskatchewan and past associate professor at the University of Saskatchewan, she continues to practice medicine at the Seven Generations Midwives of Toronto. She is also a research scientist at Saint Michael’s Hospital Centre for Research on inner city health as well as an associate public health sciences professor at the University of Toronto.

Dr. Smylie continues her work with communities across Canada in order to advance and design the delivery of health to Indigenous peoples.

Other Métis Award-winners

The 2012 National Aboriginal Achievement Award (NAAA) recipients’ list includes two other outstanding Métis Nation citizens.

Senator Gerry St. Germain from Manitoba was recognized for his

Lifetime achievements. As the first self-identified Métis person to serve in Canada’s federal cabinet Senator St. Germain has dedicated much of his life’s work to advancing issues of importance to Indigenous peoples across Canada. He was appointed to the Senate in 1993 and is currently the Chair of the Senate’s Standing Committee on Aboriginal Peoples where he has introduced legislation on self-government. Senator St. Germain was instrumental in achieving a formal residential school apology from the Government of Canada.

Candace Sutherland from Manitoba was given the Youth Award. Candace is an exceptional role-model for young people across Canada. Donating to charities and running across Canada in support of the Salvation Army, the Heart and Stroke Foundation, the Canadian Diabetes Association and the Canadian Cancer Society.

The National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation presented its yearly awards on February 24th in Vancouver. The Awards Gala was co-hosted by Theo Fleury and Carmen Moore and will be televised by both Global and APTN later in the year.

Special appearances included rock icon Robbie Robertson from Six Nations of the Grand River, internationally acclaimed Métis singer, songwriter and pianist, Chantal Kreviazuk, award-winning singer Derek Miller, and Métis actress and chanteuse, Andrea Menard.

For a complete list of winners and more information about the Awards visit: www.naaf.ca/NAAA.



▲ Dr. Janet Smylie (left) with National Aboriginal Health Organization CEO, Dr. Paulette C. Tremblay, presented findings of the Indigenous Children’s Health Report: Health Assessment in Action to the National Aboriginal Health Organization (NAHO) in 2009. (PHOTO: National Aboriginal Health Organization)

COMMUNITY COUNCILS

KENORA MÉTIS COUNCIL | FESTIVAL DU VOYAGEUR

Culture & Pride

Kenora Métis Council brings Métis culture & language to the next generation during Festival du Voyageur

By **Nina Henley**
Kenora Métis Council
Secretary

The Métis Nation of Ontario, Kenora Métis Council was asked to join in the festivities at Ste. Marguerite Bourgeoy's French Immersion School in celebration of Festival Du Voyageur for the second year in a row on February 17th.

We set up two classrooms. In one classroom we focused on the sharing of our traditions, showcasing our resource books, posters, and Métis artefacts such as our flag, sash, clothing, traps, etc. Councilor, Karen Cederwall was happy to discuss any of our resources with the teachers and students, and to answer their questions.

We held a mini-Michif class, with Women's Representative, Colette Surovy giving a short lesson. Colette also gave a brief explanation of the canoe expedition that came through Kenora and showed the paddle that had been presented to our council, a map of the route they had followed, and pictures of the young voyageurs. She also talked to the students about how important the canoe was to the voyageurs, and how they made canoes out of birch bark.

Katelyne Stenlund welcomed the students in Michif and gave a brief presentation about our Métis flag and sash, explaining the meanings of the different colours. PCMNO Region One Councillor, Theresa Stenlund, and citizen, Roxy Derouard, helped Katelyne answer questions from the students.

Our treasurer, Sandra Triskle, her father, Floyd Triskle and our Youth Rep., Jaymie Triskle gave a presentation on trapping and medicinal plants. The students had many questions about the furs and animal skulls, as well as plants such as, sweet-grass, echinacea and hawthorn.

In the second classroom, Métis fiddle music played, while citizens Adelle Gordon, Nina Henley, and Hailey Fortier showed the students how to play the spoons and how to jig. They were all excited to give it a try. Then, citizens, Jolena Henley and Ashley Cederwall handed out bannock and jam to the deserving students.

Both the teachers and students seemed to enjoy our participation in this event, and have asked us to participate again next year.



▲ Colette Surovy (with canoe) gives a short lesson to students at Ste. Marguerite Bourgeoy's French Immersion School in celebration of Festival Du Voyageur.



▲ Adelle Gordon and Nina Henley.



▲ Sandra Triskle enchants her audience.



▲ Katelyne Stenlund (left) gives a brief presentation about the Métis flag and sash



▲ Ashley Cedarwall prepares to serve the bannock.



▲ Floyd Triskle and Jaymie Triskle display trapping paraphernalia and medicinal plants.

OUTREACH

The Métis Way of Life

By **Theresa Stenlund**
Region One PCMNO Councillor

When it comes to passing on the teachings of our Métis way of life, it is so important that our children, and our children's children, are given the teachings that our ancestors have given us.

In saying this, it is also very important to me as a parent, for my children to know who they are and where they have come from. I have taken the time to teach my children and watch them grow up as Métis children. Spending time outdoors with my children--hunting, fishing or just in the bush--is an experience that I have wanted them to know from infancy. They need to be aware of what surrounds them and the gifts that nature provides.

Just recently I had my eight year old daughter, Katelyne, participate and assist the local Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Kenora Métis Council in giving a French school an afternoon workshop during Festival du Voyageur day.

I have taken the time to teach my children and watch them grow up as Métis children.

This workshop incorporated a definition of who the Métis are and some teachings about our Métis way of life. It was very heartwarming to see my daughter wear her ribbon shirt and sash and give teachings on the Métis flag, sash, capote, etc. to the teachers and to children of all ages who rotated through her group station. It confirmed for me that my daughter at this young age, is proud of who she is, her culture, and her identity.

I also had my six year old son, Hayden, participate in the group stations and he had the opportunity to watch his sister Katelyne present on our Métis culture. I hope through his eyes he sees his sister as a strong Métis role model and he too will one day be in her shoes teaching others about our Métis way of life for the next generation to come.

INFINITE REACH | MÉTIS YOUTH SOLIDARITY NETWORK

Métis beading workshop at Brock University

By **Andrea DesRoches**

On January 26, a number of Brock University students took part in a traditional Métis beading workshop, held on campus in St Catharines, Ontario. The workshop was sponsored by the Métis Nation of Ontario's (MNO) Infinite Reach program and co-hosted by Brock's Aboriginal Student Services. Beading is a traditional art form of the Métis, one of Canada's Aboriginal peoples, and the tradition continues to this day.

Barbaranne Wright, the Women's Representative for the MNO Niagara Regional Métis Council, volunteered her time to come to campus to teach students this craft. A total of nine students took part in the event, including two Métis students and two First Nations students. All participants started a flower design project, and received a full kit with all the necessary supplies to finish two designs. Students could sew the finished product onto clothing or another accessory, or frame it to be used as a wall decoration.

During the workshop, Barbaranne shared with participants the historical and cultural importance of beadwork for the Métis



“Beading is a traditional art form of the Métis, one of Canada's Aboriginal peoples, and the tradition continues to this day.”

people. Beading has always been an important component of traditional Métis culture, first taught to Métis girls by Christian nuns in mission schools. Métis women went on to produce beaded items for their voyageur husbands to trade with First Nation partners in the fur trade. Historically, the Métis were referred to as “The Flower Bead-

work People” because of the popularity of their exquisite beading, and flowers are one of the most common designs. Today, beading is worn proudly by many Métis, including our leaders across the province and country as a symbol of our history.

Barbaranne also talked about the history of the Métis sash and the Métis flag, two traditional symbols of the Métis people. She even told the history behind the lives of her own Métis ancestors from all parts of North America.

For almost all of the students, this was their first exposure to any type of beading craft, but everyone did an amazing job and took home some beautiful projects. All of the participants enjoyed the workshop and the full day of stories, laughter, sharing, and fun!

The event was sponsored by the MNO as part of its Infinite Reach program. The Infinite Reach Student Solidarity Network is a new initiative of the Métis Nation of Ontario to help to create a community of Métis learners in Ontario's post-secondary institutions. Workshops like this one aim to provide culturally-specific events to raise awareness of the Métis people.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

▲ **Métis Fiddler Alicia Blore.** Photo by Brea Bartholet

Métis Awareness Day at Durham College

Based on an article by **Brea Bartholet**

Durham College has welcomed an array of new facilities and programs over the past few months, including the recently opened Aboriginal Student Centre, located within the Simcoe Building.

The centre celebrated its first Métis Awareness Day on January 26th, when everyone was invited to find out more about the Métis cul-

ture. Cecile Wagar, the Senator of the Métis Nation of Ontario Oshawa and Durham Métis Council, was in attendance and happy to share food, jigging and fiddling fun with curious visitors. She also mentioned the artefacts and furs that were on display, as well as the beaded moccasins and unique clothing items.

Alicia Blore, who played the fiddle throughout the day, entertained guests with her songs.

See video at:

www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=PkgX02EX6Us

Reaching 10,000 Métis Households

MÉTIS VOYAGEUR

ADVERTISING

As the voice of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO), the Métis Voyageur is the best vehicle for reaching one of the fastest growing demographic groups in the province. It is also a respected source of information about Métis issues and events that is used by government, business and educational institutions across Ontario.

Rates* for Corporations & Governments

Size	One Issue	Two Issues (Save 10%)	Three Issues (Save 20%)	Four Issues (Save 30%)	Five Issues (Save 40%)	Six Issues (Save 45%)
Full page	\$1200	\$2160	\$2520	\$2880	\$3600	\$3960
¾ page	\$850	\$1530	\$2040	\$2380	\$2550	\$2805
½ page	\$650	\$1170	\$1560	\$1820	\$1950	\$2145
¼ page	\$450	\$810	\$1080	\$1260	\$1350	\$1485
⅓ page	\$250	\$450	\$600	\$700	\$750	\$825
Listing	\$150	\$270	\$360	\$420	\$450	\$495

Rates* for MNO Community Councils,
MNO Citizens & other Métis Governments

Size	One Issue	Two Issues (Save 10%)	Three Issues (Save 20%)	Four Issues (Save 30%)	Five Issues (Save 40%)	Six Issues (Save 45%)
Full page	\$600	\$1080	\$1260	\$1440	\$1800	\$1980
¾ page	\$425	\$765	\$1020	\$1190	\$1275	\$1402
½ page	\$325	\$585	\$780	\$910	\$975	\$1072
¼ page	\$225	\$405	\$540	\$630	\$675	\$742
⅓ page	\$125	\$225	\$300	\$350	\$370	\$412
Listing	\$75	\$135	\$180	\$210	\$225	\$247

* Double the price for an ad to appear in full colour.
Multiply the price by 2.5 for an ad to appear on the back cover (always in full colour).
Rates effective as of October 13th, 2011

File Submission

Please submit ads electronically in PDF format to samb@metisnation.org
For more information contact:
Sam Baynham at
613-798-1488 ext. 155

Please note that there is limited space for advertising in each issue of the Métis Voyageur, so, advertising is accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. The MNO reserves the right to not accept advertisements.

Advertisement Sizes

Full page - 10" x 16"
¾ page - 6.5" x 10.5"
½ page - 5" x 16" or 10" x 8"
¼ page - 8" x 5" or 2.5" x 16" or 10" x 4"
⅓ page - 4" x 2.5" or 1.25" x 8" or 5" x 2"
Listing (business card) - 2" X 3.5"

ONTARIO POWER GENERATION

opg.com

February 2012

MOVING TO CLEANER FUELS THUNDER BAY GS CONVERSION PROJECT

Phasing out coal

While OPG continues to phase out the use of coal to produce electricity by 2014, work is underway to convert its **Thunder Bay Generating Station (GS)** from coal to natural gas. The station is located in the City of Thunder Bay, next to the Lakehead Region Conservation Authority's Mission Island Marsh.

What is the “conversion” project?

Ontario's Long-Term Energy Plan calls for the conversion of Thunder Bay GS from coal to natural gas. This will allow for the continued use of a facility owned by the people of Ontario. With the cost of natural gas projected to stay relatively low for the foreseeable future, conversion to natural gas is recognized as the lowest cost option for Thunder Bay GS. The conversion will cost less than building a new natural gas-fuelled generating station.

The use of natural gas will also reduce greenhouse gas emissions by about 45 per cent per unit of (produced) energy compared to coal. Plant modifications will maintain the possibility of adding biomass in the future.

The converted plant will continue to help meet peak electricity demands in northwestern Ontario and serve to “back up” OPG's hydroelectric generating stations during low water periods.

The production flexibility provided by the converted units is important in enabling increased intermittent, renewable electricity generation like wind and solar. Conversion of Thunder Bay GS will also help

maintain local jobs, continue to provide economic benefits to the region and ensure electricity is available to power future economic growth.

Engineering work on station modifications is underway and the applications for environmental approvals are being prepared. OPG's plan is to have Thunder Bay GS supplying electricity fuelled by natural gas by late 2014.



Natural gas pipeline

Construction of a natural gas pipeline is required for the conversion of Thunder Bay GS. Union Gas is responsible for all aspects of supplying natural gas as fuel for electricity production at the station including route selection and pipeline construction.

Looking ahead

OPG will be holding a public information session on the project in the months ahead. This session will be advertised in the local media.

For more information on the Thunder Bay GS Conversion Project, visit www.opg.com; email conversion@opg.com or call Chris Fralick, Northwest Thermal Plant Manager, at 807-625-6400.

PARTNERSHIPS



MNO ensures
Métis have a
role in 2015
Pan-Am and
Parapan Games

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) is participating in the organizing committee for one of the world's largest athletic events. The Pan-Am and Parapan Games are second only to the Olympics and Para-Olympics in size, scope and grandeur and will be taking place July 10-26 and August 7-14, 2015, in Toronto. The games will attract more than 10,000 athletes and officials from all over the western hemisphere and more than 250,000 tourists from all over the world. The games are expected to generate more than 15,000 jobs and require more than 20,000 volunteers. For more information, visit the Pan-Am and Parapan Games website at: www.toronto2015.org.

In order to ensure recognition and involvement of Aboriginal peoples at the Pan-Am and Parapan Games, the board of directors for the games has put an Aboriginal Committee in place and the MNO is represented on that committee. The games are also currently looking for a Manager of Aboriginal Relations. Anyone interested in applying for that position can find the job posted at this link: www.toronto2015.org

As the dates for the games draw closer look for more announcements about exciting opportunities for Métis people!

COUNCIL ELECTIONS

The Mattawa Métis Council
held its election on
January 22, 2012

President
Nelson Montreuil

Vice-President
Roger Pedneault

Secretary
Emile Delarosbil

Treasurer
vacant

Senator
Romeo Sarrazin

Women's Rep
vacant

Youth Rep
vacant

Councillor
Roger Rose

Councillor
Michel Sarrazin

Councillor
Jacques Delarosbil

Our Unified Métis Front

There is so much we learn from our history. The Métis of Ontario can most likely better identify with the voyageurs than with the buffalo hunters of the central part of our Homeland. History has taught us that just before the Nor'Wester voyageurs came to a fort or back to their point of origin they would beach their canoes and change into somewhat more presentable clothing. They would polish themselves up to make a proper and dignified impression. They would put on their best face and do themselves proud.

What can we learn from our forefathers? Certainly we can relate to this practice of making a good impression. When we ourselves gather we observe a multitude of sashes and Métis regalia. Without doubt it is a fine tradition to continue. However, on a more basic level it also teaches us a valuable lesson that I believe is worth exploring.

There is no question in my mind that the long canoe trips caused some conflicts amongst the



Senators' Spotlight

By Reta Gordon, Executive Senator

voyageurs as they travelled day in and day out in close, cramped quarters. What of course is interesting is how they put that all aside and put their best foot forward when they came to a fort or back to Montreal.

While on their journey, many differences must have come to the forefront; it would only be natural that these "issues" come to a head. There would be disputes, complaints, bickering, and confrontations of all sorts. But just prior to coming into public view they would stop, shake off the dust, dress up in their best attire then head into the fort or settlement in fine form--a well oiled machine.

All too often as we travel on our Métis journey, we have our own disputes or complaints, and our own confrontations. We most definitely

have our fair share of bickering. All of this is a healthy way of advancing the Nation. However, some of us seem to have lost the ability to shake off the dust and put forth a unified appearance when we come into public view. The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) has always striven for consensus; it is the cornerstone of our political system. What is unfortunate is that some continue disputes, complaints and confrontations after consensus has been reached.



The Métis Nation of Ontario has always striven for consensus; it is the cornerstone of our political system.



The Future Matters!



Aboriginal Peoples Survey

Education and Employment

Starting in February 2012, Statistics Canada will be conducting the Aboriginal Peoples Survey with First Nations people living off reserve, Métis and Inuit across Canada. You may be invited to participate on a voluntary basis.

Your participation will help provide a better understanding of the opportunities and challenges that lead to success in education and employment. Your information will help support the efforts of Aboriginal communities, organizations and governments as they work towards making improvements in the well-being of Aboriginal peoples.

Take part, complete the survey and help make a better future!

For more information, call 1-800-263-1136 or go to www.statcan.gc.ca/aps

NORTH BAY MÉTIS COUNCIL | MÉTIS ON ICE



▲ top: Onyx Maksoud tries his hands at ice fishing.

Métis On Ice

By **Amanda Desbiens**
AHBHC Program Coordinator
NORTH BAY

One of the great things about living in Ontario is that every year on the third Monday of February our great province is one of a few who gives us a day to spend with our families, to include some physical activity, and to take part in any events that are happening in our communities. This year, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) North Bay Métis Council in partnership with the MNO North Bay Healing and Wellness Branch organized a “Métis on Ice” day. It was the ideal time, because Ontario allows everyone to fish for free during the Family Day weekend. What a perfect activity for families to share on a beautiful northern winter’s day! (Unlike last year, when we had to brave blistering winds and dodge massive ice balls that were falling from the sky!)

I decided to bring my family on to the ice with me this year. Now normally, I’m not an ice fishing kind of gal; however, this year I thought I’d put a smile on my face and find some patience and will those fish to eat my minnow! I brought my husband, who is from the south and really doesn’t appreciate the cold and the winter activities that normal northern people enjoy; my 14 year old son, who really just wants to sit on the ice and play with his iPod; and my youngest child, who is 2.5 years old, who was so very excited to try this fishing thing out. The one thing I refused to do was bait my own hook, so I recruited Natalie, a 10 year old Métis participant, to do it for me. The thought of putting that minnow on there was not appealing to me at all!



Apparently there are lessons to be learned while ice fishing:
Lesson one: the fish really only bite between the hours of four and eight in the evening. So, clearly, being out there in the middle of the morning was sure going to lower my chances.
Lesson two: only one fishing rod

“For a northern girl who never really ice fishes, I was impressed with this experience and very grateful to have been given the time to teach my children and myself this great winter sport.”

goes into a hole. Obviously the three we had going in one hole was not going to ensure us a bite or a catch of fish.

Lesson three: you must find a twig to dangle your rod on, so you can really see if a fish is nipping at your minnow. (I failed at this as well.)

Lesson four: there is a true bathroom issue with women on the ice, and pails just don’t work.

Lesson five: make sure to always bring something to sit on if you are not in an ice fishing hut.

Lesson six: you must have patience and not get upset when the person beside you gets the fish that was nipping on your minnow first.

Lesson seven: bring other entertainment for the kids.

Lesson eight: learn how to reel your fishing line before dropping the bait into the hole, otherwise you

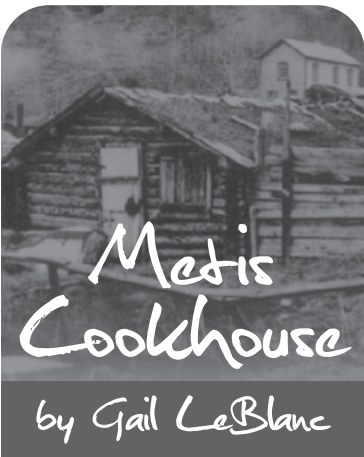
tangle the line up and spend some time trying to unravel and de-knot the thing.

For a northern girl who never really ice fishes, I was truly impressed with this experience and very grateful to have been given the time to teach my children and myself this great winter sport. We were very blessed to have had a wonderful day; the wind was calm, the ice inviting and the sun kept us nice and warm. We had a great crew and I thank Bam’s Tours’ shuttle taxi from Sturgeon Falls very much for shuttling us out to the ice fishing huts they had set up for us to use for the day.

Following the ice fishing and enjoying what nature has to offer, we had a great dinner with some thrilling cultural music, which fed my soul.

A Métis Rendezvous planned in Port Dover

A Métis Rendezvous is planned for Port Dover this coming fall, on September 22nd. The event will be held at Silver Lake Park where about 1000 people are expected to attend. Workshops are planned on drum making, tomahawk throwing, moccasin making and beading. There will be fiddlers, jiggers and story-tellers as well as displays of herbal medicines and trappers’ skills, such as hide stretching. There will also be special events for youth. The Port Dover Lions Club is helping to promote this first-time event. Port Dover is approximately a one hour drive from Hamilton.



Roasted Leg of Lamb with Crunchy Garlic Topping

- 1 tbsp margarine or butter
- 2 tsp crushed garlic
- 1/3 cup finely chopped onion
- 1/2 cup dry bread crumbs
- 1/4 cup crushed bran cereal
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh or dry parsley
- 1/3 cup chicken broth
- Leg of lamb (2.5 - 3lbs) deboned
- 1/3 cup red wine
- 1/3 cup beef broth

In non-stick skillet, melt margarine; sauté garlic and onion until soft. Add bread crumbs, cereal, parsley and chicken broth; mix until well combined (if too dry, add a bit more chicken broth).

Place lamb in roasting pan and pat bread crumb mixture over top.

Pour wine and beef broth into the pan.

Cover and bake at 375F for 20 minutes.

Uncover and bake another 15-20 minutes until desired doneness. Serve with pan juices.

Enjoy!



▲ Bailey Goldthorp, Onyx and Amanda Desbiens head out in the ice taxi.



▲ Bailey, Onyx and Amanda arrive on the ice.

HEALING & WELLNESS

Demystifying Mental Illness

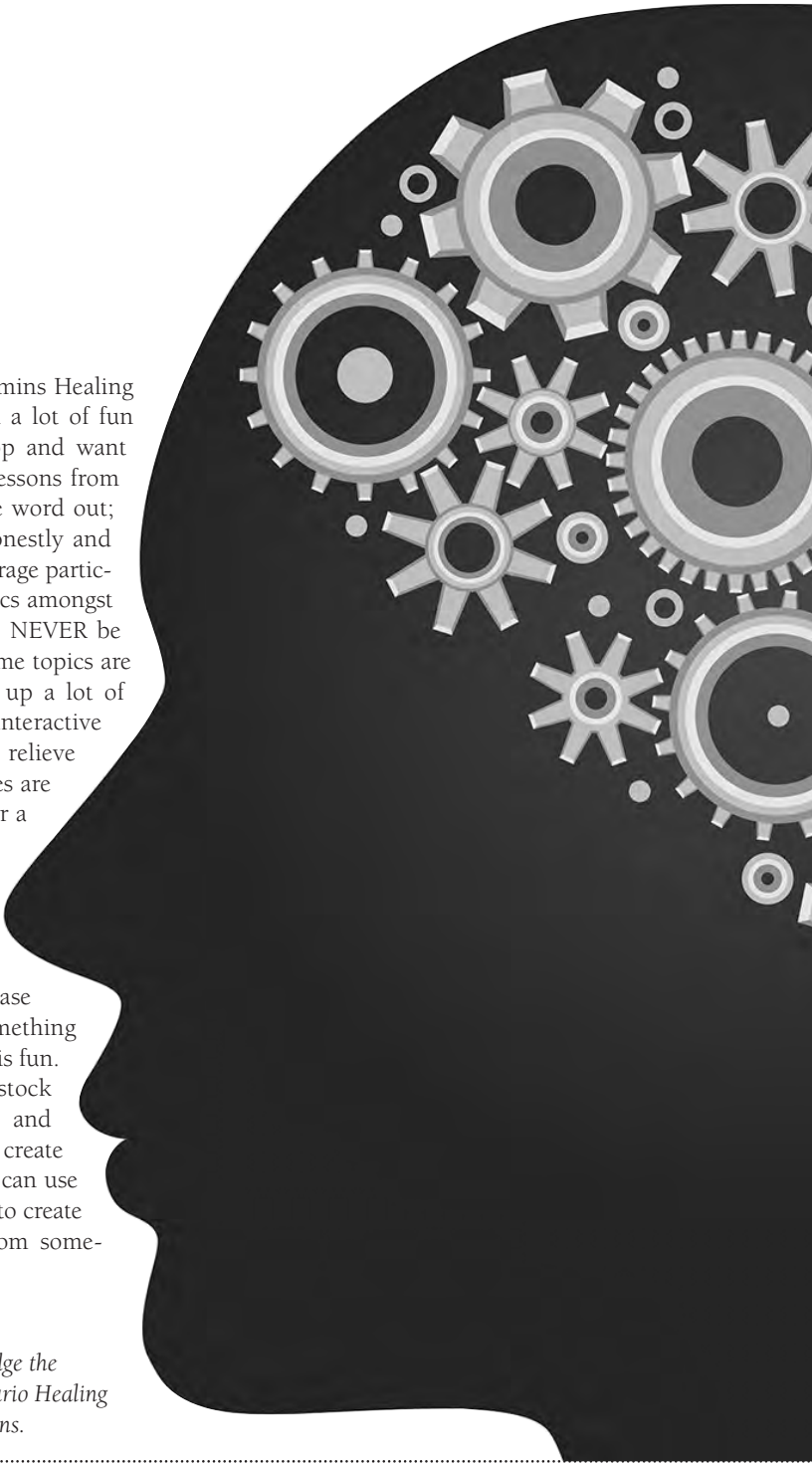
MNO Healing and Wellness workshop makes learning fun regardless of topic

By **Jessie Dolan** and **Michelle Seguin**
TIMMINS

On February 15th, 2012, we at the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Timmins branch held our workshop for “Stress Management and Mental Health”. Despite the weighty topics we had a great turn out and wonderful feedback from participants, which we credit mostly to our unique approach. The decision to partner these two topics in a one day workshop came easily given that the mention of “mental health” is usually accompanied by stress and we targeted just that! It is no secret that people often run from mental health using terms like “crazy”, “violent”, and even “stupid” to describe others that they associate with mental illness. So we decided to tackle why it is that people are so quick to label others with “mental illness”—lack of knowledge and fear is the answer. As mental disorders have long been seen as horrible debilitating diseases, or the opposite, “something in an affected

person’s head that they should get over,” we thought the most effective way to approach it was through a game. What better way to bring misinterpretations and dreaded stigmas to the forefront? We had our participants put on a headband with the name of a mental disorder or illness, such as “schizophrenia”, “depression”, “attention deficit hyper-activity disorder (ADHD)”, etc., without their seeing what is written on it. All the other participants are able to see the label and are charged with providing the “labeled” person with hints to guess the disorder stuck to their headband. Not surprisingly, we heard things like, “you hear voices” and “you have delusions” for schizophrenia, and “you’re disruptive to others”, “you can’t focus on anything” for ADHD. This simple game brought to light all of the myths and stigmas surrounding mental disorders in a fun and interactive way allowing us to address the truth and open up a discussion addressing our participants’ questions and comments. A huge “thank you” goes out to all of our participants for being open to playing and learning with us. To be sure that they were supported after the workshop we provided handouts with information about mental health myths, stress reducing tips, and places to go to research the topic on their

own. We, at the MNO Timmins Healing & Wellness Branch, had a lot of fun presenting this workshop and want everyone to take a few lessons from what we learned: get the word out; always present topics honestly and provide follow up; encourage participants to discuss the topics amongst their friends and family; NEVER be afraid to make it fun. Some topics are very difficult and bring up a lot of emotions, but using interactive games is a great way to relieve tension in a group. Games are also a good ice breaker or a simple tool to open discussion. Try the head bands game yourself, and mix up the topics or use a “stress masher” to release feelings and make something positive. A stress masher is fun. We used ripping card-stock paper of many colours and gluing it onto a board to create unique artwork, but you can use any medium you choose to create something wonderful from something negative! We would like to acknowledge the entire Métis Nation of Ontario Healing & Wellness Team in Timmins.



NATIONAL ABORIGINAL HEALTH ORGANIZATION | MÉTIS CENTRE

A Promising Practice

Métis Centre programs highlighted for potential to reduce existing health disparities between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians.

In August, the Health Council of Canada released, “Understanding and Improving Aboriginal Maternal and Child Health in Canada”. The report is the result of a multi-year project initiated in 2010 to highlight programs and initiatives with a potential of reducing existing health disparities between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians. Last winter, the council held a series of seven regional meetings across Canada to learn what is making a difference in the health of Aboriginal mothers and young children. The goal of the meetings was to capture on the ground information about what is working from people in the field. The council identified two Métis Centre projects as promising practices: *Healthy Beginnings, Supportive Communities: A Strong Future*, a DVD about Métis maternal/child health, and *Ispayin—Métis Youth Express Yourself!* a DVD and discussion guide exploring Métis identity and culture from a youth perspective.

A promising practice was defined as including the following characteristics: is based on Aboriginal experiences; resonates with users; results in positive changes in people’s lives; is inclusive; and, is adaptive, i.e. recognizes the importance of community context for successful implementation. Findings from the report conclude that:

Healthy Beginnings, Supportive Communities: A Strong Future:

- Fills a gap where information was lacking or non-existent;
- Ensures Métis voices are heard in maternal and child health discussions;
- Recognizes and respects oral stories and teaching;
- Is easily accessible to all Métis across Canada;
- Has a comprehensive package with written material, images and video.



ISPAYIN—Métis Youth Express Yourself!

- Promotes positive Métis identity;
- Builds Métis cultural competence;
- Is youth-driven and developed.

For more information or to read the reports, visit the Health Council of Canada: www.healthcouncilcanada.ca

SUDBURY

Spring is here

Sudbury’s MNO Healing and Wellness staff preps for change of season

By **Desneige Taylor**
Community Wellness Coordinator
SUDBURY

The Metis Nation of Ontario, Healing and Wellness Branch, Sudbury site, has been successful and busy. Soon the sun will melt the snow, so now is a good time to complete any sliding, snow men, ski-doing, or ice fishing you were thinking of doing and haven’t as yet. With winter behind us, we are preparing for upcoming spring workshops and we hope to hold another feast in celebration of new beginnings. We will be planning some fun, physically active workshops and are looking forward to gathering with community members for another year. With spring upon us it’s time to plant the gardens again. A healthy way to keep your memories close to your heart is to journal. We hope your spring and summer are enjoyable and any trips safe.

ARTS

SUNSET COUNTRY MÉTIS COUNCIL | BENEFIT CONCERT RAISES FUNDS FOR COMMUNITY HALL

Big-hearted community keeps the Métis Hall going

Based on an article by
Heather Latter, staff writer Fort
Frances Times On-line

The “Heart of the Arts” benefit concert, auction, art exhibit, and market held February 16th at Fort Frances High School was lauded by organizers as a success. “We were really impressed by the generosity of so many people,” said co-organizer and Councillor for the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Sunset Country Métis, Wanda Botsford.

“We need events like ‘Heart of the Arts’ to not only show off some of the amazing talent we have in the area, but also to help fundraise to keep the Métis Hall going,” said Clint Calder, President of the MNO Sunset Country Métis. “We don’t have many community halls left in Fort Frances, and we would like to preserve this one to not only house our community gatherings but also the community programs that run out of it,” he stressed. “We really appreciate the help of all of the entertainers who pulled together a remarkable lineup, and the Rainy River Arts Collective for adding another dimension and joining in with a fabulous display of local artistic talent,” he added.



▲ **Cloe Dolyny, six, checks out the hand-crafted jewellery available at the arts’ market.** photos courtesy Heather Latter, Fort Frances Times

In addition to musicians, there were story-tellers, actors, comedians and dancers, all of whom donated their time and talent to help raise money to sustain the Métis Hall, as did the artists and artisans from the Rainy River Arts Collective. “They are all a true testament to how much ‘heart’ our community has,” he remarked.

Calder thanked local merchants and community members who contributed to the penny table and the auction, and local bakers for contributing to the bake sale. He noted that the Métis Hall is a gathering

place for many community groups and events, and some great programs run out of the Métis Hall that benefit surrounding communities, like the Healthy Living Food Box and the Kids Being Kids playgroup.

“There is a misconception that the Métis Hall is government-funded, but it is not and it never has been,” stressed Clint Calder, President of the MNO Sunset Country Métis. “It is run by volunteers.” He added that because many of the programs there, are philanthropic and cultural in nature, they do not necessarily generate revenue.



▲ **Actor Darryl Allan offers comic relief during the benefit concert.**

“We need events like ‘Heart of the Arts’ to not only show off some of the amazing talent we have in the area, but also to help fundraise to keep the Métis Hall going.”

MÉTIS IN THE MEDIA



Riel Goes Digital

Chester Brown’s award-winning graphic novel biography of Louis Riel to be published as e-book

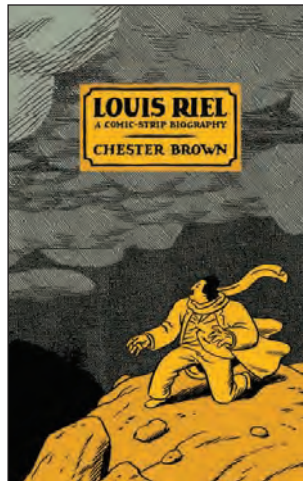
Originally published in 2006, *Louis Riel: A Comic Strip Biography*, won a Harvey Award for graphic nonfiction, and was dubbed by Publisher’s Weekly as “a strong contender for the best graphic novel ever” because of its artful telling of the life story of Riel.

Now, *Drawn & Quarterly* (D & Q), the Canadian graphic novel publisher, will digitize cartoonist Chester Brown’s well-known account of the Métis hero’s life.

“While the book concerns imperialism, empire, nationalism and the chaos that results, Brown maintains a still, almost silent atmosphere. He brilliantly renders a lengthy courtroom sequence by setting figures against a black background, heightening the tension of the events by employing minimal effects. Even the battle scenes are subdued,” *Publisher’s Weekly* said in its review at the time of release.

Last fall, Brown voiced his desire for e-books; CBC Canada Reads shortlisted *Louis Riel* in its top-ten for its annual contest; and, Canadian company Kobo, expressed an interest.

Louis Riel: A Comic-Strip Biography, by Chester Brown—an artist considered to be one of the greatest cartoonists living today—coming soon to a computer near you.



POETRY

Métis Lament

Take kindly to the council of years and experience of our Elders, gracefully surrendering our youth and many things of the past. We would not be here without them. We will continue to build our strength and spirit to protect and shield us when grief arises as we encounter any sudden misfortunes throughout our lives.

A clear, strong and nurtured mind will overcome and conquer many of our fears, which are often the origin of our unhappiness, fatigue and loneliness. We will discipline ourselves to be outstanding and proud people who will leave our mark of excellence in today’s society, to carve a path to guide our siblings and the next generation of Métis.

We must stand together as a nation and be proud of our heritage and be kind and gentle to our brothers and sisters. We are a family of Métis in this great universe who stand equal to all others on this earth.

We give thanks to our great creator for all the great gifts and wisdom he has given us. We will continue to follow our guiding light and carry forth our sign of infinity into the future because we have a God-given right to stand tall as proud Métis.

By **Senator Elmer Ross**
Bobcaygeon, ON

POETRY

I wrote this poem during a visit to the reserves on Manitou Island and the Golden Lake. I must admit that my Métis soul truly felt at home on the island and on Golden Lake Reserve, and I continue to feel very much at home on Algonquin territory in Ottawa where I currently live. I strongly suspect that one of my aboriginal ancestors was Algonquin. --- **Raymond D. Tremblay**

Let Us Walk a Good Path

Love of our heritage guided us throughout our journey.
Energized by Mother Earth, we sought to live in harmony.
Thanks to our sole Creator, we discovered our Métis identity.

Unrestrained joy flowed in our hearts as God kept us company.
Silent sounds inspired our souls. We felt one with Mother Nature.

We kept quiet to fully savour the warm embrace of our divine Creator.
As we heard the sacred heartbeat of the drum, we blossomed to no end.
Life nurtured our quest for wisdom. It was as if we were already in heaven.
Knowing that the Golden Eagle kept an eye on us, we longed to join his flight.

Accepting us as his children demonstrated the intensity of his spiritual might.

Goodness filled our souls and beckoned us to help the poor of our society.
Open-minded, we greeted them with dignity. We knew they were needy.
Our hearts bled for them and our souls overflowed with compassion.
Divine grace and Mother Nature caressed us. We felt their passion.

Peace invaded our beings. The White Owl was our key witness.
As we heard his hypnotizing hoots, we stayed awake no less.
The regal Thunderbird reminded us of our ancestral ways.
Hope, love and optimism became our Holiest Pathways.

I’m finally being myself

By **Tamarra Shepherd**
Regional Employment & Training
Intake Officer - TORONTO

Nina Farrauto is not one to settle. The self-identified Métis woman and successful 26-year-old makeup artist, originally from St. Catharines, has never been satisfied staying still. But it took a little searching to determine where she wanted to be and how she would get there.

After a brief and somewhat discouraging stint at university, Nina knew that the typical post-secondary experience wasn't for her. A self-described "artist", Nina recalls being aware her talents lie elsewhere at an early age. "I was making extensions at two years old," she says.

For a period of time, Nina admits she pursued what others around her were doing instead of following her truest passion and it wasn't until an insightful talk with a university advisor that she knew she was in the wrong place. She says her biggest challenge in that moment was "figuring out what my dream job was and finding out where I belong." For Nina, this meant leaving the university experience behind and taking a chance on the unknown.

She didn't hesitate. Nina knew in

order to pursue her dreams she needed to talk to and siphon experience from people who are already living them. She talked to fashion designers, successful stylists, and even met with *eTalk's* Leah Miller's makeup artist over coffee to talk about what unforeseen challenges she might face in this field. Nina found the experience invaluable. "One of the biggest steps for me was figuring out who to shadow." She credits this as being the key to success at any job. "I don't think there's enough emphasis on 'job shadowing'. When you finish high school take one year and go to the company you want to work for and ask to shadow 'the accountant', 'the receptionist', or whoever, for free for two weeks." A practitioner of her own advice, Nina discovered after a few hour-long job shadows, exactly what her future would entail.

Relying on her talent as a stylist, it wasn't long before she found a job at a salon. Temporary as it was, Nina's eye for hair design inspired in her a desire to learn more about the



▲ **Nina Farrauto**

aesthetic arts. But how she would be able to afford the education she needed for such a competitive field was yet to be decided. "After going to university and hair school, I just couldn't afford it." That problem brought to mind a conversation with a cousin years ago who had men-

tioned accessing support through the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) for college tuition.

Métis herself, Nina visited the MNO Toronto branch to see if the MNO could help in any way. When she met with Kelly Honsberger, Coordinator of Education and Training at the MNO Toronto office, she was confident she had made the right choice.

Her desire to do art instead of just aesthetics led Nina to choose Completions makeup artistry program. This institution, well-known for its instructors and its focus on special effects make-up, is considered among the best aesthetic arts schools in the country.

With the MNO's help, not even a few weeks into the eight month course, Nina realized she'd found

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With the MNO's help, not even a few weeks into the eight month course, Nina realized she'd found precisely where she belonged...

precisely where she belonged; she excelled at her course work and uncovered a hidden talent for sculpture, design and prosthetics.

Upon graduation, she secured her first contract--working as a makeup artist on season three of *So You Think You Can Dance Canada*. Since then, she's worked season three and four of the Canadian version of the dance show, as well as on the set of *Battle of the Blades*, and had her work published in magazines like *Lush* and *Vive*. Nina is now working on her first film, an independent production filmed in Toronto titled "Concrete", slated for release next year.

Nina recognises the possibilities her future holds. "I knew my whole life I wanted to do this." When asked what the most rewarding part of her job is, there is a long pause. At last she says, "That it feels like home; that it feels like I'm finally being myself."

For more information on Completions visit: www.completionsmake-up.com



Métis Fiddler Quartet

Presents *North West Voyage Nord Ouest*

Thursday May 10, 2012

Dinner 7:00 pm

Show 8:00 pm

Free admission

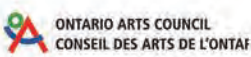
Lakeside Terrace, Harbourfront Centre
235 Queens Quay West, Toronto, ON M5J 2G8

For dinner reservations: mfqmusic@gmail.com

For Press inquiries, contact Chris Allicock, Amberlight Productions 416-694-3131 callicock@amberlight.ca

The MFQ is a performing arts group that specializes in performing and interpreting Canadian Métis and Native old-style fiddle music. This bilingual French/English group continues to discover and present the old-style fiddle tunes passed down by elders from across Canada.

Part of **PLANET INDIGENUS** co-produced by HARBOURFRONT CENTRE and WOODLAND CULTURAL CENTRE



Please visit our websites for updates and news regarding future performances, festivals and special announcements: www.metisfiddlerquartet.com or follow us on twitter: @metisfiddler.

The Métis were fighting for Canada, before there was a Canada



By **Gary Lipinski**
President
Métis Nation of Ontario

The Government of Canada has stated that the War of 1812 was crucial to the formation of Canada. This being the case, the Métis are also essential to Canada's existence because in the War of 1812, the Métis were fighting for Canada, before there was a Canada. The Métis contributions during the War of 1812 placed us in the crucible that formed Canada and further affirmed our role as one of the founding peoples of this great nation.

The following feature in the *Métis Voyageur* highlights some of the many contributions of the Métis during the War of 1812. While by no means does it represent everything the Métis did in the War (that would require, at least, an entire book) it does highlight some of the more well-known aspects of our involvement. In truth, much more research is required to explore Métis history in Ontario in general and in the War of 1812 in particular, before the full story of the Métis in Ontario can be appreciated.

I am pleased that in some of the upcoming commemorations, Métis contributions will be recognized. Most notably, the Métis Nation of Ontario will be invited to help plan a Government of Canada ceremony taking place this summer in Ottawa that will recognize the vital contributions and sacri-

fices of Aboriginal people during the War of 1812. At this ceremony, commemorative War of 1812 medals will be distributed. Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizens, including Region 4 Provisional Council of the MNO (PCMNO) Councillor, Art Bennett, have been involved in the plans of Algoma 1812, which will include the re-enactment of the events surrounding the seizure of Fort Mackinac at the start of the war—events in which the Métis played a pivotal role.

The MNO is also putting the finishing touches on its own plans to commemorate Métis involvement in the War of 1812. The War of 1812 lasted until 1814, so the MNO is not limiting itself to 2012 in its activities. Look forward to more War of 1812 themed activities from the MNO in the near future and during the next two years.

The War of 1812 is an important part of Ontario Métis history and I would encourage all MNO citizens to take part in commemorations and celebrations this summer. Take pride in your Métis heritage and don't be shy about reminding people of the Métis role in this conflict, especially if you notice that it has been overlooked. Our heroic contributions to the defence of Canada must not be forgotten!



Much more research is required to explore Métis history in Ontario in general and in the War of 1812 in particular, before the full story of the Métis in Ontario can be appreciated.



These hardy voyageurs...

or half-breeds...came up with the North-West Company, and...married Indian women, their progeny also becoming British soldiers or attachés of the fur company in various capacities ... Some were proud recipients of medals still treasured by their descendants and gained for bravery at Plattsburgh and other historic battlefields, and some carried wounds received while gallantly upholding British supremacy. They were in the front of battle during the stirring scenes of Mackinaw, St. Joseph Island, Sault Ste. Marie and other sanguinary points during the war of 1812-15. This is a testimony more eloquent than words to the loyalty and worth of the ancestors of the settlers around Penetanguishene."

— William Rawson (son of Sergeant Santlaw Rawson, a British soldier in the War of 1812), quoted in, *The Migration of Voyageurs from Drummond Island to Penetanguishene in 1828* by A. C. Osborne in Ontario Historical Society: Papers and Records. v.3, 1901 p. 123-166.

The Métis & the War of 1812

Historians often portray the War of 1812 as one theatre in the much larger conflict created by the ambitions of Napoleon Bonaparte, who, in the early part of the 1800s led France in a series of wars against several European nations. In an effort to contain Napoleon, Britain blockaded continental Europe, interfering with American commerce and providing the United States with the justification for war. A war with Britain in North America also conveniently supported American ambitions in the Great Lakes region to displace First Nations aligned with the British, and potentially to annex the entirety of British North America into the American union.

While the causes of the war may have been outside of Canada's bor-

ders, this has not prevented Canadians from viewing the repulsion of the American invasions of 1812-14 as the foundation of modern Canada. Due to its conflict with Napoleon, Britain could only provide a small contingent of troops to defend Canada, and these troops by themselves would surely have failed without the support of the Métis, First Nations and local Canadian militias. The spirited defence of Canada by all these groups contributed to a distinctive Canadian identity, but until very recently, Métis contributions during the War of 1812 have not been well known or recognized.

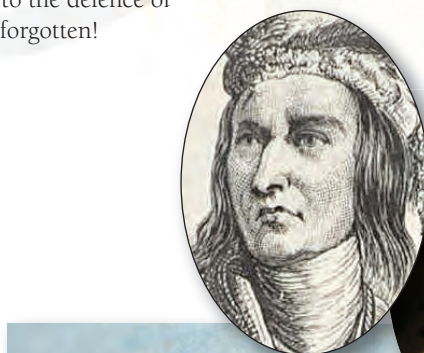
By the early 1800s, the Métis were

already a distinct people whose role in the fur trade was crucial to the Canadian economy. Living in large numbers throughout the Great Lakes region, which would be the location of most of the key battles of the war, the Métis could not help but be involved. Due to the potential disruption to their culture and economic well-being by an American takeover, and their close relationship

with First Nations, who generally favoured the British, most (although not all) Métis fought on the Canadian side during the war. Métis fought in most battles—sometimes as part of militia units or beside First Nations—and they served in other capacities as well. Some units were mostly

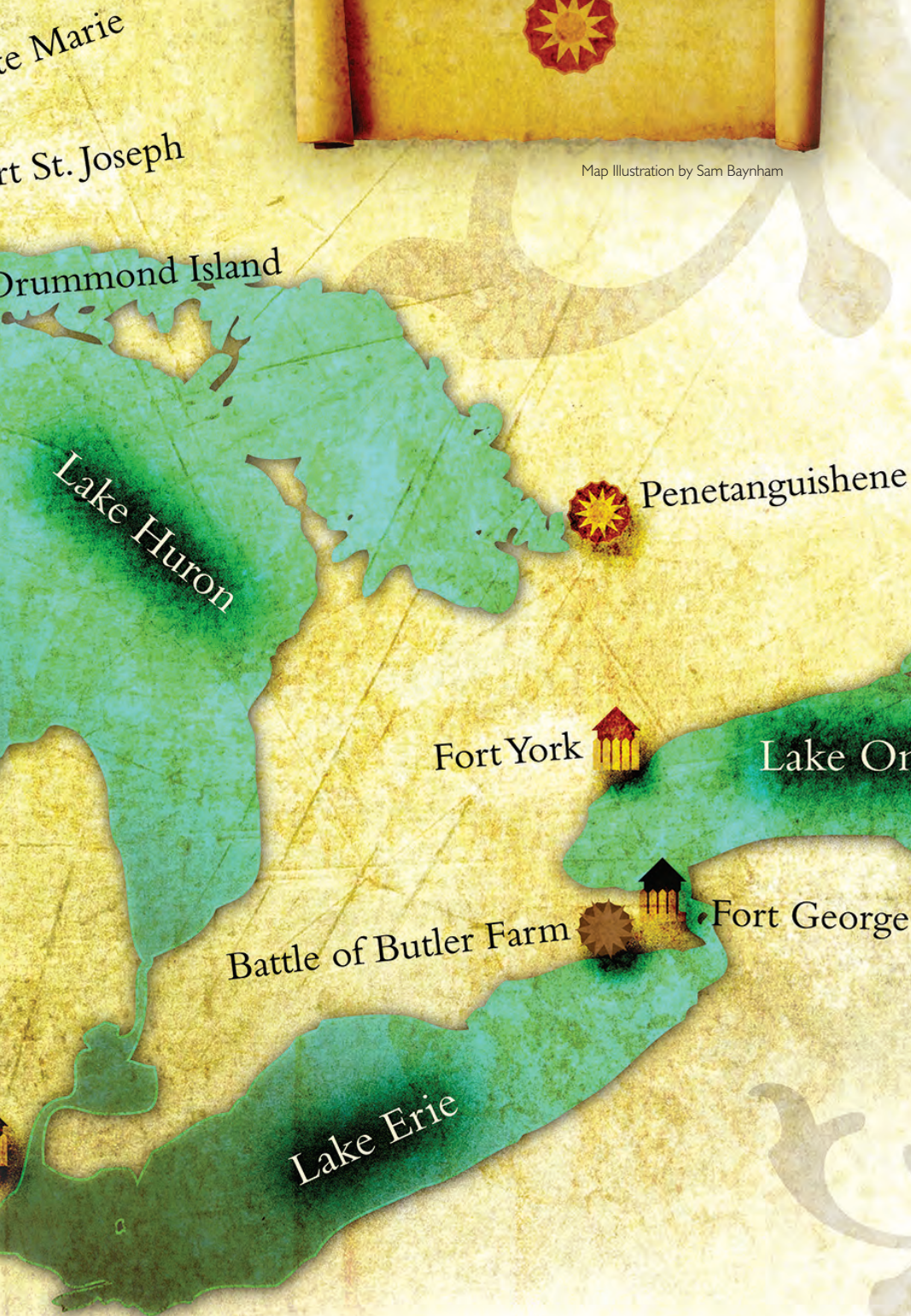
composed of Métis, such as the Corps of Canadian Voyageurs; the Mississippi Volunteers, a group of voyageurs recruited on the spot in Prairie du Chien to aid in the attack; and the Michigan Fencibles, raised at Mackinac Island in 1813, initially consisting of 50 voyageurs. The Fencibles and the Volunteers were part of the Canadian Embodied Militia that attacked Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin in 1814.

The War of 1812 is central to the development of Canadian nationhood and the Métis involvement in the war is an example of how the Métis, along with First Nations and European newcomers, are among Canada's founding peoples.





Map Illustration by Sam Baynham



Please Note: Different sources identify Mackinac Island and the fort there by different names. It is sometimes called Michilimackinac Island and Fort Michilimackinac or Fort Mackinac on Michilimackinac Island. In addition there is a community also called Michilimackinac on the American side of the strait between Lake Michigan and Lake Huron. As there is no consistency among the sources, for the sake of simplicity, both the fort and the island are called “Mackinac” in this feature.

Fort Mackinac

Fort Mackinac was an American outpost on Mackinac Island, located strategically in the strait between Lake Michigan and Lake Huron, and a crucial waterway for the fur trade. When the United States declared war in June, 1812, the British commander, Isaac Brock, dispatched a voyageur canoe expedition (likely including several Métis) to the British garrison at Fort St. Joseph near Fort Mackinac to instruct Charles Roberts, the British commander there to lead an assault on Fort Mackinac and seize control of the island.

Responding quickly to the orders, on July 17, seventy war canoes and ten other boats manned by Métis, First Nations and British allies left Fort St. Joseph and landed without being detected on the north end of Mackinac Island. There they were able to remove the civilian population and train two cannons on the fort. The American garrison, not even aware that the United States had declared war, was taken entirely by surprise when Captain Roberts demanded their surrender. The Americans, seeing that they were outnumbered, at a strategic disadvantage, and because they were afraid of the First Nations present, surrendered without a shot being fired.

Having captured the fort, it remained in allied hands for the duration of the war and became a base for operations in the area. Consequently, a large number of Métis moved to the island. The Americans tried to re-take it in July, 1814, by attacking with a squadron of five ships carrying a landing force of 700 soldiers. While the Americans succeeded in destroying Fort St. Joseph, they failed to re-capture Mackinac Island, which was ably defended by British soldiers with their Métis and First Nations allies.

The Treaty of Ghent (1814), which ended the War of 1812, gave Mackinac Island back to the Americans, so, with Fort St. Joseph destroyed, the British moved from Mackinac Island and re-located their garrison to Drummond Island with the majority of the Métis population choosing to go with them. Surveys, not completed until 1822, determined that Drummond Island was also part of the United States. Again, the Métis followed the British garrison when it moved, this time to Penetanguishene on the Georgian Bay.

From **July 17-21, 2012**, there will be commemorations of the War of 1812 taking place in **Algoma** that will include re-enactments of the canoe flotilla that travelled from Fort St. Joseph to Fort Mackinac in 1812. www.algoma1812.ca

Our Métis Ancestors During the War of 1812

Like much of Métis history in Ontario, Métis involvement in the War of 1812 has not been well documented. We would like to thank those few Métis Nation of Ontario citizens who were able to submit information about their ancestors to be included in this special feature on the War of 1812. Some simply reported that although there were some family stories about the War of 1812, nothing could be verified. In some cases, however, it can be established that their European or First Nations ancestors (or sometimes both) participated in the War of 1812.

Lt. Colonel William McKay, an ancestor of Senator Bob McKay of Thunder Bay, for example, served during the war and afterwards became a “Superintendent of Indian Affairs” in Upper Canada. Grace

LeBlanc of Guelph, and Cora Bunn, President of the MNO Grand River Métis Council, are related to the family of **Charles** and **Louis Langlade**, both of whom served in the War. Louis Langlade’s role is documented on a Government of Canada monument located near Niagara-on-the-Lake. The monument describes the Battle of Butler’s Farm and states in part: “On the 8th of July, 1813, an outpost of the invading force, encamped near Fort George, was defeated by a band of Six Nations and Western Indians led by Chiefs John Norton and Blackbird and interpreters Michel Brisebois, Louis Langlade and Barnet Lyons.” Bruce Poitras of Brantford is a descen-

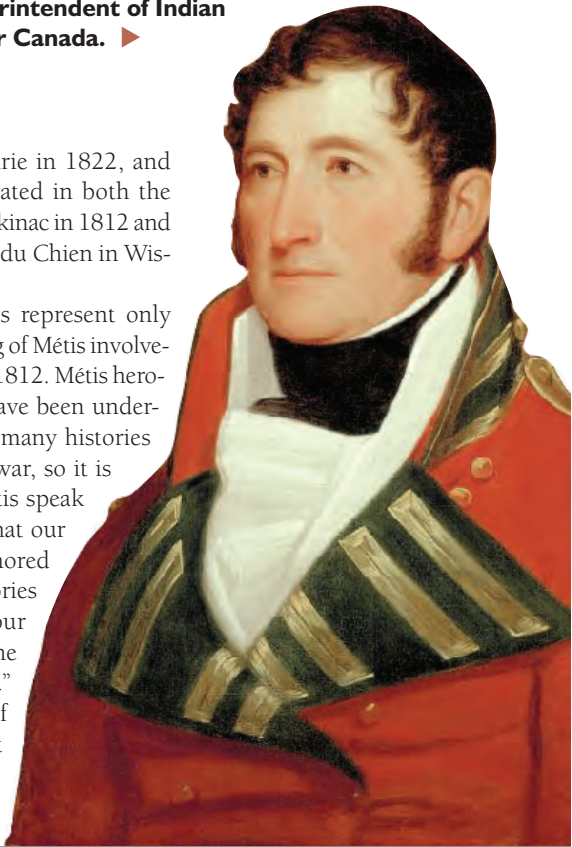


dant of **Colonel Robert Dickson**, who worked directly under the command of Isaac Brock. Poitras reports that Dickson was also a fur trader who married a First Nations woman and their family eventually found its way west to the Red River Settlement and the Qu’Appelle Valley. MNO Historic Sault Ste. Marie Council reported a fur trader named **Francois Biron** who married a Métis woman

Lt. Colonel William McKay, an ancestor of Senator Bob McKay of Thunder Bay, served during the war and afterwards became a “Superintendent of Indian Affairs” in Upper Canada. ►

from Sault Ste. Marie in 1822, and that Biron participated in both the capture of Fort Mackinac in 1812 and the battle at Prairie du Chien in Wisconsin in 1814.

These anecdotes represent only the tip of the iceberg of Métis involvement in the War of 1812. Métis heroism and courage have been under-represented in the many histories written about the war, so it is important that Métis speak out and demand that our history not be ignored any longer. The stories about the role of our ancestors “in the defence of Canada” during the War of 1812 are important and must be remembered.



The Canoe Corps

During the War of 1812 the Northwest Company recruited a force of, largely Métis, fur traders to form the Corps of Canadian Voyageurs

In October of 1812, the Northwest Company created the “Corps of Canadian Voyageurs”, the majority of whom were Métis. Over 500 voyageurs volunteered but only 400 were selected, because only the toughest and most skilled men were considered suitable. The purpose of the Corps was to make the voyageurs a military force that could keep supplies moving from Montreal to the western outposts along the Great Lakes.

Each of the volunteers was given the rank of “private” and issued a uniform including the distinctive red coat traditionally worn by British soldiers. The Métis, however, had little interest in the uniforms and typically continued to wear their own clothing. They were also issued swords, pikes and pistols which many voyageurs sold or discarded because they served little practical purpose in the wilderness. Joseph McGillvary, the commandant of the Corps, described the challenges of trying to get the Métis to conform to standard military procedures:

“It was quite impossible to make them amenable to mili-

tary law. They generally came on parade with a pipe in their mouths and their rations of pork and bread stuck on their bayonet. On seeing an officer, whether general, colonel, or subaltern, they took off their hats and made a low bow, with the common salutation of ‘Bonjour, Monsieur le General’ or ‘le Colonel’ as the case might be, and, if they happened to know that the officer was married they never failed to inquire about the health of ‘Madame et les enfants.’ On parade they talked incessantly, called each other ‘pork

eaters,’ quarreled about their rations, wished they were back in the Indian country again, & c., and when called to order by their officers and told to hold their tongues one or more would reply, ‘Ah, dear captain, let us off as quick as you can; some of us have not yet breakfasted, and it’s upwards of an hour since I had a smoke.’ In vain the subaltern winked, in vain the captain threatened, in vain

the colonel frowned; neither winks, threats, or frowns, could restrain the vivacious laugh, silence the noisy tongue, or compose the ever changing features into anything like military seriousness.” (*The Voyageur*, by Grace Lee Nute, New York: 1931 p. 164-165)

Shortly after its formation, a group of 31 Corps members were camped near St. Regis in Lower Canada where they were attacked by 400 American soldiers from Plattsburgh, New York. Twenty-three of the voyageurs were captured and the remainder killed. Despite this loss, and the superiority of American forces in the Great Lakes, it was primarily due to the Corps that Fort Mackinac stayed out of American con-

trol, which, due to its strategic importance, was critical to keeping supply routes open. The Corps also assisted in some conventional battles such as the attack on Frenchtown (Rainy Raisin), Michigan in 1813.

Despite the Corps’ lack of respect for conventional military discipline, the British commanders came to have great respect for the Corps and its effectiveness. In 1813, the Northwest Company replaced the Corps of Canadian Voyageurs with “Provincial Commissariat Voyageurs”. The new body would perform the same role as the Corps of Canadian Voyageurs but it was hoped there would be some improvement in the new force’s military decorum. These hopes were mostly in vain.



The Métis, had little interest in the uniforms and typically continued to wear their own clothing.

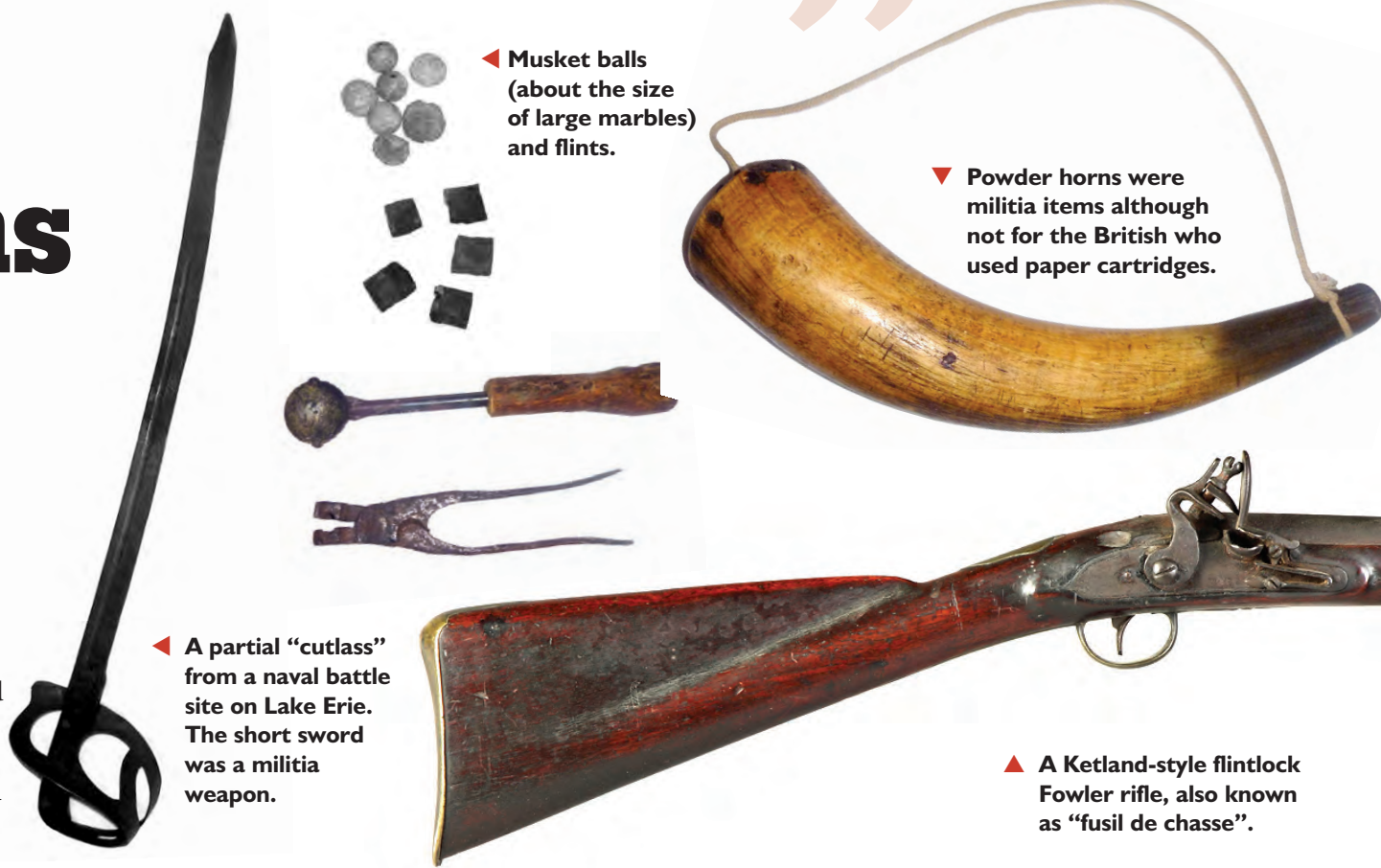


They generally came on parade with a pipe in their mouths and their rations of pork and bread stuck on their bayonet.



Métis Weapons of the War of 1812

MNO citizen, Denis Tremblay, is a collector of historical weaponry and submitted pictures of a number of items from his collection that were used in the War of 1812 by Métis and other participating groups. “My collection represents the equipment used mostly by First Nations, voyageurs, and courier de bois (most of whom were Métis).” All artefacts were found in Ontario and are from around the time of the War of 1812.



◀ Musket balls (about the size of large marbles) and flints.

▼ Powder horns were militia items although not for the British who used paper cartridges.

◀ A partial “cutlass” from a naval battle site on Lake Erie. The short sword was a militia weapon.

▲ A Ketland-style flintlock Fowler rifle, also known as “fusil de chasse”.

MÉTIS CULTURAL OUTREACH | NORTHERN SUPERIOR

Students publish books about Métis culture

By **Dr. Chris Paci**,
MNO Manager of Education

Schools sure have changed a lot since the days when being Métis was something to hide from public view. Nowadays, schools are showing a great deal of initiative. Not only do they invite Métis community members and guest speakers to share their knowledge about being Métis in Ontario, but some, like St. Hilary, St. Martin, St. Michael, St. Brigid, Holy Saviour and Holy Angels Schools in the North Super-

rior Catholic District School Board have taken a further step. These students and their teachers have produced a collection of books that shares their experiences from a recent school presentation on Métis culture by Scott Carpenter, MNO Manager of Projects and Partnerships. The schools have produced an attractive self-published collection of books, each featuring illustrations, pictures and stories provided by students. The books were unveiled at the third Circle of Light Conference in Toronto in November, 2011.



For more information contact the MNO Education & Training Branch: education@metisnation.org.

MÉTIS EDUCATION OUTREACH

MNO provides input on new courses for Ontario schools

In January the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) met with the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) in Toronto. The OCT is in the process of creating some new “Additional Qualification” courses that will become available in the fall of 2012.

This session was an opportunity for the MNO and the larger Métis community to provide input on the content and “teachers’ guidelines” for three of the proposed courses. Attending from the Education and Training Branch at head office were Jennifer St. Germain, Chris Paci, Chris McLeod, and Benny Michaud. Many community councils were also represented, including the Niagara Regional Métis Council and the Thunder Bay Métis Council.

“This session was an opportunity for the MNO and the larger Métis community to provide input on the content and “teachers’ guidelines” for three of the proposed courses.”

The courses being contemplated are titled, “Teaching Métis Children”; “Native Studies”; and, “Métis Peoples: Understanding Traditional Teachings, Histories, Current Issues and Cultures”. Senators Alis Kennedy and Roland St. Germain were there, as were youth representatives Janine Landry and Mitch Case.



▲ Métis Nation of Ontario representatives meeting with members of the Ontario College of Teachers in Toronto.

MÉTIS CULTURE | KITCHENER



▲ Participants in the Kitchener Moccasin Camp. photo by Pauline Saulnier

Moccasin Camp in Kitchener helps promote Métis culture

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) held its fourth very successful “moccasin camp” in Kitchener on January 14, 2012. Moccasin camps build a community of learners within the Métis Nation. Métis presenters are in high demand by schools, governments and from among the general public who are interested in learning more about Métis in Ontario. The camps assist the Métis community by building presentation skills, increasing awareness and instilling pride in Métis identity. At each camp community members share what they know about Métis history and culture.

In response to the growing demand for Métis presentations, moccasin camps, provide Métis educators and community leaders—including senators, elders, youth, community councillors, and other active community members—with effective ways of making presenta-

tions to different audiences using various presentation tools, such as the “Métis Education Kit”. MNO Chair, France Picotte; MNO Vice-Chair, Sharon McBride; and Provisional Council of the MNO Councillor, Pauline Saulnier were among the approximately 30 participants. MNO Education and Training staff—including Chris Paci, Chris McLeod, Benny Michaud, and Gylaine Morin-Cleroux—led sessions on such topics as public speaking skills, presenting Métis material culture, and how to promote Métis education. The participants were provided with tools they can adapt for their own presentations.

The highlight for many of the participants was a presentation by renowned Métis canoe maker Marcel Labelle. Marcel was assisted by his apprentice, Christian Pilon, and together they demonstrated how they use the canoe as the basis for

“In response to the growing demand for Métis presentations, moccasin camps, provide Métis educators and community leaders with effective ways of making presentations to different audiences.”

teaching traditional Métis knowledge. Marcel brought a full-size canoe with him to help with his teaching. He also generously presented the MNO with a miniature replica of a traditional canoe, which is now proudly displayed in the MNO head office in Ottawa.

Connecting with Métis roots

MNO training and skills development empowers a Metis youth

By **Justine Chalykoff**

I would like to thank you for the support offered to me by the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO). My first contact with the Métis [MNO] was during 2009 at which time I asked for financial support. The Métis [MNO] agreed to fund me for school. The funding provided to me was for tuition, books, and supplies. In the “Adventure, Recreation and Parks Technician” program supplies were quite expensive, and I gratefully appreci-

ate this support.

The first summer of college, the Métis [MNO] let me know that jobs were being posted. I applied for and received the position of “summer program assistant” for the Métis Nation of Ontario. This summer position offered me a place to put my studies into practice. I was able to be part of the Métis community and connect with my roots as an Aboriginal person and a Métis. It was an exciting summer for me, and my education grew.

[During] my second year at col-

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I was able again to use some of the skills acquired from my education, this time with horticulture and landscaping. I designed a flowerbed to reflect [the] Métis presence on campus—an infinity symbol.

”

lege, funding provided to me was [for] tuition, books, supplies plus living allowance. I was in heaven. This letter is about giving you my thanks. I needed to be independent and responsible on my own. Helping me build my own accountability is so important to young people like myself.

My support continued to be ongoing with your organization. My second summer at college, I was funded for another position, this time at Sault College. I was able again to use some of the skills

acquired from my education, this time with horticulture and landscaping. I designed a flowerbed to reflect [the] Métis presence on campus—an infinity symbol.

This, I know, is the beginning of my educational experience. I do plan to pursue further post-secondary education. I know I could not have come this far without your support. This letter is small compared to the support this young person received from the Métis Nation of Ontario.

Again, many thanks.

DEMOGRAPHICS | 2012 ABORIGINAL PEOPLES' SURVEY

We All Count

Aboriginal Peoples' Survey will sample 50,000 Aboriginal people living off-reserve in Canada

In this day and age it is impossible to get along without statistics. Companies spend millions surveying consumer spending habits; political parties spend millions surveying public opinion; and governments spend millions to gather data on social and economic conditions of their constituents. No one would be doing this if the results weren't important.

Aboriginal people are one of the fastest growing populations within Canada. We know this because of the population statistics that Statistics Canada gathers through the census. The Canadian Census, which rolls out every five years, is one of the prime sources of statistical information on Canada's Aboriginal population. It is in fact about the only source of hard data on Canada's Métis population. The other Aboriginal peoples of Canada—First Nations and Inuit—have other data sources, such as the “Indian Register” or modern “land claim benefits”, in the case of the Inuit. These are known as “administrative databases”. There are no established administrative databases yet for Métis people. So, we must rely on the census to count how many Métis people there are in this country.

There was a time when the census asked the same questions of every household in Canada. For example, the 1901 Census, much used in Métis genealogical research, was conducted by census takers who visited every household, recording, among other things, whether there were “half-breeds” or “Métis” living there. But since the 1970's, the Government of Canada has found it just as effective--and a lot cheaper--to use the census to count everyone in Canada at the time the census is taken, and then to ask detailed questions of a sample of the total population. Up to the most recent census in 2011, these questions

were found in what was known as the “Long Form Census Questionnaire”, which went out to one in every five households. People were required by law to answer this questionnaire and the 20% sample was statistically sufficient to provide reliable data on the entire population for most purposes.

Among the questions in the Long Form questionnaire is the “Aboriginal Identity” question, which asks whether you are First Nation/North American Indian, Métis or Inuit. This self-identification is the way Aboriginal population counts are generated in Canada today. For the 2011 census, the Conservative government decided to transform the Long-Form questionnaire into a voluntary survey, called the “National Household Survey”, which was distributed to one in every three households. Approximately 70% of the surveys have been returned, which results in a number comparable to the former Long Form questionnaire.

The census and now the



National Household Survey provide a

great deal of valuable information not only on the general Canadian population, but on a variety of sub-groups within that population, including Aboriginal people, who make up about 4% of the total population. However, to obtain more information about Aboriginal people, another instrument was needed. This is where the “Aboriginal Peoples Survey” (APS) comes in. The APS seeks to add to the information obtained on Aboriginal people by the census and National Household Survey by exploring issues that are specific to Aboriginal people, such as the use of Aboriginal languages, and school or labour market experience.

The APS usually follows the Canadian Census. It is a sample

“

The APS seeks to add to the information obtained on Aboriginal people by the census and National Household Survey by exploring issues that are specific to Aboriginal people, such as the use of Aboriginal languages, and school or labour market experience.

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Building Systems Technical Advisor Internship Program



▲ left to right: **Robin Armstrong, Tyler Boily, Tara Gusola, Casey Boban, Gail Lawlor, Adrian Karasiewicz**

Second round of BSTAIP Interns learns about Building Science

During the week of January 16-20, 2012, the second group of trainees in the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO), Housing Branch, Building Systems Technical Advisor Internship Program (BSTAIP) was introduced to the concept of the “House as a System”.

The instructor, Gail Lawlor, from Energy Matters, conducted a week of building-science training which included an overview of pressure systems within a home; materials used to create a better, safer house; and, the physics behind air flow within the home.

survey and it draws its sample from all those who identified as Aboriginal in the most recent census. That means that the sample for the 2012 APS was drawn from households who received and responded to the 2011 National Household Survey (NHS). If you didn't receive the NHS, you won't be included in the APS; but if you did fill out the NHS, then the chances are good that you will be included in the APS sample. The APS will sample 50,000 Aboriginal people living off-reserve in Canada. Statistics Canada will be conducting telephone interviews and some face-to-face interviews starting February 4 and continuing to the end of June 2012. APS results should be available beginning sometime in 2013.

The results will be important. The 2012 APS concentrates on education and employment. These are two central concerns of government at all levels and will define the future of First Nations, Métis and Inuit in Canada. If the APS can

lead to better policy and enhance resources being devoted to the education of our young people and jobs that can lift our people out of poverty, it will be worth the hour or so that it takes to complete the questionnaire.

APS surveys were conducted in 1991, 2001 and 2006, but have not gone on-reserve for over a decade. That is supposed to be remedied this time. Aboriginal and Northern Affairs Canada promises to conduct a similar survey on-reserve in 2013. The majority of people surveyed in the APS will be Métis, but we must remain vigilant about how the data will be used. The survey is being conducted under the *Statistics Act*, which guarantees the privacy of personal information; and, only aggregate data will be published. Nonetheless, it is important to ensure that we can all access the data and not just federal bureaucrats or organizations with deep pockets who can afford to pay for it.

LANDS & RESOURCES

Nuclear Clean-Up

MNO continues learning about Canada's plan for Safe Long-Term Management of Used Nuclear Fuel

Canada is well on its way to establishing itself as an international leader in planning for the safe long-term stewardship of used nuclear fuels, through the work of the Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO). The NWMO's process is designed to identify an informed and willing community to host a deep geological repository and *Centre of Expertise* for safely managing used nuclear fuel over the long term. As a requirement of federal legislation, the NWMO was established by Ontario Power Generation, Hydro Quebec and New Brunswick Power in 2002 to operate on a not-for profit basis.

As the siting process moves forward, the NWMO's work will increasingly take place with interested communities and those that surround them. Building trust and doing so in a manner that is both transparent and respectful of communities' values and needs is vital to the process.

Canada's approach, commonly referred to as "Adaptive Phased Management" (APM), was approved by the federal government in 2007. The plan calls for the construction of a single deep geological repository to become the facility for the long term storage of highly radioactive used nuclear fuel. Current estimates hold the earliest a repository facility may be in operation is 2035. The site selection process itself is expected to take seven to ten years. However, there are no prescribed timelines for identifying a suitable site. The NWMO will take the time that is necessary to do it right. Ultimately, there will have to be a compelling demonstration of willingness expressed by the citizens of any interested community after a long period of site assessment, and learning about the project, before a host community is declared.

To date, eleven communities have formally entered the NWMO's "Learn More" program. The municipalities of Brockton, Nipigon and Elliot Lake in Ontario and Pinehouse in Saskatchewan are in step two of the process. English River First Nation and Creighton also

in Saskatchewan—along with Ear Falls, Ignace, Schreiber, Hornepayne and Wawa, in Ontario have moved forward to step three, the "Preliminary Assessment - Feasibility Study".

The project has an estimated cost of \$16 to \$ 24 billion to be paid for by the used fuel producers. It will involve scientists, engineers, and community well-being professionals, trades people and many others. The project will have a significant impact on any community and region in which it is located.

An undertaking of this size and nature has the potential to transform a host community. Social and economic pressures will need to be carefully managed to ensure the long term health and sustainability of the host community. Overall, the project will generate thousands of jobs in a host region, and hundreds in a host community for many decades.

The NWMO and the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) have worked together over a number of years to learn together and develop a strong relationship. Following the dialogues which the MNO participated in during the study years of 2002-2005, the NWMO invited the MNO to collaboratively design, develop and coordinate a series of regional information and dialogue sessions on the proposed siting process in 2009. These sessions brought together MNO leadership, Elders, and youth to provide perspectives on the process. Each year since that time, the MNO has invited the NWMO to bring members up to date through a work shop during the *Annual General Assembly* in August. This year through the *MNO Regional Consultation Committees*, the two organizations will develop plans to involve Métis people in the areas where potential host communities are located.

The NWMO's *Learn More* program offers a wide range of resources to communities expressing an interest in learning more about the APM, the activities of the NWMO, and the process it will use to select an informed and willing community to host the project.

Providing communities and organizations with information, building their capacity to understand the work and its potential impact on them, placing independent experts at their disposal—all are part of building sustainable relationships and making the siting process one of partnership and collaboration.



Canada has been generating electricity from nuclear power for almost 50 years. In that time, just under 2.3 million used fuel bundles have been produced.

After a fuel bundle is removed from a reactor, it is safely managed in facilities licensed for temporary storage at each reactor site. First, it is placed in a water-filled pool for seven to 10 years while its heat and radioactivity decrease. Afterwards, used fuel bundles are placed in dry storage containers, silos or vaults.

About 85,000 used nuclear fuel bundles are generated in Canada each year. Source: NWMO



Potential Sites for Nuclear Waste Storage in Ontario:

1. Ear Falls
2. Ignace
3. Nipigon
4. Schreiber
5. Hornepayne
6. Wawa
7. Elliot Lake
8. Brockton

For more information on this important national infrastructure project please visit the NWMO website at: www.nwmo.ca

The NWMO and the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) have worked together over a number of years to learn together and develop a strong relationship.



On Truth and Reconciliation



As far back as I can remember in my family is the story of our connection to this land which we call home. My great-ancestor grandfather way back, Peter Fiddler, an English surveyor and map maker who worked for the Hudson's Bay Company in Canada's early European settlement period, married a Cree woman named Mary. We carry the genes in our blood, and feel the heartbeat of the land. Our family is mixed-blood, Métis. As a result, my grandfather and his sister were sent to residential school during World War One.

I am Métis, the mother of two young children, and a parish priest with the Anglican Church in Bolton, Ontario. It is in my calling to listen, to look at, to reach into the darkness of the human heart and the human condition, and to shine the light of love as much as possible into that

same darkness. Working with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on Indian Residential Schools (TRC) is a personal journey for me, and a responsibility I undertake as an intergenerational survivor and as a sojourner on this land.

I went to Winnipeg in June, 2010, to the first national hearing of the TRC to listen. I witnessed there a momentous gathering of our nation's human family--people who followed their hearts and came to heal, came to be heard, came to witness, came to speak of anger, pain, and betrayal--many for the first time in a public fashion. Alongside the flowing of the mighty Red River and the great Assiniboine River which meet at this place, there was a constant wind blowing through our gathering; I perceived it to be a beautiful invocation and blessing of the Holy Spirit, a tangible presence of love that changed the land itself. We came in good faith, to work together. It is hard work, this unveiling of the past, finding ways of dealing appropriately with injustices, and this healing process into which we lean.

This process of involvement is deeply challenging for me personally because I come both as a member of my family, and as a representative of the church--a flawed institution that

helped contribute to the cultural destruction the residential schools created--an institution that is helping to unravel that mess and work for justice, for right relationships among the first peoples of this land and their descendants, and all who now call this "home." As Métis people, we have a place and a responsibility in this reconciliation process for there were many Métis children, including my grandfather, who were taken from their homes and confronted at a young and vulnerable age with brutal de-culturation and assimilation techniques. The mess that is the legacy of the residential school system is not limited to abuse, as it includes many stories of positive relationship experiences and educational opportunities that were the intended outcome of some in the system, while on the other hand, we recognize that it was a colonial experiment to eradicate the peoples who had claim to this land and her resources.

Since 2010, I have been to the Northern National Event-Inuvik, in June, 2011, and the Atlantic National Event-Halifax, in October, 2011. At the opening ceremonies of these national hearings, the drumbeats of the north, east, south and west imitated the heartbeats of the

red, the yellow, the black and the white people, and the sure and steady flow of time was marked with a common beat that reminded us to be strong, to listen to each other, to be open to that which is unfamiliar, to learn from the brutality and hard-heartedness of the past, to dance because we live. The paths of trust and shared humanity are opening between friends and strangers--neighbours all, with those drumbeats. Through the wounds of rejection, alienation, stigmatization and

regenerating, rebuilding, reconstructing generations of shattered social structures.

What was stolen in the spirit of colonization was land, rights and responsibilities, a voice--language, culture, faith--that makes us who we are. In a few words, the vastness of what is being reconciled includes the re-integration of people with their own hearts and well-being, and with their cultures and languages of origin; the hope that families are being reunited and affirmed; acknowl-

***In this reconciliation process,
we have the capacity to heal our hearts,
to deepen our souls, to change
human consciousness.***

abuse, I have heard over and again testimonies that the message of Jesus' forgiveness, and the unqualified, unquantified gift of love, has lit broken hearts on fire.

One measure of hope is the spirit of resilience which pervades the gatherings. I hear in the words spoken in vulnerability, and see in the actions of encouragement and gentleness, an intense desire for reconciling differences, dealing with the pain and isolation that colonization has caused, and the slow work of

edgement of wrongs perpetrated and committed, which bring opportunities for the spoken word of apology, restitution, forgiveness, healing, justice, and creativity. Artists continue to speak out in the voices of the oppressed and the stigmatized, helping us to see with new eyes and hear with new ears. In this reconciliation process, we have the capacity to heal our hearts, to deepen our souls, to change human consciousness.

The Reverend Riscylla Shaw is the daughter of Senator Ruth Wagner.

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UNIVERSITY

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Métis voices to be heard

Minister Hoskins commits to hearing Métis perspective on Children and Family Services

Prior to the 2011 Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Annual General Assembly (AGA) in August, the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) released its “Children First: Report on the Status of Aboriginal Child Welfare in Ontario”. As the Métis were neither consulted nor included in the *Report*, the AGA passed a resolution that the MNO prepare a parallel report on Métis children to supplement the MCYS *Report* and set up a meeting with the Minister of Children and Youth Services to discuss the lack of Métis perspective in the *Children First Report*.

That meeting took place on March 21st between President Gary Lipinski and Dr. Eric Hoskins, Minister of Children and Youth Services.

Although he was not Minister when the *Report* was released, Dr. Hoskins is very well versed in MNO’s concerns and indicated that he was pleased that the MNO initiated its

own *Report*. The Minister committed to reading the MNO *Report*, which should be released before Easter, and to considering its contents along with the original MCYS *Report*.

“This was a very positive outcome for the Métis in Ontario,” stated President Lipinski, “and demonstrates the value of the working relationship the MNO has built with the Ontario Government in the last four years. The foundation for this relationship was laid down when we signed the *MNO-Ontario Framework Agreement* in 2008, and continues to reap benefits for our people today.”

In the spirit of the *Framework Agreement* both the Minister and President Lipinski agreed that their respective staffs should continue working together starting with at least two of the Ministry of Children and Youth Services’ new strategies: “Children and Youth Mental Health and Addictions” as well as the “Youth Framework Strategy”.



▲ MNO President Gary Lipinski (left) with the Honourable Dr. Eric Hoskins (right), Minister of Children and Youth Services.

COMMUNITY COUNCILS | TORONTO



▲ left to right front row: **Christine Skura, Jo-Anne Diamond, Rachel McLean, Senator Alis Kennedy, Katherine Stewart-McNeil**, (left to right back row) **Patrick Diamond, Corey Diamond, President Robert Bird, Will Skura, Marilyn Hew.**

Toronto York Métis Council participates in governance and finance training

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) benefits immensely from the dedicated volunteers who are members of our chartered community councils. These hard-working individuals spend hundreds of hours building and strengthening their Métis communities.

Through funding provided by the New Relationship Fund, the MNO has been able to develop and deliver a “Governance and Finance Course” that helps community councils perform their important work. The Governance and Finance Course is delivered by Glen Lipinski and Andy Lefebvre, the MNO’s Consultation and Community Relation Coordinators. During the weekend of January 27, the course was offered

to the MNO Toronto and York Region Métis Council. In the past, courses have been available in Atikokan, Sudbury, Niagara, Peterborough, Grand River, Credit River and Georgian Bay.

The course is a two-day seminar, usually on weekends, in a hotel or meeting hall in each council’s community. The program explains the role of community councils as the MNO’s local governments, whose structure and purpose is coordinated through each council’s charter agreement with the MNO. The course covers everything from how to run effective meetings and engage citizens in council activities to budgeting and the various financial practices, regulations and legislation that community councils follow.

NEW STAFF | WELCOME ABOARD

MNO Education & Training branch welcomes new staff

The MNO is pleased to introduce several new staff members to the Education and Training Branch. These individuals bring a wealth of experience and look forward to working on behalf of our communities and clients across Ontario. Please welcome the following talented people to the MNO.

KRISTEN STEWART
Acting Project Coordinator
Navigating Employment Pathways

Kristen began with the MNO Education and Training Branch as the Job Developer for the *Ready to Work* project. She is now in a position to ensure this new project gets off the ground smoothly.
355 Cranston Cres. Box 621
Midland, ON L4R 4L3
kristens@metisnation.org
PH: 705-527-1228 or
TF: 888-684-7347

NANCY SULLIVAN
Regional Employment and Training Coordinator

Nancy previously worked at Youth Employment Services (YES) in Thunder Bay where she gained valuable experience in job development, labour market service delivery, life skills training and workshop facilitation.

226 S. May Street, Main Floor
Thunder Bay, ON P7E 1B4
nancys@metisnation.org
PH: 807-624-5014
TF: 800-256-2595

CHANTAL CÔTÉ
Education officer/analyst

Chantal’s background is as a teacher and her program development experience will be a great asset to the MNO’s education initiatives. She is fully bilingual and a native of Timmins.

347 Spruce St. South
Timmins, ON P4N 2N2
chantalc@metisnation.org
PH: 705-264-3939
TF: 888-497-3939

RANDI VERREAULT
Project Developer

Randi comes to MNO with a diverse employment background--most recently, several years of experience working in the training and employment sector. She is bilingual and an active volunteer in her community.

355 Cranston Cres. Box 621
Midland, ON L4R 4L3
randiv@metisnation.org
PH: 705-527-1228
TF: 888-684-7347

RAE-ANNA GARDNER
Project Developer
Navigating Employment Pathways

Rae-Anna comes to the branch with a Bachelor of Education and experience in managing an Adult Education Centre. Her background in assisting clients in labour market research, employment counselling and teaching will serve the project participants well.

101 Worthington St. E., Ste 235
North Bay, ON P1B 1G5
reag@metisnation.org
PH: 705-474-2767
TF: 888-825-1742

ANNE TRUDEL
Project Developer
Navigating Employment Pathways

Anne’s background in research, community development and client case management will be critical in her role as Project Developer. Her knowledge of Métis culture and involvement in the Métis community will be an asset to the project.

26 Queen Street East
Sault Ste. Marie, ON P6A 1Y3
annet2@metisnation.org
PH: 705-254-1768
TF: 877-737-6693

DAVID SEEGERTS
Project Developer
Navigating Employment Pathways

David is originally from northern Saskatchewan. He has extensive training and experience in employment and career counselling and has performed many roles in the education and training field in both Aboriginal and mainstream organizations.

226 S. May Street, Main Floor
Thunder Bay, ON P7E 1B4
davids@metisnation.org
PH: 807-624-5014
TF: 800-256-2595



Culture Clash

A usurped homestead in Hamilton still stands as a symbol of a dishonoured Métis family and the clash of cultures that continues to this day

By **Donn Fowler**

My article published on page 27 in the fall 2011, *Voyageur*, “How are we identified?” indicated that sociologists say “...we are who we think other people think we are.” They also say that kinship, when seen as a single and personal entity, tends to define our individual cultures. In other words, our individual cultures are: “Nothing more nor less than the reflection of all the thoughts that have been placed in our heads by all the ‘significant others’ in our lives, beginning with our parents, our siblings, our secular and religious teachers, and anyone else who can get inside our heads.”

Moreover, they say it is our job to “re-think things all over again.” But they don’t say what those “things” actually are--the things which we must “re-think all over again”--therein lies the enigma. Are we to understand, for instance, that our various teachers’ teachings are to be questioned? Have we somehow been “hoodwinked” by all those with whom we have related throughout our years of war and peace, while living out our lives? Do we not already know exactly who we are, and what our individual goals in life are, because we assuredly have been taught only the “truths” by all those “significant others” in our lives?

These ideas of whether or not we are owners of our own thoughts and actions do enable us to challenge whether or not we necessarily need to challenge anything which we perceive to be one of the good things in life, as well as to challenge the many possible evil things we could also encounter. Take for instance the secular and religious “truths” we have been taught and probably accepted as one of our personal and collected “truths”, possibly a “truth” originally received, in one form or another, from some ‘significant other’, viz. a very important person in our life. Perhaps we have been struck--as I have--

by a word or phrase such as that once uttered by Lord Balfour, who said: “Today’s truth can be tomorrow’s fallacy”. And of course, in fairness, also that today’s fallacy can become tomorrow’s truth.

The above Lord Balfour’s remark probably was taken from the Scottish Parliamentary papers. Moreover, the first Balfour to Bruce peerage “transfer” began with Margaret Bruce (d.1769) the sister of Robert Balfour the 5th Lord. It remains extant today with Robert Bruce the 8th Lord. But the heiress presumptive is the present peerage holder’s daughter, the Honourable Victoria Bruce, Mistress of Burleigh (b.1973).

A Peerage was created in 1607 for Lord Balfour of Scotland; Sir Michael Balfour, became Lord Balfour of Burleigh, in the County of Kinross, and was succeeded by his daughter, Margaret (Balfour) Arnot, the second holder of the title.

Robert Arnot, assumed his wife’s rightful name and her title as a “Balfour”, he having married Margaret, the daughter of Sir Michael. By the time of their son, the 3rd Lord Balfour, his grandson, the 5th Lord Balfour, was active in the Jacobite Rebellion of 1715. The 7th Lord Balfour was a Scottish Peer from 1922 to 1963, and as of 2010 the 8th peer had succeeded on his father’s death. The ruined Burleigh Castle was once the seat of the Balfours, and then of the Bruce families near Kinross, Scotland. Another “Bruce” notable was Sir James Bruce, the 8th Earl of Elgin and 12th of Kincardine (b.1811-d.1863), who was formerly the Governor General of the Province of Canada (from

1847 to 1854) and enforced the Crown’s will. This adversely affected the lives of several Métis children. One example concerns a retired and affluent father, a former commissioned officer with the Hudson’s Bay Company, originally from Orkney, Scotland.

In 1840 he had come out of Rupert’s Land in the north country to settle his family in the tiny hamlet of “Amherst”, later known as the “Town of Hamilton”, located in the new Township of Hamilton, in the Counties of Northumberland and Durham, in the District of Newcastle, in the Province of Canada. In the north, the siblings’ aboriginal mother, “Mary”, had died, at age 35, on the 23rd of September of 1823 and was buried in the north. By 1841/1842 the siblings’ father had built a large, beautiful house in the Town of Hamilton. By 1844, when their Orcadian father died, each child had been named as a beneficiary in his substantial will.

However, because the Town of Hamilton’s authorities saw these unacceptable offspring as “half-breeds”, they appear to have been considered “Indians”, and therefore not British subjects. Moreover, they were never allowed to benefit directly from their father’s £18,000 will, for a variety of apparently “official” reasons. 1844 to 1854 was, therefore, a decade of misery for the hopeful “beneficiaries” because, in that latter year, a “half-breed” (Métis) son, named William, (b.1818-d.1890), was finally authorised by Governor General, Sir James Bruce, to be the sole “administrator” of his father’s will, but on the strict condition that three notables of the Town of Hamilton would act as “sureties”,

one third each, of the will’s value, already so long held in question, and which then effectively allocated £6000 (six thousand pounds sterling, not including the house) to each one of these three Family Compact gentlemen who were subsequently named by Governor General Bruce’s loyal commissioner, Mr. Throop.

Throughout the decade ending in 1854 this quite capable family of siblings was compelled, regrettably, to obtain multiple mortgages on their beautiful home in order to survive. That necessity of course resulted in their losing both the home and property. Their sureties may have, through fiduciary malfeasance, misfeasance, or nonfeasance, improperly used much of the £18000 (evidence of some of this expenditure is available) to replace a small wooden-framed Anglican church structure with a new huge stone church, for their priest, the Reverend Alexander Neil Bethune who had buried the siblings’ father in 1844. The County Sheriff--who was a son-in-law of the original Crown Grantee of 1802--acquired related properties and then sold some of it to a man who had sold it originally to the siblings’ father. The Métis family’s property had been purchased in 1841 from that man for £75 sterling. Eventually this family, a father and his six (four unmarried) children, died and were buried; the last in 1909.

The usurped homestead remains intact to this day as a “Heritage” location in the Town of Hamilton a symbol of that sorely dishonoured Métis family and the unfair clash of two cultures in the Canada of an earlier day.

“However, because the Town of Hamilton’s authorities saw these unacceptable offspring as “half-breeds”, they appear to have been considered “Indians”, and therefore not British subjects.”



Donald (Donn) Fowler enlisted as a 14-year-old in the Canadian army in June, 1940. As a member of the Glengarry Highlanders he landed in Normandy, France with a wave of D-Day reinforcements in 1944.



THE MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO

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With commemorations of the 200th Anniversary of the War of 1812, Sault Ste. Marie is certainly the place to be in the summer of 2012. However, it is weddings booked at every venue every weekend in August that has resulted in having to move the start of the AGA back one day resulting in a Sunday instead of the traditional Saturday start to the business meetings.

PRE-AGA / AGA DATES:

Pre-AGA workshops and meetings will take place **Friday, August 24** and **Saturday August 25**, with the AGA starting on **Sunday, August 26**, continuing on **Monday August 27** and wrapping up around lunch time on **Tuesday, August 28**.

More information on the AGA will be announced in upcoming *Voyageurs* and *eVoyageur* as well at: www.metisnation.org

OUR STORIES | THE SIXTIES SCOOP

Adopted to assimilate

A Métis woman adopted during the “Sixties Scoop” reflects

By **Rhonda Czech**
MNO Citizen, Region 6

One day, in a time not that far away, a little girl sat before her mirror staring at her reflection wondering who she was. She looked at her long dark brown hair, and the coppery brown tan that kissed her skin. She had just been called a “little squaw” by friends and family. She wasn’t sure how that made her feel, but something tugged at her heart. “Why are people implying that I am an ‘Indian’ when I am English/Scottish?” she asked herself as she examined her high cheekbones, her brown-green hazel eyes and her nose. Deep inside she wondered, tucking that question away quietly in her heart.

As the years mounted in number so did the questions. She knew she was adopted but did not know where she came from. Her parents were awesome to her; she knew they loved her without restraint, but something inside her craved knowl-

edge. Something unnamed called to her very core, something truly missing, something just out of her reach. Drawn to all things Indian, something called to her in the night, like a whippoorwill calling to its mate in the falling darkness, an inner craving of her ravenous soul.

That little girl was me. When I was 19 years old I found my birth mother, and guess what? She was Métis, or as the government called her family line, “red skin, mixed or other Indian breed”. I was astonished when she told me! You see, the non-identifying information given to me by the Renfrew County Family and Children’s Services failed to mention the fact that I was aboriginal. They actually purposely withheld that information from my adopted parents. So I was raised in a German-Caucasian family, with their culture and traditions but deprived of my birthright as a Métis woman.

Don’t get me wrong; I love my parents’ culture and traditions, but deep inside, without even knowing

it, I longed for my native heritage. No one had the right to keep that from me! No one had the right to make that decision for me! That one decision made by the government stripped from me the very essence of who I am! It is cultural genocide!

I am not alone; this event in the history of Canada is known as the

“
No one had the right to keep that from me! No one had the right to make that decision for me! That one decision made by the government stripped from me the very essence of who I am!”

“60’s Scoop”. Approximately 16,000 aboriginal children were removed from their birth parents either by force or persuasion. These children were given to the Canadian and provincial governments from the 1960s until the early 1980s when the aboriginal peoples of Canada fought back. Legislation was then enacted to ensure that all aboriginal children who were adopted would be told that they are of aboriginal ancestry. The first choice was to place these children with family or another aboriginal family. Only then would they be placed in foster care or adopted, but with their cultural background intact.

Adoption is a wonderful thing in itself, but using it to manipulate a society the way one government thinks it should be is wrong on so many levels. In an age where diver-

sity is celebrated and our differences are given credit for the uniqueness that makes us Canada, why are such things still tolerated?

Kenn Richard, Director of Native Child and Family Services of Toronto said it best: “The lesser-known story is the child welfare story and its assimilationist program. And you have to remember that none of this was written down as policy: ‘We’ll assimilate aboriginal kids openly through the residential schools. And after we close the residential schools we’ll quietly pick it up with child welfare.’ It was never written down. But it was an organic process, part of the colonial process in general.”



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Victims of Sixties Scoop seek justice in courts

continued from page 2

lings and parents I never fit back into family. For emotional survival life for everyone moves on in different directions and no one understands the full scope of what happened. This loss does not just include funerals. The loss I experienced includes all family functions, Christmas, Easter, Weddings, births of children and Birthday Parties. I see how many families enjoy many of these celebrations, however throughout my whole life, I never had the opportunity to experience the emotions tied to familial events.

I was 38 years old before I knew I descended from the Red River and what it represents. My children witnessed the emotional upheaval I went through accepting this new identity. As a child I turned into a type of amateur writer because my life was burdened with so much cultural abuse, assimilation and emotional abuse writing has helped to release many things that happened that could not be spoken about before the Residential School era was public knowledge.

I was a child who needed the assistance of the CAS. In 1964 this was my 2nd experience with the CAS. The first time I was placed in care in the aboriginal community of Geraldton. In 1964 the CAS bypassed Geraldton and I was brought to Thunder Bay. Had I been placed in an aboriginal community like I was accustomed to living I perhaps would not have experienced the extreme cultural loss which I did.

Opinions expressed in the following commentary are solely those of the writer and do not reflect the policies of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) or the viewpoints of MNO officials or staff.



My father passed away before I had an opportunity to meet him so I learned about him from records collected in my genealogy. He was a 2nd World War Veteran who loved aboriginal people and he fought for all of our rights and freedoms. I wonder how he would feel if he were alive and knew aboriginal children including his own aboriginal children did not experience the rights and freedoms that our Conservative Government has enjoyed.

Ruth Robbins
Brantford, Ontario
Formerly of Thunder Bay



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Corporal **TIFFANY MAHAN**, Norway House First Nation

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« Chaque jour amène un nouveau défi et une autre occasion d’aider les autres. J’acquiers constamment de nouvelles compétences et je rencontre de nouvelles personnes. Être membre des Forces canadiennes, c’est comme faire partie d’une collectivité tricotée serrée. »
Caporal **TIFFANY MAHAN**, Première nation de Norway House

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Strength & Running Water

Family seeks ways to blend and honour their Métis, Mohawk and European ancestry

By **Amanda Dale**
HAMILTON

Living in the “traditional way” is a rarity in today’s fast paced world, but the Dale family do whatever they can to hold on to their cultural teachings and to pass along those traditions to their six children. They are a blended family of Métis, Mohawk and European ancestry. Amanda Dale, a Métis woman from Hamilton Ontario, was given her spirit name, “Pimapitone Nibe Awayte Mino Asin” (Running Water Over Sacred Stone), in a naming ceremony by an Oji-Cree Elder in 2010, eight years after self identifying as Métis. Her husband, “Strength of Two Buffalo”, is a Mohawk from Six Nations Reserve and was introduced to his cultural identity twenty-seven years ago at sixteen. Although each of them has their separate stories to tell, they have also been on a journey together that started in 2009.

The journey began when Running Water had a dream and in it she was approached by an Elder woman who told her that she was to build a big buffalo hide drum for her husband. She shared with Strength her dream and he told her that he could teach her how to make the drum. He taught her the difficult tasks of de-meating, de-hairing, tanning the buffalo skin and building a large drum piece by piece in their garage. It took three months, a lot of sleepless nights, sore fingers and backs to make the drum in the traditional fashion. When the big drum was finished it was given its name, “Four Thunders”, and a birthing ceremony was

performed to welcome the drum into the community. Over 60 First Nations, Métis, Elders and community members attended the ceremony from all four directions of the province.

Since the birthing ceremony Running Water and the children support Strength in his new role in the community as “Drum Carrier”. The Drum Carrier must take care of the drum, live a clean, honest life, and when asked, to go anywhere the Drum Carrier must go. The supportive role for the Drum Carrier’s wife is to watch the men drum and guard against any harm, whether it is spiritual or physical. It is believed that when the men are drumming they are half in the spirit world and half in this world so they are extremely vulnerable to outside influence without the women surrounding them. Our traditional roles as aboriginal men and women are commonly viewed today as sexist because of the lack of understanding of their purpose. Running Water doesn’t mind that she doesn’t drum with the men because she realizes that she has a job to do that is equally as important as drumming.

Traditionally, women didn’t play the big drum because it had a much deeper purpose for the men. The story passed down by our ancestors is that a spirit named “White Buffalo Calf Woman” visited the corn field and on behalf of the Creator brought with her a big drum. In the corn field was an Aboriginal woman to whom the spirit woman gave the drum in order for her to gift it to the men. The men were to play it, come together, and stop fighting. It is seen by those who honour this



▲ right: Jack Timleck, Joe Guigue, Ron Wagner, Alex Day, Kris LeBlanc, and Kyle LaForm.



▲ Strength of Two Buffalo Dale, Amanda Dale (Running Water Over Sacred Stone), and Elder Hubert Skye from Six Nations.



▲ Amanda Dale with baby Jasmin Miah, Konorosnhkwa Dale, Kenneth St. Pierre-Dale (left) and KayLee St. Pierre (right).

tradition as inappropriate for a woman to play the big drum because by doing so she would be taking the drum back from the men. Although it is the woman’s right to take back the drum, by doing so, she would also be taking back the healing they were given and counting the men as hopeless. This is not believed by all but for the most part that is why you will see only men drumming on the big drum at cultural events.

Four Thunders is how their story begins but it doesn’t stop there. While making the drum, the couple decided that there is a deeper need, not just at home but in Aboriginal communities as a whole, for the traditional knowledge they have. Running Water and

Strength decided it was time to begin holding workshops where Strength could teach the knowledge he gives his children. The Dale family now holds *Bow & Arrow*, *Drum Making* and *Tanning* workshops as often as they can. They travel to different schools and social service agencies where Strength and his wife share the knowledge they have about their cultures, traditional roles and philosophies.

Recently, they have begun making medicine to help those who are sick and would like to use traditional healing methods. They struggle however, to provide ongoing workshops because of the lack of funding to their cultural awareness strategies. They sell T-shirts with the slogan “Prepare to be Unassimi-

lated” in order to subsidize expenses for those who can’t afford to pay. The couple would like to offer it all for free and find it difficult to charge for the workshops.

The workshops and speaking engagements are just a small part of a much bigger dream. Strength and Amanda would like to open a fully funded healing lodge and cultural centre in Ontario. This lodge would provide a healing oasis for those who would like to heal in a traditional manner and learn more about their Aboriginal culture.

Strength and Running Water appreciate their struggles in sharing the pride of their culture because they see the reaction of those who learn a bit more about who they are and regain what they’ve lost.

COVER STORY:

MNO releases findings of major Chronic Disease study

Calls for immediate attention to higher rates of chronic disease in Métis population

continued from page 3

The financial support from the PHAC was also recognized throughout the release of the findings. “The Public Health Agency of Canada supports the collection of reliable data on chronic disease trends and risk factors,” stated Chief Public Health Officer David Butler-Jones, prior to the release. “We are very pleased to have played a key role in funding this important new research.”

Following the formal launch, the MNO held a guided dialogue session to provide health experts with the opportunity to discuss the findings in detail. Over 80 people attended the findings launch and guided dialogue

session, including representatives from ICES, PHAC, Health Canada, the Canadian Institute of Health Research, Cancer Care Ontario, Statistics Canada, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, National Lung Health Framework, National Aboriginal Health Organization, Institute of Aboriginal Peoples’ Health, Gignul Aboriginal Housing, Inuit Tapirit Kanatami, Assembly of First Nations, National Association of Friendship Centres, Mental Health Commission of Canada, Provincial Aboriginal LHIN Network, Ottawa Public Health, Champlain LHIN, the Universities of Waterloo, Ottawa, Toronto and Ryerson.

The guided dialogue session



With this groundbreaking study now released, the next challenge for the MNO will be to use these finding to influence public policy to improve health and wellness treatment and disease prevention programs for the Métis people in Ontario.



included presenters from the MNO, ICES, PHAC and several universities. The MNO’s presenters included MNO Chair, France Picotte; Senior Policy Analyst, Dr. Storm Russell; and, Chronic Disease Surveillance Coordinator, Yvon Allard. Other presenters were: Dr. Baiju Shah, Staff Endocrinologist with the Sunnybrook Sciences Centre and Professor in the Department of Medicine at the University of Toronto; Dr. David Urbach, Professor in the Departments of Surgery and Health Policy at the University of Toronto; Dr. Eric Crighton, Professor of Geography at the University of Ottawa; Karen Roberts, Senior Epidemiologist in the PHAC Chronic Disease Surveillance and

Monitoring Division; and Dr. Martin Cooke, with the Department of Sociology and Legal Studies at the University of Waterloo.

The findings released on March 20 represented over five years work, which was spearheaded by the MNO team of Healing and Wellness Manager, Lisa Pigeau, and Chronic Disease Surveillance Coordinators, Jo McQuarrie and Yvon Allard. With this ground-breaking study now released, the next challenge for the MNO will be to use these finding to influence public policy to improve health and wellness treatment and disease prevention programs for the Métis people in Ontario.

RESEARCH CONDUCTED BY The Métis Nation of Ontario AND The Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences

Métis Health Research

Chronic Diseases

Diabetes, Cancer, Respiratory Disease
and Cardiovascular Disease

RESPIRATORY DISEASE

WHAT IS RESPIRATORY DISEASE?

Respiratory disease is a group of diseases affecting the lungs. It includes asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and lung cancer. This research focused on asthma, COPD and lung cancer. Asthma is a chronic or long-term disease where airways become inflamed and full of mucus making it difficult to breathe. COPD includes chronic bronchitis and emphysema: many people have both. In COPD, airways become swollen and blocked by mucus, lungs become damaged over time and breathing is increasingly difficult. Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death in Ontario. Non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC) is relatively slow growing and is more common than small cell cancer. Small cell lung cancer (SCLC) grows quickly and often spreads to other parts of the body. Each type is treated differently.

WHY STUDY RESPIRATORY DISEASE AMONG THE MÉTIS OF ONTARIO?

Little is currently known about respiratory disease in the Métis population or how Métis people with respiratory disease access and receive care in Ontario. This lack of critical health information makes it challenging to target resources and programs where they will be most effective in improving Métis health status and outcomes.

WHO WERE INCLUDED IN THE STUDY?

Health related data from four provincial databases were linked to the Métis Nation of Ontario Citizenship Registry data to provide information on rates of asthma, COPD and lung cancer in approximately 14,000 Métis citizens in Ontario. These data were then compared to the general population of Ontario.

HOW WIDESPREAD IS RESPIRATORY DISEASE AMONG THE REGISTERED MÉTIS POPULATION?

- The number of registered Métis living with asthma in Ontario (prevalence rate) was 1.2 times higher than in the general Ontario population in fiscal years 2007/08 and 2008/09.
- The gap in asthma prevalence was greatest among Métis aged 18 to 24 years.
- The prevalence of COPD was 1.7 times higher in the Métis population in 2007/08 and 1.6 times higher in 2008/09.
- The gap in the prevalence of COPD in the Métis relative to the general population increased among people aged 45 years and older.
- There were no significant differences between the Métis and the general population in the number of new cases of asthma diagnosed during the study period (incidence rate).

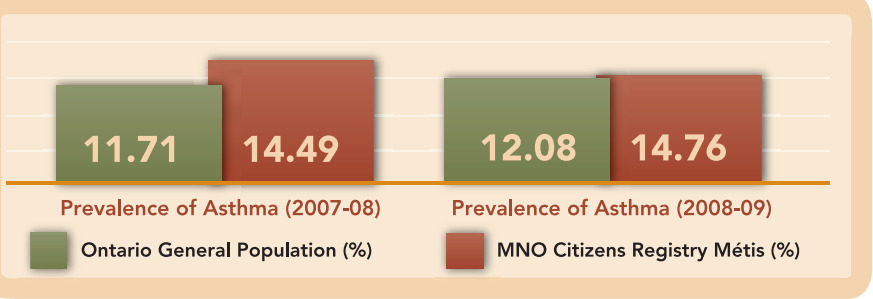
- The incidence of newly diagnosed cases of COPD was 40% to 50% higher among the Métis.
- Overall emergency department visits among those diagnosed with asthma or COPD were 40% and 30% higher among the Métis compared to the general population.
- Total hospitalizations among those diagnosed with asthma or COPD were 10% higher in the Métis compared to the general population.
- There were no significant differences in the number of new cases of lung cancer diagnosed in the registered Métis population compared to other Ontarians between 2005 and 2007.

HOW SHOULD WE INTERPRET THESE RESULTS?

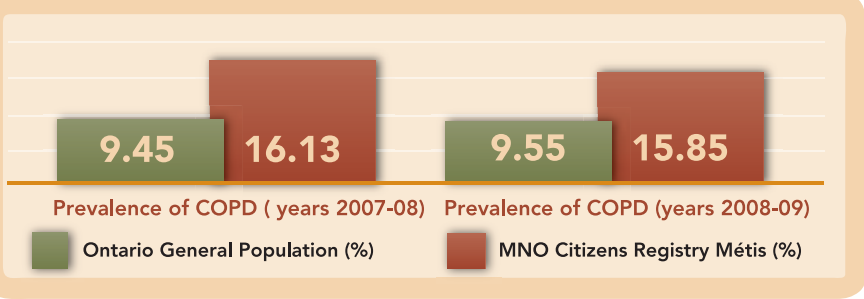
This landmark research represents the first population-based study of respiratory disease among the Métis of Ontario. These initial findings suggest that registered Métis are suffering from unacceptably high rates of two key respiratory diseases – asthma and COPD – and this is of major concern. High smoking rates among the Métis population of Canada (37% compared to 22% for the general population) are likely contributing to the higher rates of respiratory disease among the registered Métis population. The reasons for these differences are complex. Social determinants of health such as housing, education levels and lower socio

economic status are likely impacting rates of respiratory and other chronic conditions among the Métis, as well as engagement in risk behaviours. A higher proportion of Métis people live in remote and rural areas in Northern Ontario where access to health care and supports are more limited. This lack of access may be affecting rates of respiratory disease and other chronic conditions, as well as Métis health outcomes more generally. Results suggest that urgent action is needed to address the disproportionately high rates of respiratory and other chronic conditions among the Métis of Ontario. Métis communities would benefit from programs that increase knowledge and awareness about risk factors for respiratory disease and which improve access to public health outreach programs, and primary and specialist care. Because respiratory diseases develop over longer periods of time, it is essential that we continue to monitor rates among the Métis of Ontario and begin to identify the reasons for these higher rates. The MNO will use this information to target programs and resources to where they will be most effective and have the greatest impact on Métis health status and outcomes. Collecting more data over longer periods of time will increase the extent to which we can generalize the results of this kind of research to the entire Métis population in Ontario, which in the 2006 census numbered around 73,000 people.

PREVALENCE OF **ASTHMA** (2007-08 & 2008-09)
PER 100 PERSONS (MNO MÉTIS CITIZENS VS ON POP)



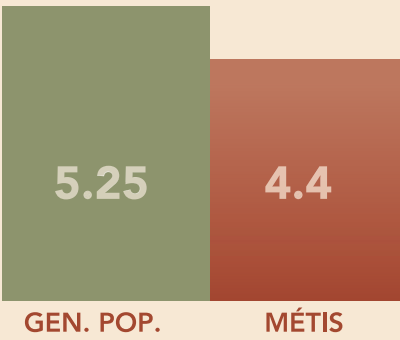
PREVALENCE OF **COPD**
PER 100 PERSONS (MNO MÉTIS CITIZENS VS ON POP)



CANCER

WHAT IS CANCER?

Cancer starts when cells in the body begin to divide and grow uncontrollably. When cancer cells spread to other parts of the body this is called metastases. Many cancers are preventable or treatable in their early stages so it is important to identify who is at risk and to ‘catch it early’.



NEW DIAGNOSIS OF CANCER: OVERALL
(OUT OF EVERY 1000 PEOPLE 2005 - 2007)

WHY STUDY CANCER AMONG THE MÉTIS OF ONTARIO?

Little is currently known about cancer in the Métis population or how Métis people with cancer access and receive care. This lack of critical health information makes it challenging to target resources and programs where they will be most effective in improving Métis health outcomes.

WHO WERE INCLUDED IN THE STUDY?

Data from the Ontario Cancer Registry were used to identify the number of newly diagnosed cases of cancer (incidence rates) among the approximately 14,000 Métis people included in the Métis Nation of Ontario Citizenship Registry. These rates were then compared to people within the general Ontario population.

HOW WIDESPREAD IS CANCER AMONG THE REGISTERED MÉTIS POPULATION?

A total of 168 cases of newly diagnosed cancers were identified in the registered Métis population during the three year period 2005 to 2007.

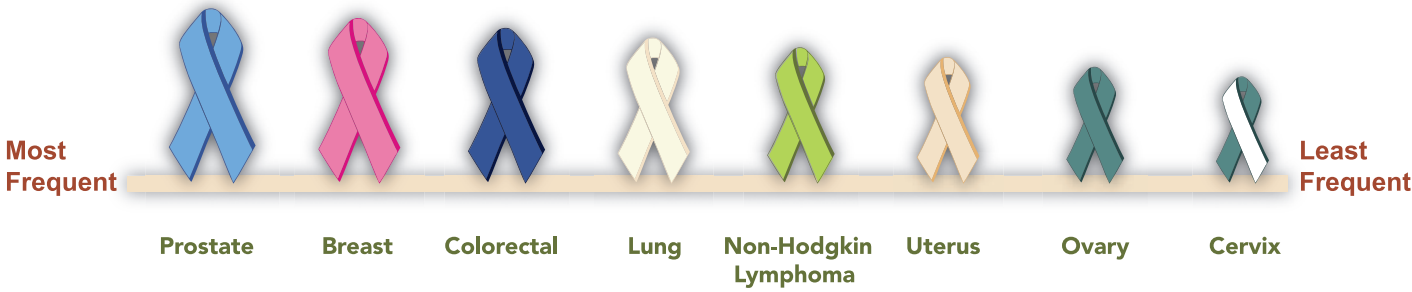
For people aged 65 years and older the rate of cancer diagnosis was higher in the Métis than in the general Ontario population, with the gap being greatest among people 75 years and older (rates 1.4 times higher in the Métis).

There were no significant differences in the rates of cancer diagnoses in the registered Métis and general Ontario population among people younger than 65 years of age.

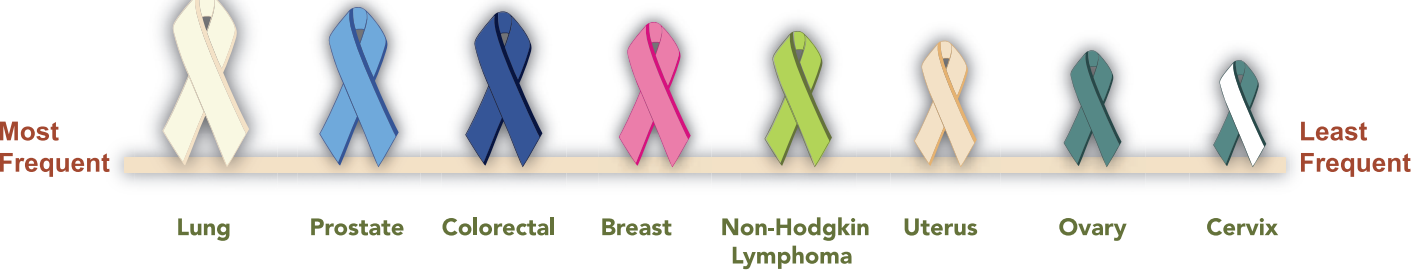
Diagnosis rates in 2005 were slightly higher among the Métis than in the general Ontario population, while in 2006 and 2007, cancer diagnosis rates were higher in the general population.

When the numbers of newly diagnosed cancers were combined over all age groups and across all 3 years, the overall rate of cancer diagnosis for Métis was lower than for the general population, with people in the general population being 1.19 times more likely overall to be diagnosed with cancer.

GENERAL POPULATION



MÉTIS



FREQUENCY RANKING OF CANCER OVER ALL DURING 2005-2007

WHAT TYPES OF CANCER WERE DIAGNOSED MOST FREQUENTLY IN THE REGISTERED MÉTIS POPULATION?

During the two year study period, the top four cancers diagnosed among the Métis were (in order) lung, prostate, colorectal and breast cancer, compared to (in order) prostate, breast, colorectal and lung in the general Ontario population.

HOW SHOULD WE INTERPRET THESE RESULTS?

This landmark research represents the first population-based study of cancer incidence among the Métis of Ontario.

These initial results suggest that cancer patterns among the Métis are not straightforward and are likely different than those in the general Ontario population. Unfortunately, the small number of incidences of new cancer diagnosis in the registered Métis population during the 3 year study period (168

in total) did not allow for a more detailed exploration of potential differences in types of cancers, or other factors such as age of onset of cancer between the two groups. Nor could we determine how many Métis people in total are living with cancer in Ontario (prevalence rates).

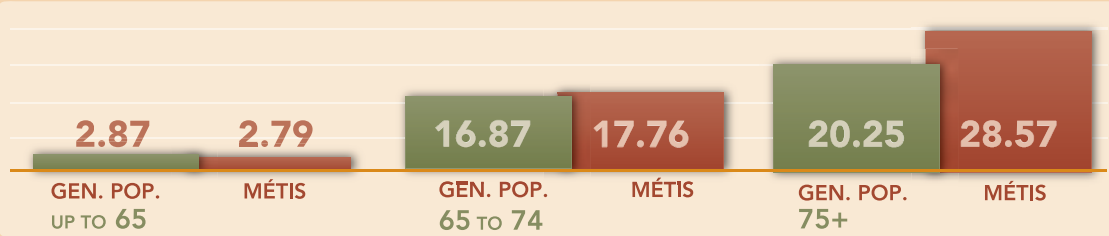
Nonetheless, the study represents the first important step in addressing the large gap in information about cancer among the Métis of Ontario, and lays the essential groundwork for building the critical knowledge base required to inform health planning and policy development in this important area.

As we continue to build our understanding of cancer patterns among Métis citizens, the MNO will use this information to target programs and resources to where they will be most effective and have the greatest impact on Métis health status and outcomes. Further research with larger samples and over longer periods of time will help in this ongoing, collaborative effort, as will research to identify interventions that are effective in promoting healthy lifestyles and reducing risk factors like smoking among the Métis.

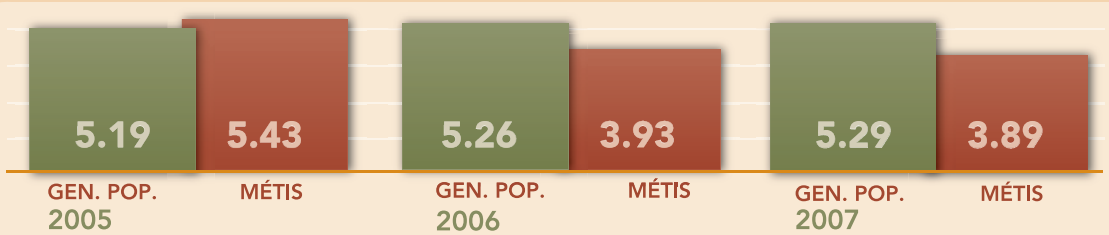
The Métis Nation of Ontario is com-

mitted to working with its stakeholders and partners to reduce the incidence and prevalence of cancer among the Métis people of Ontario.

NEW DIAGNOSIS OF CANCER: BY AGE (OUT OF EVERY 1000 PEOPLE 2005 - 2007)



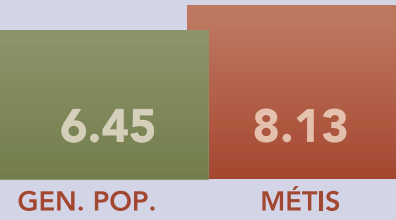
NEW DIAGNOSIS OF CANCER: OVERALL (OUT OF EVERY 1000 PEOPLE 2005 - 2007)



DIABETES

WHAT IS DIABETES?

Diabetes is a long term, chronic disease that prevents the body from turning sugar from food into energy. Diabetes can lead to several serious health problems including heart disease, stroke, kidney failure, blindness and amputation



CASES OF DIABETES: **OVERALL**
(OUT OF EVERY 100 PEOPLE AS OF APRIL 2007)

WHY STUDY DIABETES AMONG THE MÉTIS OF ONTARIO?

Little is currently known about diabetes in the Métis population, or how Métis people with diabetes access and receive care. This lack of critical health information makes it challenging to target programming and resources where they will be most effective in improving Métis health status and outcomes.

WHO WERE INCLUDED IN THE STUDY?

Health related data from five provincial databases were linked to the Métis Nation of Ontario Citizenship Registry data to provide information on diabetes rates among on approximately 14,000 Métis citizens in Ontario. These data were then compared to the general population of Ontario.

HOW WIDESPREAD IS DIABETES AMONG THE REGISTERED MÉTIS POPULATION?

The prevalence of diabetes among registered Métis in Ontario was 26% higher than in the general Ontario population, and this was true across all age groups and for both males and females.

Within the registered Métis population, the rate of diabetes was 25% higher among Métis males than among Métis females – much larger than the 10% gender difference in the general population.

The incidence of newly diagnosed cases of diabetes reported for fiscal years 2006/07 and 2007/08 was also 24% higher among registered Métis compared to the general Ontario population.

WHAT ABOUT CARE AND TREATMENT FOR MÉTIS PEOPLE WITH DIABETES?

- Registered Métis with diabetes were 86% more likely to be hospitalized due to a heart attack or pre-heart attack than people with diabetes in the general population.

- Registered Métis did not visit a primary care physician as often as did the general Ontario population. Only 50% of registered Métis reported seeing a doctor five or more times during the two year study period, compared to 55% in the general population.
- Registered Métis were 18% less likely to receive care from a diabetes specialist.
- Métis seniors with diabetes aged 65 years and older were more likely to use insulin and to test their own blood sugar than seniors in the general population. They were also less likely to receive medication for high blood pressure.
- Métis seniors with diabetes were less likely than diabetic seniors in the general population to try to control their diabetes through diet alone.

HOW SHOULD WE INTERPRET THESE RESULTS?

This landmark research represents the first population-based study of diabetes among the Métis of Ontario.

The results indicate that registered Métis are suffering from unacceptably high rates diabetes and this is of major concern.

The reasons for these differences are complex. Social determinants of health such as housing, education levels and lower socio-economic status are likely impacting rates of diabetes and other chronic conditions among the Métis, as well as engagement in risk behaviours.

A higher proportion of Métis people live in remote and rural areas in Northern Ontario where access to health care and supports are more limited. The less frequent visitation to both primary and specialist care among Métis with diabetes may be indicative of these problems with access which, in turn, may be affecting rates of diabetes and other chronic conditions among the Métis as well as health outcomes more generally.

The higher rates of hospitalization combined with the finding of less frequent visits to primary care and specialist physicians suggests room for improvement in the upstream management of diabetes among the Métis.

Together these results suggest that urgent action is needed to address the disproportionately high rates of diabetes and other chronic conditions among Métis citizens.

Métis communities would benefit from targeted diabetes prevention and public health promotion as well as programs which improve access to both primary and specialist care.

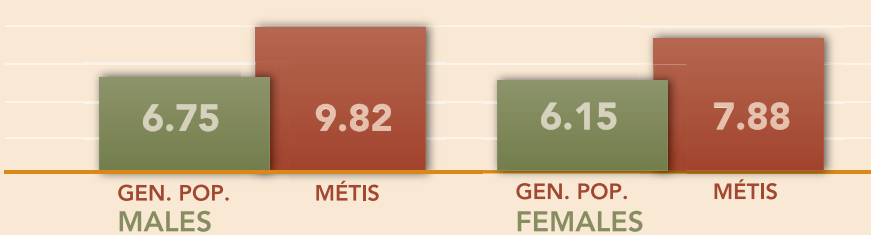
Because diabetes develops over long periods of time it is essential that we continue to monitor disease rates among the Métis of Ontario and begin to identify the reasons for these higher rates. The MNO will use this information to target programs and resources to where they will be most effective and have the greatest impact on Métis health status and outcomes.

Collecting more data over longer periods of time will increase the extent to which we can generalize the results of this kind of research to the entire Métis population in Ontario, which in the 2006 census numbered around 73,000 people.

DIABETIC COMPLICATIONS PER 100 PEOPLE (APR 1, 2007 - MAR 31, 2008)

	Congestive Heart Failure	1.35	1.14
	Eye Complications	1.39	1.02
	Heart Attack	0.73	1.36
STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT			
	Hypo or hyperglycaemia	1.22	1.35
	Kidney dialysis	0.57	0.90
	Lower extremity amputation	0.16	0.10
	Precedures to re-open blood vessels	0.81	1.30
	Stroke	0.34	0.34
		General Population	Métis

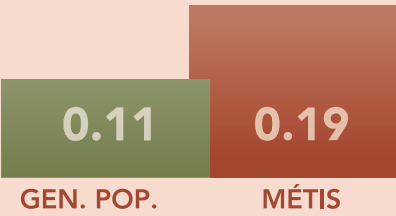
CASES OF DIABETES: BY SEX DIABETES CASES IN ONT. AT APRIL 1, 2007



CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE

WHAT IS CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE (CVD)?

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is a term used to describe a range of diseases that affect your heart and, in some cases, your blood vessels. Diseases that fall under the CVD umbrella include congestive heart failure; heart attack or pre-heart attack; irregular heart beat; stroke and congenital (birth) defects of the heart.



NEW CASES OF: IRREGULAR HEARTBEAT
OUT OF EVERY 100 PEOPLE (APR 1, 2006 - MAR 31, 2008)



Congestive Heart Failure

25.71

21.84



Heart Attack and Pre-Heart Attack

17.55

16.91



Irregular Heartbeat

9.44

30.95

STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT



Stroke

28.53

26.65

General
Population

Métis

CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE: DEATHS PER 100 PEOPLE (APR 1, 2003 - MAR 31, 2009)

WHY STUDY CVD AMONG THE MÉTIS OF ONTARIO?

Little is currently known about CVD in the Métis population, or how Métis people with CVD access and receive care in Ontario. This lack of critical health information makes it challenging to target resources and programs where they will be most effective in improving Métis health status and outcomes.

WHO WERE INCLUDED IN THE STUDY?

- Health related data from three provincial databases were linked to the Métis Nation of Ontario Citizenship Registry data to provide information on CVD rates among on approximately 14,000 Métis citizens in Ontario. These data were then compared to the general population of Ontario.

HOW WIDESPREAD IS CVD AMONG THE REGISTERED MÉTIS POPULATION?

- Over the 2 year study period, rates of heart attack and pre-heart attack and congestive heart failure were 1.8 and 1.3 times higher among Métis compared to the general Ontario population.
- Stroke rates were similar for both populations.
- The incidence of irregular heartbeat was 1.7 times higher among registered Métis.

WHAT ABOUT CARE AND TREATMENT FOR MÉTIS PEOPLE WITH CVD DISEASE?

- The readmission rate for congestive heart failure was over two times higher among the Métis compared to the general Ontario population.
- No significant differences were found in readmission rates for heart attack and pre-heart attack, stroke and irregular heartbeat. However, a related study on diabetes among the Métis also found that registered Métis people with diabetes were 86% more likely to be hospitalized due to a heart attack or pre-heart attack than people with diabetes in the general population.
- The mortality rate for irregular heart beat was 3.3 times higher in the registered Métis population compared to the rest of Ontario.
- There were no significant differences between the Métis and the general Ontario population in mortality rates for heart attack and pre-heart attack, stroke, and mortality secondary to congestive heart disease.

HOW SHOULD WE INTERPRET THESE RESULTS?

This landmark study is the first time CVD rates among the Métis of Ontario have been studied.

These initial findings indicate clearly that there is an unacceptably high number of Métis in Ontario experiencing the debilitating effects of CVD, and this should be of major concern.

The significant gap in rates of heart attacks and pre-heart attacks between the two groups is especially alarming.

The reasons for these differences are complex. A higher proportion of Métis people live in remote and rural areas in Northern Ontario where access to health care and supports are more limited. This lack of access may well be affecting CVD and other chronic disease rates, along with other health outcomes.

The lower socioeconomic status of the Métis population compared to the general Ontario population are likely impacting rates of CVD and other chronic conditions among the Métis.

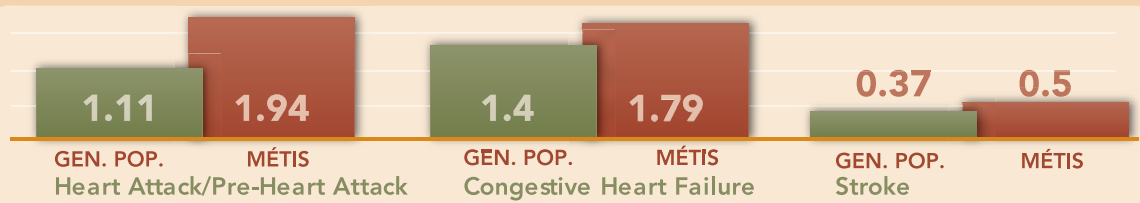
These results, together with findings from a study of diabetes, suggest that urgent action is needed to address the disproportionately high rates of CVD and other chronic conditions experienced by Métis citizens.

Métis communities would benefit from programs that increase knowledge and awareness about CVD risk factors and which improve access to public health outreach programs, and primary and specialist care.

Because chronic diseases develop over longer periods of time, it is essential that we continue to monitor CVD among the Métis of Ontario and begin to identify the reasons for these higher rates. The MNO will use this information to target programs and resources to where they will be most effective and have the greatest impact on Métis health status and outcomes.

Collecting more data over longer periods of time will increase the extent to which we can generalize the results of this kind of research to the entire Métis population in Ontario, which in the 2006 census numbered around 73,000 people.

CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE CASES OUT OF EVERY 100 PEOPLE (APR 1, 2006 - MAR 31, 2007)



DETAILED REPORTS ARE AVAILABLE
ONLINE AT: www.metisnation.org

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Funding for this publication was provided by the Public Health Agency of Canada.

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors/researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official views of the Public Health Agency of Canada.

ICES Institute for Clinical
Evaluative Sciences