

# New Breed

MAGAZINE



*Spirit of Dumont* by  
Métis Artist Dennis J. Weber

Summer / Fall 2006

# New Breed

MAGAZINE

is a publication of Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research in partnership with the Métis Nation – Saskatchewan.

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*New Breed Magazine* is published quarterly.

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**PUBLICATIONS MAIL #40827179**

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**Thank you very much for your subscription to Saskatchewan's Métis voice,  
*New Breed Magazine*.  
Receipt will be issued upon payment.**

# Interview with Métis Artist Dennis J. Weber on the *Spirit of Dumont*

Interviewed by Karon Shmon and photograph by Janessa Temple

**Karon:** The Gabriel Dumont Institute was very pleased that you accepted the commission to create the 2006 National Aboriginal Day Poster as a tribute to the Métis. Why did you feel this commission was important enough for you to accept?

**Dennis:** *I accepted it because it was part of my heritage. I felt like it was something I had to do to make a connection, it's part of my roots.*



**Karon:** Your artist's statement about the painting created for the poster obviously shows you gave it a lot of thought. How did you come to choose the elements which you included and were there any that you considered but left out?

**Dennis:** *I wanted to keep it simple enough. I wanted to depict things that represented the Métis, like the buffalo hunt, the flag and the beadwork. Those were all representations of the Métis and Gabriel Dumont. There really isn't anything I left out. There were few things I was looking at but I didn't want it to be too much or too cluttered.*

**Karon:** Your origins as a Saskatchewan Métis are right from the Batoche area. What would you like to share about that?

**Dennis:** *I can remember growing up and visiting a lot of people at Batoche. Nobody really talked about being Métis or anything like that. It was just, kind of a connection and it felt different. It felt fuller, more rooty. Like it was a simple life. Some didn't have electricity.*

## "Spirit of Dumont"

Métis artist Dennis J. Weber was commissioned by the Gabriel Dumont Institute to create the art for the National Aboriginal Day 2006 poster to help celebrate the events held at Batoche National Historic Site on June 21, 2006. The celebration was held in partnership with Parks Canada and the Friends of Batoche National Historic Site Inc. with support from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.

Dennis provided the following background to the painting:

"The small postcard is torn to show the attempt to destroy Dumont and the Métis. The buffalo skull and robe shows his role as Chief of the Hunt, the red flag his role as a Resistance fighter. The leather mitt displays the proud tradition of the Métis flower beadwork. The image of Dumont, without his hat, represents that he is no longer alive, but here in spirit. The hat and all the other items in the image are painted in high realism to represent his legacy today."

*I felt more at home there than I did in Calgary where I spent much of my youth.*

**Karon:** You have a broad range of subjects you paint but one genre you obviously enjoy is the First Nations and Métis subject matter. What inspires you to create in this genre?

**Dennis:** *I just feel I am more connected than when I am to doing anything else.*

**Karon:** If you were advising a young Métis artist on how to hone their talent, market their work, and make a living from it, what would you tell them?

**Dennis:** *Stay with what is in your heart. It's tough to make a living from art but if you stay true to yourself you will make a better connection. What you want to express will come out a lot more than if you try to paint what everyone else wants or what you think the public wants. It is a tough go anyway, so I don't really know what to say or tell others*

*how to do it, but stay with what's in your heart.*

**Karon:** Did you have to work at another occupation while you were getting established?

**Dennis:** *Yes, I was a carpenter.*

**Karon:** Would you recommend that aspiring artists have two occupations?

**Dennis:** *No. I think if they really love art, stick with art, because, like they say, you can't serve two masters. If you're establishing yourself as an artist, if you're working, your art suffers. It was not until I quit and became an artist full time that I really started to grow.*

**Karon:** Thank you, Dennis.

**Dennis:** *You're welcome.*

End of interview.

Dennis Joseph Weber was born in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan in 1951 and lived most of his life in Calgary before moving to Kelowna, BC in 1999. His maternal roots are in Batoche, an area of great historical importance to the Métis, where his mother's father, grandfather and great-grandfather were each named Joseph Pilon. Dennis' wife, Sharon, has traced his ancestry, which includes Cree, Anishinabe and Dakota, to the 1600s and his French heritage to the 1400s. Dennis is a direct descendent of many famous Canadians including explorer Jean Nicolet, Cuthbert James Grant Sr., and Canada's first non-Aboriginal farmer, Louis Hébert.

Dennis shares a prophecy from 1885 attributed to statesman and visionary Louis Riel.

"Our People will sleep for a hundred years, but when they awake it will be the artists who bring back their culture."

One hundred years later, those words, by Dennis' first cousin five generations removed, were the catalyst for Dennis to explore the possibility of becoming a full-time artist. Over the last twenty years he has succeeded and is now recognized as one of Canada's foremost Métis artists.



*Métis artist Dennis J. Weber signing a poster for a young fan on June 21, 2006 at Batoche*

Janessa Temple

# Dumont's Billiard Table Back in Batoche!

Article and photographs by David Morin

It took 121 years, but the billiard table widely believed to have belonged to Gabriel Dumont is finally back home in Batoche! On May 7, 1885, the steamer Northcote arrived at Gabriel's Crossing. Under orders from General Middleton, soldiers tore down the stables to fortify the ship's upper deck. It was at this time that Gabriel Dumont's billiard table was also taken from Batoche to be used for fortification. There were actually three pool tables taken from Batoche during the 1885 Resistance, and while there is some conflicting evidence, testimony from several sources including oral history has led to the conclusion that the pool table now permanently on display at Batoche National Historic Site belonged to Gabriel Dumont.

After leaving Batoche, the table was brought to Stony Mountain Institution, a medium-security prison north of Winnipeg. Ironically, one of the veterans attending the ceremony was a guard at that prison. In 1988, the table was put in storage at the Government of Canada Service Centre in Winnipeg. After almost a decade in storage, the table was then repatriated to Batoche. The return of Gabriel Dumont's billiard table involved the hard work of many groups including Métis Homeland Batoche Local #51, Parks Canada, the Friends of Batoche Historic Site Inc., and *The Métis Cultural Development Fund*, which is supported by SaskCulture Inc. and delivered in partnership with the Gabriel Dumont Institute.

The billiard table was unveiled during the 2006 *Back to Batoche* festival on Friday, July 21, 2006. There were many people in attendance

including: Bruce Dumont, President of the Métis Nation of British Columbia; Audrey Poitras, President of the Métis Nation of Alberta; Elders Rose Fleury and Ed Bruce; Métis veterans; Ray Fiddler, President of the Métis Homeland Batoche Local #51; Pat Adams, President of Friends of Batoche; the Honourable Brad Trost, MP for Saskatoon-Humboldt; Mark Calette, Site Manager of the Batoche National Historic Site; and Cheryl Penny, the Superintendent of the Saskatchewan South Field Unit for Parks Canada.

The evening began with an opening speech by Mark Calette, followed by a prayer and speech by Duck Lake Elder, Rose Fleury. During her speech, Rose thanked everyone who brought the table back to Batoche, and she also emphasized the importance of bringing back the missing Bell of Batoche ("*Marie-Antoinette*") as well. She sees the returning of the table as the first step in reclaiming what was stolen in 1885. After Rose's speech, Cheryl Penny, Audrey Poitras, Bruce Dumont, Ray Fiddler, and Pat Adams all had a turn to talk about the importance of the event and to thank all those who participated in returning the table.

After the speeches, Bruce Dumont and Audrey Poitras opened the exhibit by untying the two sashes barring the way into the exhibit. Cheryl Penny and Bruce Dumont's son, Michael, rolled back the blanket unveiling Gabriel Dumont's pool table to the public. Soon after Elder Ed Bruce took the first shot! Afterwards, other dignitaries and Métis veterans got a crack at the table.

With the exhibit open to the public, many people headed into the museum to have a look at the historical table. Many hope that this will set a precedent for many more artifact repatriations to come. Perhaps the missing bell of Batoche will be the next long-lost Métis artifact to make its way home!



David Morin

*Bruce Dumont, Nathan Dumont, Michael Dumont, Audrey Poitras and Cheryl Penny*



David Morin

*Bruce Dumont and Audrey Poitras opening the exhibit*



David Morin

*Cheryl Penny and Michael Dumont unveiling the Billiard Table*



David Morin

*Elder, Ed Bruce taking the first shot!*



David Morin

*Gabriel Dumont's pool table*





**GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE**  
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#2-604 22nd Street West Saskatoon, SK S7M 5W1

**Métis Cultural Development Fund**

The Gabriel Dumont Institute has entered into a partnership with SaskCulture, Inc. to develop and administer the *Métis Cultural Development Fund* (MCDF). Funding for this program is provided by Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust Fund for Sports, Culture and Recreation.

The MCDF provides funds for activities that preserve, strengthen and transmit Métis culture and traditions in Saskatchewan. An emphasis is placed on children and on building cultural leadership skills, transferring knowledge between generations, skills development, mentorship and having fun. The activities should encourage gathering, sharing, learning, celebrating and developing Métis culture in Métis communities.

Applications must be submitted prior to the May 15<sup>th</sup> and October 15<sup>th</sup> deadline.

For additional information and an application form and guidelines for the MCDF, please contact:

Secretary, *Métis Cultural Development Fund*  
Gabriel Dumont Institute  
#2-604 - 22<sup>nd</sup> Street West  
Saskatoon, SK S7M 5W1  
Phone: (306) 934.4941  
Fax: (306) 244.0252  
or visit our website at: [www.gdins.org](http://www.gdins.org)




**Venez vous amuser à la façon des Métis!  
A Métis Good Time!**  
Venez à Batoche. Découvrez comment les événements qui s'y sont déroulés ont marqué notre pays. Découvrez la culture métisse. Les employés et les bénévoles les programmes réguliers ainsi que les activités spéciales vous permettront de mieux découvrir des chapitres de notre histoire, que vous ne serez pas prêt d'oublier.

Come to Batoche. Discover how events here changed the nation. Explore the Métis culture. Staff and volunteers, regular programs and special events will help you unravel the chapters of a story you won't soon forget.

**Lieu historique national du Canada de Batoche  
Batoche National Historic Site of Canada**  
**(306) 423-6227**

Friends of Batoche Historic Site Inc.

[www.pc.gc.ca](http://www.pc.gc.ca)

Parcs Canada Parks Canada

Canada



**Napoleon LaFontaine  
Scholarship Program**

The *Napoleon LaFontaine Scholarship Program* was established to encourage the Métis from Saskatchewan to pursue post-secondary educational training in fields related to Aboriginal people.

Napoleon LaFontaine was instrumental in organizing the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan (formerly "Association of Métis and Non-Status Indians of Saskatchewan"). Over the years, he devoted himself to developing social and educational policy for Aboriginal people. These scholarships are so named in recognition of his many contributions.

There are six types of scholarships: entrance, undergraduate, graduation, graduate, loan remission and special.

For additional information including eligibility, academic criteria and application forms, please visit our website at [www.gdins.org](http://www.gdins.org) or contact:

The Napoleon LaFontaine Scholarship Program  
c/o Gabriel Dumont Institute  
#2-604 22<sup>nd</sup> Street West  
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7M 5W1  
(306) 934.4941

Applications must be submitted prior to the May 1<sup>st</sup> and October 1<sup>st</sup> deadlines.



## SUNTEP 2006 Graduation SUNTEP Saskatoon

Article by Janessa Temple and photograph by Susan Temple

"If you can imagine it, you can achieve it, if you can dream it, you can become it." This was the theme of the Saskatchewan Urban Native Teachers Education Program (SUNTEP) graduation. The event took place at the Hilton Garden Hotel on Saturday April 29, 2006.

The evening began at 5:30 with an hour of socializing and toe-tapping to the beat of John Arcand's fiddle and his wife Vicki's accompaniment on the guitar. The room was buzzing with excitement, laughter, cheers and tears as each graduate was introduced to the crowd. Maria Campbell, the Honourable Pat Atkinson – Minister of Advanced Education

and Employment, Cecilia Reynolds – Dean of the College of Education at the University of Saskatchewan and Shelia Pocha, a former SUNTEP graduate and current Principal of W.P. Bate School, addressed the crowd and praised the graduates on their hard work and dedication. Graduates received a plaque from the Gabriel Dumont Institute and a sash to commemorate the event. The class valedictorians, Lloyd Laliberte and Janessa Temple, ended the evening on a happy note wishing each grad success and happiness as new educators. "Wherever you may go, no matter what the weather, always bring your own sunshine."



Susan Temple

*Top Row L to R: Raelynn Blondeau, Darcy Boisson, Angela Demerais, Lloyd Laliberte, Charmaine Laroque, Celine Levesque, Chandrelle Micklewright  
Bottom Row L to R: David Neilson, Brandon Pocha, Margaret Roy, Tina Suru, Janessa Temple, Dustan Vandale  
Missing: Angela Bickert*

# SUNTEP Regina

Article and photographs by SUNTEP Staff

Cameras flashed and parents beamed as seven more graduates received their Bachelors of Education from SUNTEP - Gabriel Dumont Institute through the University of Regina.

The twenty-third SUNTEP Regina graduation ceremony took place at the Delta Regina on Friday, May 19, 2006. Balloons of burgundy, white and silver reflected off of mirror table centres.

The gathering included approximately 180 family, friends, students and invited guests. They visited, laughed, cried and cheered as their favourite graduate was introduced and then walked to the head of the table while both a fiddle (seven-year old Dawson Elles) and a guitar (Billy Young) played softly in the background.



SUNTEP Staff

GDI Board Representative  
Gerald St. Pierre

– Candace Brentnell. This is significant as there is only one award for the entire Faculty of Education. Gerald St. Pierre, GDI Board representative, also gave an inspiring speech to the graduates.

Dean Margaret McKinnon, Faculty of Education, University of Regina, gave an eloquent speech to the graduates and announced the winner of the *Myrtle Magee Award* to one of last year's outstanding graduates

Other awards that were handed out included the *David Amyotte Scholarship*. The award was presented by G. Amyotte on behalf of the family to Renee Vilbrunt.



SUNTEP Staff

Renee Vilbrunt and  
G. Amyotte

The *SaskEnergy Sharing the Warmth* Winner was Nathan St. Dennis and the award was presented by Joley BigEagle. Chief

Clarence Bellegarde made a presentation to Trudy Bellegarde on behalf of the Little Black Bear First Nation.



SUNTEP Staff

Joley BigEagle and  
Nathan St. Dennis

Karen Anason, a former faculty member, was the guest speaker for the evening. As per tradition, sashes in the SUNTEP colours were presented to each graduate along with traditional leather bags, designed and hand-made for each graduate by staff. The theme of this year's graduation class was "The Journey Continues On . . ."

Alumni Ceane Dusyk and Crystal McCrae did an excellent job of keeping the evening going along smoothly. The evening ended and became another success story as family and friends visited and took pictures long after the final speech was over.



SUNTEP Staff

*Back Row L to R: Amanda Bandas, Alicia Bird, Rene Vilbrunt, Rachel Cantin, Trudy Bellegarde  
Front Row L to R: Wayne Dahlgren, Guest Speaker Karen Arnason, and Nathan St. Dennis (Distinction)*

## SUNTEP Prince Albert

### Graduating Class of 2006:

Koraley Anderson  
Jeri-Lynn Cook  
Francis McCallum  
Jesse Nicolas  
Melanie Smith  
Beige Unger

Curtis Breaton  
Liza Havlicek  
April McDermott  
Bradley Parenteau  
Carleen Spencer  
Leslie Wilson

Jeanette Burns  
Iris Labiuk  
Shelley Mitchell  
Shawna Sinclair  
Lori Ann Tkatchuk  
Jasmine Wolfe



# GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE

of Native Studies and Applied Research

## Gabriel Dumont Institute Announces Graduate Student Bursary Program

**Organization:** Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research

**Email:** [gdcbursary@gdi.gdins.org](mailto:gdcbursary@gdi.gdins.org)

**Released:** August. 4, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - August 4, 2006

The Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research (GDI) is pleased to announce a new graduate student bursary program for Métis students. The program will be offered through the Gabriel Dumont College (GDC), a program within GDI.

The *GDC Graduate Student Bursary Program* will have two primary purposes, to provide financial assistance and encourage Saskatchewan Métis to pursue full time graduate studies and conduct research in fields related to Métis people and to increase Métis employment in Saskatchewan and internally at the Institute.

The program provides for a maximum of five bursaries of \$10,000 for each academic year of study at a recognized Canadian university or abroad. Applicants are eligible for a maximum of two awards, which may be in consecutive years or in non-consecutive years. Applicants may apply prior to two intake deadlines, April 21 or October 6 annually.

To be eligible, applicants must be Métis, should be Saskatchewan residents for at least the immediate five years prior to the date of application, and should have applied to, been accepted, or are already enrolled in, a full-time graduate degree program at the Masters or Doctorate level, at a recognized university in Canada or abroad. Successful applicants will also be planning to undertake, or are already engaged, in a major research project or thesis which relates to Métis people and be committed to working in a Métis work environment upon the successful completion of their studies.

The application form and terms of reference are available on the GDI website at: [www.gdins.org](http://www.gdins.org)

For more information, please contact:

Secretary, Selection Committee – *GDC Graduate Student Bursary Program*

Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research

#2-604 – 22nd Street West

Saskatoon, SK S7M 5W1

Telephone: (306) 934.4941

# ***Lii Michif Niiyanaan, aan Michif biikishkwanaan*** **– We are Michif and Michif We Speak**

Article by Janessa Temple and photographs by Peter Beszterda

The Gabriel Dumont Institute was pleased to organize a Michif Speakers Meeting on March 11, 2006 at the Bessborough Hotel in Saskatoon. Delegates from across Saskatchewan, Alberta and Manitoba gathered to form a National Michif Speakers Association (NMSA). The NMSA consists of Michif-speaking community people who will strive to protect and promote the Michif-Cree language. Other roles and responsibilities of the NMSA are to:

- ❖ Coordinate the development of Michif speakers' nests throughout the Métis Homeland
- ❖ Work with provincial departments of education to develop Michif-language awareness and resources, and ensure that Michif resources are put into the provincial curricula
- ❖ Coordinate with Métis educational and cultural institutions, and provincial departments of education to develop Michif immersion programs and language-training programs for teachers

- ❖ Liaise with Métis educational and cultural institutions to assess, translate, validate and develop Michif resources
- ❖ Assume the responsibility and authority to protect and promote Michif languages and culture

The delegates showed great interest and determination to get the project underway. The afternoon was spent brainstorming and sharing ideas with each other regarding what needs to happen and what they would like to see happen to Michif-Cree. A steering committee was chosen to head the NMSA. The committee members are Rita Flammand, Norman Fleury, George Fleury, Claude Langan and Harriet Oaks. Over all, the meeting was a success and was the first step in the journey to accomplish the challenges noted above.



Peter Beszterda

*Steering Committee from L to R:  
George Fleury, Norman Fleury, Rita Flammand,  
Harriet Oaks and Claude Langan*



Peter Beszterda

*Photo of the delegates at the Bessborough,  
March 11, 2006*



# **GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE**

of Native Studies and Applied Research

## **EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**

**\*\*\*Internal/External Posting – Anticipatory Competition\*\*\*\***

**The Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research invites applications for the following position:**

### **Director - Gabriel Dumont Institute Training and Employment Services**

**Responsibilities:** Reporting to the Executive Director of GDI, the Director of Training and Employment Services will be responsible for the development, delivery, and evaluation of Métis labour market programs and services; developing, monitoring, and reporting of annual business plans, expenditure, and other plans; human resource management; policy development and implementation; quarterly and annual reports; partnership and stakeholder liaison; financial management of the corporation; overall management of the Training and Employment Services entity; and other duties and responsibilities as are assigned by the Executive Director of Gabriel Dumont Institute.

**Qualifications:** The ideal candidate will have a relevant Master's Degree combined with related work experience or equivalent educational qualifications and work experience; a minimum of five years managerial/supervisory experience; a demonstrated ability to work cooperatively with staff and other agencies; minimum two years experience in the delivery of services in training and/or employment; extensive understanding of Métis culture and employment and training needs of the Métis; and an excellent understanding of labour market issues and trends within Saskatchewan.

**Remuneration:** *A competitive salary and benefits package*

**Location:** **Saskatoon, Saskatchewan**

**Deadline for receipt of applications: October 13, 2006**

**Please submit resume and the names of three references to:**

**Mr. Geordy McCaffrey, Executive Director**  
**Gabriel Dumont Institute**  
**917 22nd Street West**  
**Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7M 0R9**  
Telephone (306) 242.6070 Fax: (306) 242.0002  
Email: geordy.mccaffrey\_dti@sasktel.net

Gabriel Dumont Institute has permission from the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission to hire affirmatively.

**The Institute reserves the right to withdraw this posting at any time.**



# **GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE**

of Native Studies and Applied Research

## **EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**

**\*\*\*Internal/External Posting –Anticipatory Competition\*\*\*\***

**The Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research invites applications for the following position:**

### **Director of Finance - Gabriel Dumont Institute Training and Employment Services**

**Responsibilities:** Reporting to the Director of Training and Employment Services, the Director of Finance is responsible for managing the accounting, finance, and administrative operations of the new company, and for ensuring the appropriate reporting on the financial health of the organization. Duties will be based around the following categories: planning/budgeting; financial management and reporting; contract administration; human resource management; banking relations; risk management; and other duties and responsibilities as are assigned by the Director.

**Qualifications:** The ideal candidate will have an accounting designation with at least three years experience; experience with Great Plains accounting program would be an asset; demonstrated leadership in human resources, financial management, operational planning, and project management; a demonstrated ability to interact and work with diverse stakeholders including Métis groups, educational institutions, and government agencies; experience in the delivery of services in training and/or employment; understanding of Métis culture and employment and training needs of the Métis; and an understanding of labour market issues and trends within Saskatchewan.

**Remuneration:** *A competitive salary and benefits package*

**Location:** **Saskatoon, Saskatchewan**

**Deadline for receipt of applications: October 13, 2006**

**Please submit resume and the names of three references to:**

**Mr. Geordy McCaffrey, Executive Director**  
**Gabriel Dumont Institute**  
**917 22nd Street West**  
**Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7M 0R9**  
Telephone (306) 242.6070 Fax: (306) 242.0002  
Email: geordy.mccaffrey\_dti@sasktel.net

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# **GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE**

of Native Studies and Applied Research

## **EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**

**\*\*\*Internal/External Posting – Anticipatory Competitions\*\*\***

**The Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research invites applications for the following 5 positions:**

**Program Coordinator- Gabriel Dumont Institute Training and Employment Services**

**Responsibilities:** The position will assist with coordination and delivery of employment and training services to Métis clients throughout Saskatchewan. Each Program Coordinator will be responsible for a staff of six individuals located at two different service delivery offices in the province. Under the supervision of the Director of Training and Employment Services, the Program Coordinator will be responsible for developing and administering employment and training programs, creating/monitoring corresponding budgets and work-plans; liaising with public, private, government, and other stakeholder agencies; ensuring base standards are met in the case management of clients; monitoring delivery services for Métis clients; supervising and managing staff, following Institute policies/SGEU Collective Agreement; participating in regional labour market needs assessment processes; developing and negotiating proposals; and other duties as assigned by the Director.

**Qualifications:** The ideal candidate will have a Bachelor's Degree in a related field, or equivalent, a minimum of two years supervisory/management experience; a demonstrated ability to work cooperatively with staff and other agencies; two years experience in the delivery of services in training and/or employment; extensive understanding of Métis culture and employment and training needs of the client group; and an excellent understanding of labour market issues and trends within Saskatchewan

**Remuneration:** *A competitive salary and benefits package*

**Location:** **TBD – Several options exist within the service delivery network.**

**Deadline for receipt of applications: October 13, 2006**

**Please submit resume and the names of three references to:**

**Mr. Geordy McCaffrey, Executive Director  
Gabriel Dumont Institute  
917 22nd Street West  
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7M 0R9  
Telephone (306) 242.6070 Fax: (306) 242.0002  
Email: geordy.mccaffrey\_dti@sasktel.net**

Gabriel Dumont Institute has permission from the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission to hire affirmatively.

**The Institute reserves the right to withdraw this posting at any time.**

# **Dr. Jo-Ann Episkenew: First Canadian Indigenous Scholar to Receive a Ph.D. from an Ancient German University**

Article by Hartmut Lutz and photograph by Hans Blohm



Hans Blohm

Dr. Jo-Ann Episkenew

Greifswald University is "pre-Columbian" and one of Germany's oldest. Founded in 1456, the university is celebrating its 550th anniversary this year. By comparison, Greifswald University's Canadian Studies Program is almost ridiculously young – only 15 years old – but on June 15, 2006, it witnessed a truly historical event: the first North American Aboriginal person earning a doctorate in Germany.

Jo-Ann Episkenew, a Métis scholar from Regina, Saskatchewan, publicly defended her doctoral thesis in front of an interdisciplinary board of experts in Canadian Literature, Native Studies, Education and Community Medicine. She did so well in her "*Rigorosum*" (thesis defence) that her PhD committee awarded her the highest possible mark of "*summa cum laude*" (with the highest praise) for that achievement. Three months earlier, Jo-Ann Episkenew had handed in her doctoral thesis, *Beyond Catharsis: Truth, Reconciliation, and Healing In and Through Indigenous Literature*, on which she had been working for more than five years. Her thesis is a substantial investigation to determine whether and how contemporary Indigenous literature in Canada fulfills a cathartic healing function similar to that which is traditionally entailed and actively employed in Indigenous oral storytelling. This piece of profound scholarship and committed research earned her an excellent "*magna cum laude*" (with great praise) from her Greifswald supervisor, Dr. Hartmut Lutz, her outside reader, Dr. Warren Cariou (University of Manitoba) and the Greifswald Ph.D. committee.

Like so many other Aboriginal women, Jo-Ann came to university rather late in her life. Nonetheless, she blazed a trail which made her a unique and encouraging role model for Aboriginal youth. Born and raised in Winnipeg, Manitoba in 1952, she never finished high school. Jo-Ann married very young and moved

to Saskatchewan at age 19 where she had two children, but the marriage did not last.

The following years were difficult. Her second husband attempted to make a living trapping in the Prince Albert area, but the life of a trapper is not an affluent one. In the end, he died violently and left her with three children. After her second husband's death, Jo-Ann decided to change her life to make things better for her children. She enrolled in adult education upgrading and then worked for SaskTel for two years. While working at SaskTel, she completed her last high school class during the evenings and graduated in 1986. A single mother in charge of four children, she entered the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College (SIFC) at the University of Regina (U of R). She soon decided to major in English. From then on, her academic career took off. As an undergraduate in 1990-91, she worked as my teaching assistant while I was a visiting guest professor. A decade later, I became her Ph.D. supervisor. She graduated (B.A.) with distinction in 1991 and was awarded the U of R's *President's Medal* for her scholarship and leadership. The following year, she was awarded an Honours Certificate, and in 1994, working with Dr. Bernard Selinger, she obtained her M.A. Her thesis is titled *Narrative Voice, Discursive Authority, and Ideology in the Works of Leslie Marmon Silko*.

Again, like many other Aboriginal people with university degrees, Jo-Ann became immediately involved in academic teaching because of the shortage of qualified Aboriginal university teachers. She was recruited into academic administrative positions shortly thereafter. However, while working as a professor at the SIFC English Department and later serving as Dean of Academics, she felt pressured to obtain a Ph.D. Within Canadian academic protocol, this would have meant moving to another

university, just at a time when her life seemed to be settling down a little. For the first time in her life, Jo-Ann and her partner Clayton were earning decent wages, bought a house together, and began looking forward towards a life that the majority of non-Aboriginal Canadians would consider modest but normal. She continued to win awards and prizes in recognition of her commitment and scholarship, e.g. in 1999 the *Regina Métis Women Award for Outstanding Contributions in Education*. All the while, Jo-Ann continued her research and academic publishing. In 2000, Jo-Ann co-edited, together with Renate Eigenbrod, *Creating Community: A Roundtable on Canadian Aboriginal Literature*, which was published by Theytus Books and Brandon University's Bearpaw Publishing in 2002.

At the same time, Jo-Ann registered as a Ph.D. student with the University of Greifswald. She attended many colloquia with her German "Doktorvater" (the author) in both Canada and Germany, while doggedly writing and re-writing, when time permitted, chapter after chapter. This arrangement allowed her to continue her work at what in 2003 became the First Nations University of Canada and stay in Regina.

In my assessment, I wrote this about her doctoral thesis:

This dissertation is a substantial and unique contribution to the study of contemporary Canadian Indigenous literature in general, and a new and pioneering investigation of the healing potential of Indigenous autobiography, prose fiction and drama in contemporary Canada. Moreover, this dissertation gives a most forceful, concise and politically and scholarly committed overview of pertinent aspects of the colonial policies that lie at the root of the diverse problems and conflicts facing Indigenous people in Canada today. As such, this dissertation undertakes nothing less but a comprehensive historical record of the (psycho-)pathology

of Canadian internal colonialism, which so many contemporary literary texts address and seek to heal.

Her analysis goes beyond a clinical concept of pathology. By grounding postcolonial stress in a politically and historically evolving process of colonization, her thesis also entails the realization that, in order to overcome the suffering caused by internal colonization, it is not enough to (ad)dress its wounds alone. They are only symptoms. The root causes are found in socio-economic structures which remain intact. Without a change of those structures, the healing can only go so far, whereas a more radical cure, would necessarily affect the social fabric in its entirety.

Indigenous literature, we learn from Jo-Ann Episkenew's dissertation, tends to be bound to the needs of the Indigenous communities it addresses. An Indigenist ethics steers many Indigenous writers towards addressing the various effects of colonialism, and towards exploring literary strategies that promote healing. This healing, Episkenew maintains, is necessary not only for the victims and their children but also for the members of the settler culture who can only understand themselves and their situation vis-à-vis Aboriginal Canada, if they know the whole historical truth and not only those parts which

are easily digested or even self-celebratory. For Indigenous readers, the literary texts provide a panoramic social mirror, reflecting their individual history in context. Residential School survivors can then realize that they are not alone in their suffering, nor are they alone in trying to overcome the after-effects. Such literature helps understanding and becomes pro-active in dismantling colonial structures.

Perhaps the greatest assets of this dissertation are Jo-Ann Episkenew's unflinching honesty and courage to be self-critical, and her ability to go beyond the "Indian lament." Instead of distributing blame unilaterally, she also looks for flaws in Indigenous practices, which she neither idealizes romantically nor debunks.

In 2001, Jo-Ann married her partner of many years, Clayton Episkenew. In their blended family they have 13 kids, 26 grandchildren, and a first great grandchild. Given the fact that Jo-Ann is now the acting head of the English Department, teaching a full course load including an honours graduate course, while at the same time preparing her dissertation for publication, let's hope that she will find the time to enjoy her family and friends. Congratulations, Dr. des. Episkenew!

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### **"The Métis Program" – 90.5 FM Saskatoon**

Every Saturday from 1:30 - 3:30 PM Rene Durocher hosts

"The Métis Program" on CFCR Saskatoon Community Radio (90.5 FM).

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# Métis Entrepreneur: Susan Temple

Article and photograph by Janessa Temple



Janessa Temple

Susan Temple

"Shining Service for You in Our Office or Your Home!" Susan Temple is the proud owner and operator of Choiceland Insurance in Choiceland, Saskatchewan. A Métis woman from Nipawin, Saskatchewan, Susan received her Canadian Accredited Insurance Broker (CAIB) designation in October 2002. Insurance wasn't something Susan initially considered a career in: rather healthcare was her first field of choice. She enjoyed working in healthcare for several years when she decided to further her education in the insurance business. With dedication and commitment, Susan completed all 4 CAIB levels within a year's time. Prior to completing her CAIB, she worked with a local insurance company learning the basics, gaining confidence, and expanding her knowledge in the business. Eight years later, she is finally doing what she had always envisioned since completing her designation – opening her own agency. When asked what she likes most about being her own boss, Susan responded, "I love the challenge,

the excitement, the ongoing education and being able to work with the public. I think it is important for Métis women to become entrepreneurs in society, we have come so far as a people, I have had a lot of great role models...".

Besides selling insurance, Susan is involved in the community in many other ways. She has been actively involved with the Nipawin Métis Local since 1995. She also volunteers with the Nipawin Justice Committee, sits on the Ducks Unlimited Committee and teaches Catechism at St. Eugene's Catholic Church. Susan enjoys fishing, playing slo-pitch, gardening, camping, reading and spending time with her family and friends.

Susan Temple feels fortunate to have found a career which she finds rewarding, challenging, fulfilling and most of all, a career she takes pride in.

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# Back to Batoche Interactive Website Now Online at The Virtual Museum of Canada

Article by David Morin

After two years of hard work from many people, *The Back to Batoche Interactive Website* is now online at:

[www.virtualmuseum.ca!](http://www.virtualmuseum.ca!)

The website, developed in partnership with *The Virtual Museum of Canada* (VMC), is the Gabriel Dumont Institute's newest resource and is located in English at:

[www.virtualmuseum.ca/Exhibitions/Batoche/html/about/index.php](http://www.virtualmuseum.ca/Exhibitions/Batoche/html/about/index.php)

and in French at:

[www.museevirtuel.ca/Exhibitions/Batoche/html/about/fr\\_index.php](http://www.museevirtuel.ca/Exhibitions/Batoche/html/about/fr_index.php)

This website chronicles the events of the 1885 Resistance as well as highlights Métis culture. It also outlines how contemporary Métis culture is celebrated at the *Back to Batoche* festival. The *Back to Batoche Interactive Website* contains hundreds of pictures, over a hundred pages of text, hours of video footage and interviews and Michif-language lessons. It also has many fun and interactive features including games, which focus on Red River Cart-building and bannock-making.

Many people deserve thanks for the creation of the website including David Morin, Darren

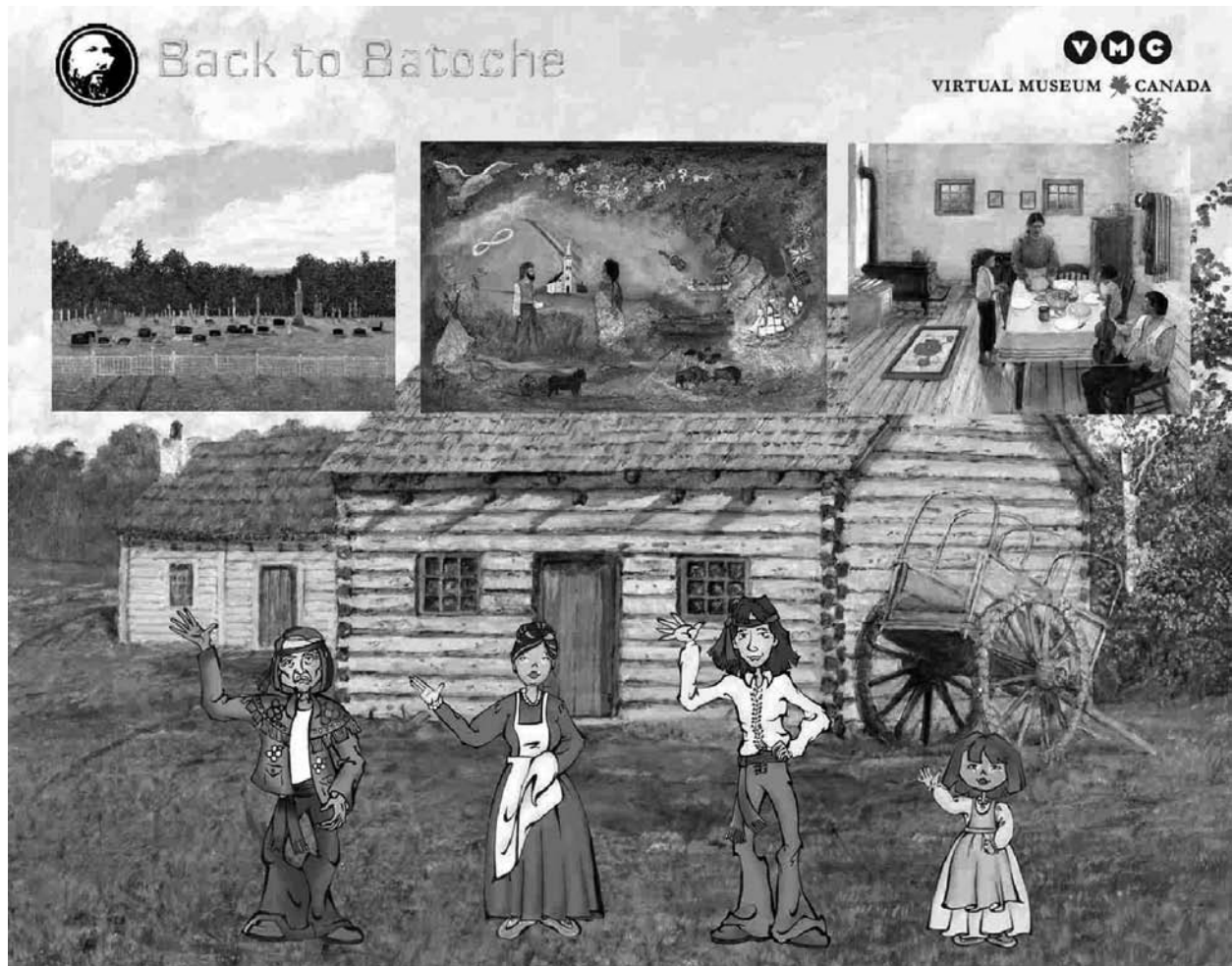
Préfontaine, Karon Shmon, Janessa Temple and Warren Dudar (the Gabriel Dumont Institute) and Gabe Ng, Shawn Zheng, Randy Skurdal, Jin Zhang, and Frank Bulk (the Division of Media and Technology at the University of Saskatchewan). We would also like to thank Ruth Heggveit, Tracy McKenney, and Jason Kiss (the Department of Canadian Heritage), Norman Fleury (the Michif translator), Patricia Leguen (the French translator), Carrie Saganace, Armand Paquette,



Donna Lee Dumont (the artists), Raine Morin, Kelly Parker, Deborah Cottreau and Dave Turcotte (the narrators). The Institute would also like to thank Parks Canada, the National Historic Site of Batoche and Turtle Island Music for their efforts to see this project come to a successful fruition.

institutions. [Virtualmuseum.ca](http://Virtualmuseum.ca) is a unique portal to the countless stories and treasures held in trust by Canada's museums, and lies at the core of the Government of Canada's strategy to nurture and promote Canada's culture online.

The VMC, an initiative of the Department of Canadian Heritage, was established in partnership with over 1,200 Canadian heritage



# Saskatchewan Métis Students win Millennium Awards for Excellence

Article by David Morin and photographs by Madelaine Rochon

Congratulations need to be offered to both Terrilyn Dallyn, of Meadow Lake, and Chelsie Scragg, of Saskatoon, for winning *The Millennium Awards for Excellence*. *The Millennium Awards* were created to recognize the outstanding achievements of students who demonstrate leadership skills, community involvement, academic achievement, and interest in innovation. Both of these recipients equally deserve their recognition.

Terrilyn is one of 100 students that received the national level of the award, which amounts to \$5,000 and is renewable up to three years to a maximum of \$20,000. Terrilyn has helped organize fundraisers for charities, such as the Terry Fox Organization, Telemiracle, the Heart and Stroke Foundation, Operation Christmas Child, and Tsunami Relief. Terrilyn also volunteers in a Youth Mentoring Program.

Terrilyn has shown her entrepreneurial skills by opening up T.J's Lawn Care Service, as well as being on the winning team of the University of Regina's 2006 Youth Business Institute's Grand Challenge!

In addition, Terrilyn has shown leadership in volunteer activities including coaching volleyball and educating children as a peer mentor. She is a member of school clubs, such as the Drama Club and Concert Band. She also plays volleyball and competes in track and field at the provincial level.

Terrilyn intends to pursue a career in Physiotherapy or Chiropractics. In the fall, she will take Kinesiology at the University of Saskatchewan.

Chelsie Scragg is one of 23 Saskatchewan students who received a provincial award of \$4,000 that is renewable up to 3 more years up to a maximum of \$16,000. Chelsie is a member of the Saskatoon Community Foundation's Batting 1000 Youth Advisory Council, which awards \$10,000 a year in grants to charities that support Saskatoon's children and youth to help them discover new opportunities and maximize their potential.

Chelsie also volunteers as a mentor to grade nine girls to help smooth their transition into high school, and she was the youth coordinator of a health career conference at St. Paul's Hospital.



Madelaine Rochon

Terrilyn, centre, at awards ceremony





Chelsie Scragg

Other awards Chelsie has received for her dedication and hard work include *The SaskTel Aboriginal Youth Award of Excellence* and an *Aboriginal Youth Bursary* from the Canadian Council of Aboriginal Businesses.

Chelsie plans to become a lawyer specializing in Aboriginal and environmental issues. In the fall, she will study at the University of Saskatchewan's College of Arts and Science.

Recognition must also be given to other Métis recipients from across the country including Sinéad Charbonneau, living near Medicine Hat, Alberta, Kelly Graves, from Port Moody, British Columbia, David Lussier, of Winnipeg, Manitoba, and Christopher Sowden, of Port Alberni, British Columbia. All of these outstanding youth are great role models for other young Métis students looking to make a difference in the world! Congratulations!

For more information on *The Millennium Scholarships* and how to apply, be sure to visit the websites [www.myopportunities.ca](http://www.myopportunities.ca) and [www.millenniumsolarships.ca](http://www.millenniumsolarships.ca).

# Sharing Our Culture: A Field Trip to the Valley

Article by and photographs by Amanda Norton

Amanda Norton



The hospitality of the Métis people in the South will be "known throughout the North all the way to Uranium City", said Kathy Littlejohn, a professor from the University of Saskatchewan. In this speech, she was thanking the people of Eastern Region III for the workshops they held for her students.

This was the second time Eastern Region III had welcomed Cathy Littlejohn's class. The people of Eastern Region III, led by Bev Worsley, came together to put on a two-day workshop for

Cathy Littlejohn's Northern Professional Access College (NORPAC) and Northern Teacher Education Program (NORTEP) students from LaRonge. The two-day workshop, which was held on April 25 and 26, 2006, at the Kapachee Training Centre in Fort Qu'Appelle, Saskatchewan, included some very knowledgeable and talented Métis Elders and youth from this region. They facilitated the workshops, and also entertained the northern students.

In order to make the students learning experiences more meaningful, Bev Worsley sought out people in her community to facilitate the workshops. Bev believes "leaders not only help to unite people, but also invite them to share their knowledge". She believes that it is important that leaders seek out people in their communities. Over the course of two days, the local people provided much entertainment including a presentation of a Souris River map and a variety of workshops such as those on jigging, beading, rug-hooking and family crafts.

Amanda Norton



Tyler Hoffarth

Day one started off with introductions. The NORPAC and NORTEP students participated in a beading workshop facilitated by Elder Shelia Starr. Shelia is a mother of six grown sons, as well as four young foster children. Tyler Hoffarth, a fourteen-year-old Métis youth, from Lipton joined the students and Elders for some entertainment before sitting down to a homemade meal prepared by the Yeh Fleur Rouge Women. Tyler has done some acting. While waiting on a movie set, he saw another actor doing magic tricks. Tyler was so excited

about this that he went online and researched how to be an illusionist. He looks up to other illusionists like David Blaine, and Brad Christian. Tyler believes that magic has helped him build up his self-esteem, because "bringing joy to others makes [him] happy".

Other entertainment that night included Derek Racette and his daughter Kayla who jiggled for the group. Derek said that it makes him very proud to see Kayla joining him, because he knows he is passing something very valuable down. He also thinks it is important for all children in schools to learn how to jig and learn about Métis culture.

The following day, the NORTEP and NORPAC students participated in a rug-hooking workshop facilitated by Margaret Harrison. Margaret is a member of the Yeh Fleur Rouge Women. Margaret's rug-hooking was inspired and passed down from her mother, Adeline Pelletier dit Racette, who used to make rugs to sell or trade to "farmers" for butter or eggs. Even though the rugs were worth more money than what her mother received for them, she had to feed her family and accepted this fact.

At the end of the two-day workshop, twenty-year-old Blaine Beaven, one of the NORPAC students, said that he learned a great deal about the history and culture of the Métis from this experience. He also recently graduated with a Bachelor of Arts from NORPAC and is a member of the cadet reserve air force. He believes that being a part of the cadets has helped him be strong because of the positive influences and role models he had in his

training. As a result of being involved in the cadets, he has travelled around the world. He also received his commercial pilot's license in 2005. He believes that it is important for youth in the North to become active in their communities and look for opportunities to become involved. He is also a role model for young people living in LaRonge. He uses his free time to give skiing and guitar lessons. He will also carry the knowledge of what he learned in the two-day workshop when he starts law school at the University of Saskatchewan in the fall of 2006. Jody Corrigan, a twenty-year old from Ile-à-La Crosse, who recently graduated from NORPAC, said this experience is really different from what she experienced in the North. The beadwork and language are different from what she is used to.

The two-day workshop ended with new friends being made. It also passed down a priceless gift of Métis traditions and stories. The students' experiences may have been different from what they were used to, but it was clear that one thing stayed the same, from North to South "the hospitality of the MÉTIS PEOPLE".



Amanda Norton

# *Kéni-pimahatówang owéti-izi-n'gán* "Pathways to the Future": The Saskatchewan Aboriginal Literacy Network Annual Gathering

Article and photograph by Janessa Temple

On May 9, 10, 11, 2006, Elders, youth and adult learners, literacy practitioners, community leaders, and interested Aboriginal advocates gathered together to promote Aboriginal literacy. The Saskatchewan Aboriginal Literacy Network (SALN) gathering was a rich and exciting event with ceremonies, learning workshops, meals, feasts, and cultural activities. An awards banquet was held to recognize and commend individuals for their achievements in Aboriginal literacy. The awards were presented in categories according to contributors. The recipient for the *Learner Award* was Lisa Marie Bird from Prince Albert. The *Elder Recognition Award* was presented to Mrs. Irene Jacques from the Standing Buffalo First Nation. Mrs. Bertha McKay from Cumberland House received the *Practitioner Award*. Organizations and businesses were also commended for their support and dedication to Aboriginal literacy. This year's recipient was the Battlefords Family Health Centre – Learning Circles, directed by Rose Favel. The Saskatchewan Literacy Commission, represented by Donna Woloshyn and the Gabriel Dumont Institute/Dumont Technical Institute, represented by Geordy McCaffrey, were both *Honourary Award* recipients. Gabriel Dumont Institute Executive Director Geordy McCaffrey felt that the gathering was a great success:

The gathering provides an excellent venue for us to share what is working, learn from one another and celebrate our successes. I believe all of the participants will leave knowing there is a strong and respectful network of support for Aboriginal literacy.

The SALN's vision statement states that: "Aboriginal literacy will be owned and managed by Aboriginal people in order to foster healthy, literate communities that contribute to the growth and well being of society through integrated, meaningful, and diverse learning experiences that are culturally and linguistically appropriate". This gathering is an indication of SALN's success and demonstrates its future potential.



Carol Vandale, Geordy McCaffrey and Donna Woloshyn

Janessa Temple

# ***Métis History: Emerging from the Shadows or How a non-Métis Discovered "True" Métis History***

Article by Darren R. Préfontaine

Distinguished guests, colleagues and dear friends: *taanshi*, *welcome* and *willkommen* to my presentation.

• • •

I work in GDI's Publishing Department. My Department plays a multifaceted role within the Institute: we are a literary publisher, a curriculum development and research unit, an archival and curatorial centre and a cultural resource producer. Our collective endeavours are imperative for a number of reasons. Perhaps the most important is that the Métis are struggling to overcome generations of colonialism and its negative adjuncts: racism, discrimination, poverty, lack of educational opportunities and various social pathologies. This invariably means the loss of languages and culture. As a result, GDI works with the province's Métis community to preserve and promote Métis culture. One area of particular concern is the near extinction of the three Michif languages: Michif-Cree, Michif-French and Ile-à-la Crosse Michif. Métis Elders tell us that without being able to speak a Michif language – you are unable to fully understand the Michif worldview that includes a rich Oral Tradition, and a whole panoply of folklore, healing traditions, spiritual systems, communitarian values, and harvesting strategies. This loss of cultural retention is also heightened by a demographic shift that indicates that the Métis birthrate – like that of the province's First Nations – is much higher than that of the larger population. So much

so, that by 2040, a majority of people in Saskatchewan will be Aboriginal.

This is the cultural milieu in which our Department works. Since the need to produce high-calibre, culturally-affirming and Métis-specific resources is so vital, there is a great deal of pressure to produce results. At first this proved, for myself, an almost insurmountable task. My academic training, with a specialization in Canadian History and Political Science, provided me with a number of key skills, particularly how to write and analyze and interpret complex information. However, it also left me ill-prepared for a career in Métis Studies. I thought that I knew everything that I needed to know about Métis history and culture. How wrong and terribly naïve I was! My time at the academy centred on implicitly Eurocentric history courses. When Aboriginal peoples were mentioned in the historical narrative, these efforts focused on Contact, the Fur Trade and their eventual marginalization through the Dominion of Canada's state-building policies. Reading Canadian history textbooks in the 1990s, you would think that, from 1885 until the 1960s, Aboriginal peoples almost disappeared from the national narrative.

I had to learn all the central tenets of Métis history and culture while on the job. These include the unique and beautiful Michif languages and the Métis' syncretistic folklore system that blends Canadian or *canayen* and

Algonquian worldviews. Moreover, the well-known "Road Allowance" experience following the 1885 Resistance was not mentioned in any of my textbooks nor was the Métis Scrip System. A crash course on these experiences had to be learned. In fact, my real historical and cultural education started the day I was hired at GDI. My cultural knowledge, such as it is, has been taught to me by a network that includes Elders and Michif speakers, my coworkers and community people who have shared so many of their life-stories with our Department and the Institute.

After absorbing all I could from community people and reading prodigious amounts of Métis history, I tried to craft my own way to better understand Métis history and culture. My first printed introduction to Métis Studies began with Howard Adams, Maria Campbell and Beatrice Culleton. This troika formed the basis of my knowledge of the Métis' colonization and helped me understand the mindset of the colonized and brought back memories of Albert Memmi, and Toussaint Louverture, and other "liberation" figures from my university days. I then began to blend oral history with my historical training. Like other Indigenous and traditional cultures, the Métis transmit historical, social and cultural knowledge through Elders or the "Old People" as they are also known. From there, I weaved my academic training in Canadian history, focusing on printed documents enthused with the Métis' Oral Tradition. This can be hard because the two do not always form a coherent synthesis.

I then began to look for long-term trends, sometimes using the *longue durée* approach in order to better understand the Métis' past. Parallels with other societies in both time and place became important. For instance, I began to think about how the Métis experience is parallel with other Indigenous and popular

insurrectionary movements such as those in the US West, Latin America, the Patriotes of 1837-38 in Lower Canada and even the uprisings of early modern Europe. One thing that struck me was that the Métis Nation was born in a period of international revolution and nation building. As a result, it was also no coincidence that the Métis Nation was also crushed by the nascent Canadian state in 1870 and 1885. Finally, as a student of French-Canadian/Québec nationalism, I also noticed that the main theme of French-Canadian history – "*la survivance*" – the passionate and visceral desire to preserve language and culture at all costs – closely mirrors the main theme of Métis history – resistance. Some of you may notice that scholars specializing in Indigenous resistance have embraced this term as well.

After all of this, came my epiphany. Métis history is a clandestine history, which has been hidden from the larger narratives of the colonizer and from the oppressed themselves. With this in mind, I then tried to figure out why so much Métis history had been obscured or erased. In the end, I concluded that there was no grand conspiracy. This was done simply because Canada, until quite recently, was not ready to include the Métis as a Founding People worthy of full inclusion in our national narrative. For instance, early histories about the Métis focused exclusively on the machinations of Louis Riel and avoided the mass of participants involved in the Métis resistance movements of 1869-70 and 1885. The Métis were portrayed as childlike marionettes controlled by the manipulations of Riel as opposed to being active agents of their own will. They were also seen as a mass of static primitives who engaged, albeit heroically, in a rearguard action to prevent the onward march of civilization. This type of historical writing was in vogue from the 1890s until well after the Second World

War. In 1960s, the way Canadians wrote history shifted and began to have a more inclusive sense of the past. For the Métis, this has meant moving from political biographies, to social-economic histories based on staples production (the fur trade, early Red River farming or the bison hunt), to community studies that employ social-science methodologies.

Métis history and historiography are now divided into the following themes: (1) the Métis as rebels or resisters, which focuses almost exclusively on Louis Riel (2) the Métis as children of the fur trade, (3) Métis Ethnogenesis and the creation of a "new"/distinct people (4) the so-called "Half-breed Dilemma" and the problems associated with having a mixed identity, (5) the Red River Métis' alleged class/ethnic and sectarian cleavages and (6) Métis community studies. My own themes that I use when I discuss Métis history are "Resistance", "Persistence" and "Adaptation". I am also interested in applying the "Imagined Communities" hypothesis of Benedict Anderson and others to the modern Métis Nation; however, I have not been able to write anything on this yet.

• • •

*Danke! Marsi!*

**Note:** This is an abridged version of a presentation which Darren Préfontaine delivered at a Canadian Studies conference in Greifswald, Germany in June 2006.

# Back to Batoche 2006

Article by Janessa Temple and photographs by Joseph Fauchon

The Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) had the pleasure of delivering activities to the children at the *Back To Batoche* festival this year. Our small tent was host to over 50 children throughout the weekend. Activities included beading, face painting, finger weaving, the Métis Alphabet Book game, puzzles, colouring, Métis bingo, jiggling, horse

shoes and relay races. Alfred and friends from *The Alfred Reading Series* even joined us one evening for a puppet show! GDI Staff and children had a wonderful time celebrating Métis culture through games. This annual event is highlighted by a number of special activities as listed on the program agenda.



## Back to Batoche 2006 Experience

Article by Pam Sokol

The four days of the *Back to Batoche* celebration are truly a celebratory gathering of the Métis community – where commitment to the Métis Nation is certainly evident. This gathering, full of sharing, music, visiting, and understanding the richness of Métis culture, continues to instil pride in the Métis. The fiddlers' music brings back memories of spending countless hours with my grandparents who were true Métis. This music reaches into your soul more than words will ever describe. The people do not look at what you wear or what you have. People easily become friends at Batoche. We spend our mornings having coffee with each other and our evenings sitting around the campfire. From this, a feeling of belonging remains long after Batoche is over. For those four days the only life that exists for me consists of family, food, visiting, dancing and listening to fiddle music.

My anticipation for next year's *Back to Batoche* is already built – laughing and dancing the "Red River Jig" (even if you don't know how). My brothers, who are from Duck Lake, have a band, "The Voyageurs", and are deep into traditional Métis fiddle music. This is the second year that their music has been part of the celebrations. For the rest of my family *Back to Batoche* has been our holiday for the past few years. Even the children participate in the dancing. My niece wants to attend every dance, so we go and enjoy the music. I have already planned for next year. I will return to *Back to Batoche* until I am an old Métis woman. This gathering has become a proud part of life and that of my family.



# Back to Batoche Celebrations 2006

Article and photograph by Mavis Taylor and photograph by Joseph Fauchon

*Back to Batoche* celebrations took place on July 20, 21, 22, and 23, 2006.

The *Back to Batoche* organizing committee consisted of Guy Bouvier (Chairperson), Bonnie Start (Coordinator), Mark Calette, Ray Fiddler, and Mavis Taylor. This year, the celebration was planned and delivered through a joint partnership with the Batoche National Historic Site. On behalf of the committee, Mr. Guy Bouvier would like to thank everyone who attended and helped make the Batoche cultural celebration a success. Mr. Bouvier would like to thank the committee for all their hard work and dedication. A thank you should also be extended to the staff at Batoche National Historic Site, Elder Rose Boyer and her family for their excellent work in the Elders' Hall, all those who helped during the event and all the sponsors for their generous donations. Thanks also to the Gabriel Dumont Institute for delivering the children's activities and contributing the sound system and all the music which included the Donny Parenteau Band and John and Vicki Arcand.



Joseph Fauchon

*Buffalo Lake Reelers Dancers from the Buffalo Métis Settlement, Caslan Alberta*

Other sponsors who deserve a big thank you include SNEDCO, MACSI, the Métis National Council, the Department of Canadian Heritage, Sask Sport, the Manitoba Métis Federation, the Métis Nation of Alberta, and the Métis Nation of Ontario. You were all tremendous!

From all the committee members, thank you for your trust and faith in us and for once again helping to make *Back to Batoche* 2006 a resounding success!



Mavis Taylor

*Guy Bouvier, Chairperson Batoche Committee, reminiscing with Elder Ambrose Maurice*

# ***Back to Batoche 2006 Agenda***

**Thursday, July 20, 2006**

**5:00 p.m. – Opening Ceremonies – Main Stage**

Procession into Veteran's Hall

Opening Prayer

Métis National Anthem

**6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. – Children's Festival – Children's Area**

Children's Entertainment and Activities courtesy of Gabriel Dumont Institute

**7:00 to 8:00 p.m. – Métis Showcase – Open Stage**

The Main Stage will be open to all those who wish to perform.

Come and share your talents!

**8:00 p.m. to 12:00 a.m. – Old Tyme Dance**

Featuring Mel Vandale and Lenny Dumont



Janessa Temple

*John and Vicki Arcand*

**Friday, July 21, 2006**

**Day and Evening – Elders' Programming – Elders' Building**

**Community Appreciation Day – Batoche National Historic Site**

9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. – Pancake Breakfast

9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. – Entertainment featuring Donny Parenteau and John and Vicki Arcand

**10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. – Children's Festival – Children's area**

Children's Entertainment and Activities courtesy of Gabriel Dumont Institute

**10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. – Parks Canada Tours – Main Gate**

Take a wagon tour through the displays of the remains of the Village of Batoche.

The site depicts the lifestyles of the Métis of Batoche as they were between 1860 and 1900.

**1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. – Square Dancing/Jigging Competition – Main Stage**

Music provided by John Arcand

**11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. – Pavilion**

A display area, craft market and service showcase. Various Métis businesses, craftspeople, and Métis Nation – Saskatchewan Affiliates will have display tables and information booths.

**1:00 p.m. – Aboriginal Veteran's Procession – Main Gate to Veteran's Hall**

**2:00 p.m. – Métis Voyageur Games – Voyageur Area**

**5:00 p.m. – Unveiling of Gabriel Dumont Pool Table – Batoche National Historic Site**

**7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. – Jam Session – Main Stage**

**9:30 p.m. to 2:00 a.m. – Dance**

Music provided by Donny Parenteau

# National Aboriginal Day Celebration at Batoche

Article by Tasha Altman and photographs by Janessa Temple

On June 21, 2006, Aboriginal peoples across Canada celebrated National Aboriginal Day, and what better place to partake in some celebratory activities than at Batoche National Historic Site? Although the day presented itself with threats of rain and cold temperatures, the attendees, the artisans, the performers, and the display booths did not allow these factors to affect the day's spirit.

In addition to what the Batoche National Historic Site has to offer, Donny Parenteau and John Arcand fiddled in the church while Vicki Arcand played accompaniment, Leah Dorion displayed some of her artwork and was working on a current painting, and Dennis Weber – who was commissioned by the Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI), Friends of Batoche National Historic Site Inc., Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, and Parks Canada, to design this year's National Aboriginal Day poster – displayed some of his artwork. Olive Whitford, author and Joanne Panas, author and illustrator of *The Beavers Big House*, attended as well, with Joanne working on her latest illustrations for GDI's upcoming publication – *The Story of the Rabbit Dance*. Norman Fleury, a Michif advocate,



Janessa Temple

Leah Dorion

promoted the Michif-Cree language with help from Elders Dorothy Aubichon and Rose Fleury. GDI's Publishing Department also had a display which included everything from Métis-specific resource materials to music CDs. Curriculum Developer David Morin also demonstrated *The Back to Batoche Interactive Website* ([www.virtualmuseum.ca/Exhibitions/Batoche/html/about/index.php](http://www.virtualmuseum.ca/Exhibitions/Batoche/html/about/index.php)), which was officially launched August 1, 2006. Not to be forgotten, the W.P. Bate School Jiggers performed for all to enjoy!

The origins of National Aboriginal Day are rooted in Québec. In 1990, "Aboriginal Day" was celebrated in Québec as a result of an act of the province's *Assemblée nationale*. Later that decade, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples recommended that the celebrated "Aboriginal Day" become "National Aboriginal Day". On June 13, 1996, the Right Honourable Roméo LeBlanc, Governor General of Canada, first proclaimed it in Parliament.

Each year, June 21 is a time when Aboriginal peoples – Métis, First Nations, and Inuit – come together to celebrate their distinctive heritages and cultures. What a wonderful day!



Janessa Temple

Terry Boyer with daughter and David Morin

# 9<sup>th</sup> Annual *John Arcand Fiddle Fest*

Article by Amaranta Sokol

In 1998, the *John Arcand Fiddle Fest* was launched and held in Greencourt, Alberta on John Arcand's acreage. The following year Arcand's new acreage, Windy Acres near Saskatoon, hosted the Fiddle Fest. In 2002, the *John Arcand Fiddle Fest* became a non-profit organization with the mandate to promote and preserve fiddle music and dance and to provide an environment to showcase youth, talent and culture.

The 9<sup>th</sup> annual *John Arcand Fiddle Fest* took place from August 10 - 13, 2006. The weather was mainly sunny, however, rain and hail did make a brief appearance forcing spectators to go under the big top.

The events that took place Thursday and Friday included various workshops and evening concert showcases. Fiddling and jigging competitions took place throughout the day Saturday with participants as far as the Northwest Territories attending. Later in the evening, John Arcand and friends entertained the crowd followed by an old time dance in which "Bannock Country" performed. A pancake breakfast and gospel hour featuring the Pelletier family and friends started the day off on Sunday. Fiddling and jigging finals brought closure to the weekend. Spectators and participants journeyed from many places to make the event a great success. For more information visit [www.johnarcandfiddlefest.com](http://www.johnarcandfiddlefest.com).

## April 24, 1985: The Battle of Tourond's Coulee?

Article by Darren R. Préfontaine with Karon Shmon

Most people presently know the 1885 Resistance encounter that took place on April 24, 1885 as the "Battle of Fish Creek". Despite the larger society's use of "Fish Creek" to remember this place and battle, the Métis have always known it as "Tourond's Coulee" or "*la couli des Tourond*" and "*li couli dii Tourond*" in Michif-French and Michif-Cree respectively. This place name honours the Métis family that settled there before the outbreak of the 1885 Resistance. However, in the larger public consciousness, this event became known as the "Battle of Fish Creek". In 1885, Canadian soldiers renamed the place

and battle. It soon became part of the lexicon and the historiography (or the body of written history) of the 1885 Resistance.

Many in the Métis community would like the Métis name for this place and battle restored. Métis Elder Rose Fleury, a genealogist and a resident of nearby Duck Lake, eloquently advocates for the restoration of the Métis' name to this geographic place and battle:

I am very much in favour of the name Tourond's Coulee because it honours the Tourond family who not only owned the land but who also lost family during the

battle. It honours all of the Métis, both men and women, who had a role in the resistance. Those are my ancestors and I am proud of their struggle for our rights. Out of respect, I would like to see the name my people, the Métis, used for the place and battle, Tourond's Coulee.

Gabriel Dumont also recognized a Métis place name for this locale:

I thought it wise to retire and go and wait for the enemy at Fish-Creek Coulee, known among us as **Little Beaver River**, which flows from west to east, into the right of the Saskatchewan River. The **Tourond** family lived on the right bank of this stream. I had given orders not to follow the road from Clarke's Crossing to Dumont's Ferry cutting across the coulee at the **Touronds'**...<sup>1</sup>

Historians also concede that Tourond's Coulee was the name used for this location by the Métis prior to the battle. For instance, Diane Payment, arguably the pre-eminent historian to write about the Métis community of Batoche, acknowledges this fact:

When Major-General Frederick Dobson Middleton's army approached the southernmost Métis farms, Dumont and most of his men were waiting at a place which they called "**Coulée des Tourond**" but which the soldiers were to call Fish Creek<sup>2</sup>.

Bob Beal and Rod Macleod, who have written about the 1885 Resistance's military campaigns, also recognize the Métis' place name.

...On April 12, with about 150 Métis and Indians, prepared an ambush at **Tourond's Coulee**, which the government soldiers would know as Fish Creek, 20 km south of Batoche on the east side of the South Saskatchewan<sup>3</sup>.

George Woodcock, Gabriel Dumont's biographer, also acknowledged Tourond's Coulee as the Métis place name for this battle.

...Dumont now planned to ambush Middleton and his men by day, and his knowledge of the terrain suggested to him the obvious place was **Tourond's Coulee**, the ravine that twisted from **Tourond's** farm towards the South Saskatchewan<sup>4</sup>.

Important Canadian institutions also use "Tourond's Coulee" when referring to this geographic locale. For instance, "Tourond's Coulee" is used by the CBC (CBC Archives)<sup>5</sup>, the University of Saskatchewan<sup>6</sup>, and Saskatchewan Learning<sup>7</sup>.

Taken together, all this evidence therefore indicates that "Tourond's Coulee" is recognized by:

- (1) The Métis Oral Tradition
- (2) The historical record and historiography; and
- (3) Canadian cultural and education institutions

The Métis community desires that "Tourond's Coulee" should be restored and used in the public commemoration of the Battle of Fish Creek. Such an incremental change is not about revisionism. By restoring the pre-existing and recognized Métis name to its proper place in our collective commemoration of this event, it is a tangible and easily achievable means to honour the memory of the Métis resisters who fought and died during a long-ago battle. For the Métis, the 1885 Resistance was a defining event. It was when their ancestors made a stand against what they perceived as an uncaring and distant colonial power. The battlefields are therefore sacred ground. This gesture would

also acknowledge that this geographic place not only had a Métis name before Canadian soldiers dubbed it "Fish Creek", but that it was occupied and farmed by a Métis family.

Restoring "Tourond's Coulee" to the public commemoration of the 1885 Resistance would be easy to achieve. It could start almost immediately with changing the historical plaques that commemorate the "Battle of Fish Creek". This alteration would involve rewording the historical plaques in such a way that both the current widely known name "Fish Creek" would be used in conjunction with the traditional, time-honoured Métis name – "Tourond's Coulee". The text on the plaques would indicate that "Tourond's Coulee" is the preferred Métis name for the place and battle, while indicating the larger society's use of "Fish Creek". This incremental change would demonstrate, to the Canadian public, that "Fish Creek" was not the original name of this place.

The restoration of the proper Métis name for this place and battle in the public consciousness would be an exercise in healing. It will also further demonstrate Canada's maturity in coming to terms with its past. Throughout time and place, there have been innumerable instances of historical events and peoples having multiple names; changing when social mores necessitated change. Often these various names delineate regional, class, sectarian and ethnic sensibilities. In recent years, for instance, Canada's First Nations have been reclaiming their original names for themselves and are choosing not to identify with the names given to them through colonization. Inuit, Dakota, Siksika and Tsuu T'ina all serve as examples and are replacing Eskimo, Sioux, Blackfoot and Sarcee in common usage. Furthermore, in the United

States, the battles that took place in Virginia on July 21, 1861 and August 28-30, 1862 are known in the American public consciousness as "Bull Run" and "Manassas". Americans honour both the "Union" name (Bull Run) and the "Confederate" name (Manassas) as a way to respect all those who died during their civil war – the most catastrophic event in American history.

Not restoring and affirming the Métis' name for this place and battle would be a retrograde step. It would also continue a centuries-old trend to either ignore or erase Aboriginal place names, which, both implicitly and explicitly, takes away from their role as Founding Peoples. Further, to maintain the name "Fish Creek" without qualification or without recognizing the Métis' name for this place and battle would continue to entrench a Eurocentric conquering mentality that allows the victors the right to claim, rename and supplant Indigenous lands without Indigenous consent. It would also demonstrate Canada's inability to successfully incorporate regional and ethnic nuances in the larger national narrative.

Outside of Aboriginal communities such an imposition does not exist. For example, could you imagine the furor in Québec if the *Plaines d'Abraham*/Plains of Abraham (September 13, 1759) had another name, which was imposed on the Québécois by the English-speaking world? How would Ontarians feel if foreigners considered the Battle of Queenston Heights (October 13, 1812) an American victory? They would be indignant. Québécois – as the direct descendants of the Canadiens who were defeated and conquered on the Plains of Abraham – have considerable public input in the commemoration of this event. Ontarians – many of whom are direct descendants of

the Loyalist and First Nations forces who repulsed the Americans in 1812 – have been able to determine how Queenston Heights is remembered. The Métis, a Founding People in the same sense as the Canadiens and the Loyalists, deserve the same consideration.

To conclude, restoring the name "Tourond's Coulee" to the public memory of the 1885 Resistance would allow our national historical narrative to further mature and become more inclusive and respectful of diverse voices. As a nation we should not continue to suffer from a one-sided historical amnesia that allows the dominant society to exclusively write and interpret history without consulting divergent voices. Successful societies find a way to balance varying perspectives in their national narratives. It is therefore incumbent upon all Canadians to honour all those who struggled to build Canada no matter the time, the place or the circumstance. This proposed restoration does not take away from the memory of those Canadian soldiers who died for a cause for which they were firmly committed. We can properly show our reverence for the fallen Métis resistance fighters and Canadian soldiers by acknowledging both historical narratives. For the Métis, restoring the name "Tourond's Coulee" to its proper public prominence is not about revisionism or advocating "grievance" history, it is, rather, about showing due reverence to their ancestors' plight while acknowledging that "Tourond's Coulee" is the proper Métis name and place for this battle.

**Note:** For several months, the Gabriel Dumont Institute has been part of a panel including Métis Elders and Parks Canada officials to restore the original Métis name for both the place and battle at Fish Creek. This article is based on a paper presented to Parks Canada by the Institute's Publishing Department requesting both a restoration of "Tourond's Coulee" to the official commemoration of the Battle of Fish Creek and the use of Michif-French and Michif-Cree at the historical site.

<sup>1</sup> "Gabriel Dumont's Account of the North-West Rebellion, 1885". George, F. G. Stanley Editor. *Canadian Historical Review*, Volume 30, Number 3, September, 1949, pp. 259-261.

<sup>2</sup> *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online. Gabriel Dumont.* <http://www.biographi.ca/EN/ShowBio.asp?BioID=40814>

<sup>3</sup> *The Canadian Encyclopedia. North-West Rebellion.* <http://tceplus.com/index.cfm?PgNm=TCE&Params=A1ARTA0005802>

<sup>4</sup> George Woodcock. (J.R. Miller, Editor). *Gabriel Dumont.* Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 2003, pp. 201-202.

<sup>5</sup> [http://archives.cbc.ca/IDC-1-74-1482-9900/people/louis\\_riel/clip2](http://archives.cbc.ca/IDC-1-74-1482-9900/people/louis_riel/clip2)

<sup>6</sup> <http://library.usask.ca/northwest/background/chronol.htm>

[http://interactive.usask.ca/ski/tourism/historic\\_sites/fish\\_creek.html](http://interactive.usask.ca/ski/tourism/historic_sites/fish_creek.html)

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.saskschools.ca/~mandelassash/newsite/metisfacts/metisfactsf.html>

# ***Métis Cultural Development Fund*** **Successfully Continues**

Article by David Morin

Since 2002, the Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) in partnership with SaskCulture Inc. has provided the Métis community with the *Métis Cultural Development Fund* (MCDF) to fund activities that preserve, strengthen, and transmit Métis culture and traditions in Saskatchewan. An emphasis is placed on children and on building cultural leadership skills, transferring knowledge between generations, skills development, mentorship, and having fun. The activities encourage gathering, sharing, learning, celebrating, and developing Métis culture in Métis communities.

The MCDF has already funded over 80 projects and has granted over \$350,000 since its inception in 2002. There have been numerous successes since the program's inception, including celebrations for Louis Riel Day by the Saskatchewan Native Theatre Company and the Western Region Métis Women's Association Inc.; culture camps, hosted by Jan's Bay Community School, Buffalo Narrows Friendship Centre, and Sakitawak Local #21; jigging and fiddling workshops held by *John Arcand Fiddle Fest Inc.*, and the Lloydminster Friendship Centre; as well as many other activities too numerous to mention.

The MCDF is an important program that will strive to serve the province's Métis community as long as groups continue to organize these amazing events, which accomplish the goals set by the program. To all of the past and future applications, good luck and keep up the outstanding work!

Deadlines for MCDF grants are every May 15 and October 15. For more information on the MCDF, please contact the GDI office at the address below, or download the application forms at [www.gdins.org](http://www.gdins.org):

Attention: MCDF Selection Committee  
Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies  
and Applied Research  
2 - 604 22nd Street West  
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, S7M 5W1  
Phone: 306.934.4941  
Fax: 306.244.0252  
Email: [david.morin@gdi.gdins.org](mailto:david.morin@gdi.gdins.org)



# Ile-à-la Crosse Métis Scrip Celebration

Article by Amaranta Sokol and photographs by Janessa Temple

Janessa Temple



A celebration was held in Ile-à-la Crosse July 8, 2006 that marked the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Scrip entitlements for Métis people in the region. The weekend celebration appeared to be threatened by nearby fires; however, the weather cooperated and rain eliminated much of the hovering smoke. The drive to Ile-à-la Crosse provided beautiful scenery that added to the enjoyable weekend, which was further enhanced by this friendly and welcoming community.

Saturday began with a delicious pancake breakfast at the Entertainment Centre. Soon after, last minute preparations for the parade were in order, and near 11:00 a.m the traditional parade set off. The Centenary Boat and Canoe Brigade arrived near noon at Mission Beach from Sandy Point, having taken the same route that was taken 100 years ago. Ceremonies commenced under the big top at 1:00 p.m, followed by *The Métis Community Leadership Recognition*

*Awards* presented by Don Favel. The evening entertainment consisted of Alphonse and Ernestine Whitefish, old-time dancing, square dance demonstrations, and jigging and fiddling contests.

Amusement rides were also available near the baseball diamond. A variety of tournaments also took place over the weekend including: Texas Hold'em poker, fastball, cribbage, chase the ten and a thirty-mile marathon.

Many institutions and universities had displays including the Gabriel Dumont Institute, Friends of Batoche Inc., the University of Alberta, the University of Ottawa, the University of Saskatchewan, St Boniface Historical Society, the Métis National Council and the North West Saskatchewan Métis Council.

With many prominent and respected Métis figures in attendance as well as a strong community presence, the weekend celebrations were a great success.



Janessa Temple

# What is Scrip?

Article by David Morin

Many people hear the word Scrip, but have no idea what it is. It is not a commonly-taught part of history, and unless you study Métis history, you probably won't even come across it.

The Scrip System came about after the 1869-70 Resistance, and *The Manitoba Act*, which set aside 1.4 million acres of land to extinguish the Métis' Aboriginal title to the land. The two types of Scrip created for this process were Land and Money Scrip. When the system first started, the value of the Scrip given to the Métis was either 160 acres of land or \$160 cash to be used for purchasing land. The value was increased to 240 acres or \$240 due to the rising cost of land.

Scrip was handed out by Scrip Commissions, which were like the Treaty Commissions. Scrip Commissioners would travel to the various Métis communities and gather applications for Scrip.

The system was very flawed for many reasons, resulting in the loss of a land base for the Métis. The Scrip Commissions were advertised in newspapers and on posters, but many Métis were illiterate and missed the commissions. Sometimes the Scrip Commissioners missed entire Métis communities. There was also no protection against fraud. Many had their names forged without their knowledge. Speculators bought Scrip from Métis for very low prices and then sold them to the main chartered banks in Canada. Speculators appeared to have gotten 12,560 Money Scrips out of the 14,849 issued. They also managed to leave the Métis with only 1% of the 138,320 acres of land scrip issued in northwest Saskatchewan.

For more information, please read the essay by Leah Dorion and Darren Préfontaine at: <http://www.metismuseum.ca/resource.php/00725>.



The **JOHN ARCAND FIDDLE FEST** would like to thank all workshop participants, contest competitors, spectators, suppliers, sponsors, and funding agencies for their part in making the 9th Annual event a huge success!

- + 30 competitors in the Canadian Red River Jigging Championships
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- + 883 registrations for workshops
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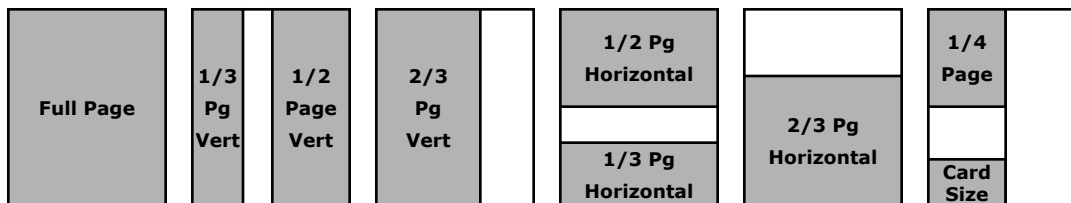
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