



Le Métis

∞ EST. 1871 ∞

YOUR RED RIVER MÉTIS GOVERNMENT'S BI-WEEKLY NEWS.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I am proud to share some important news about the progress of our historic treaty with Canada. Our journey has been long and filled with anticipation, especially following the hopes, dreams, and expectations that were so vividly expressed during last year's Extraordinary General Assembly. There, we united in our aspirations and showcased our commitment to advancing our rights as Red River Métis.

It's been more than a year since that powerful moment in our history, and I can now share that we have officially reached a critical milestone. Following many months of political advocacy, ongoing discussion and negotiation, I can share with you all that the final wording, along with the necessary details of our treaty, has been finalized. Every word, comma, and page number has been finalized.

This milestone represents a significant step in our shared journey toward our rightful place in Canada's confederation, with full recognition and respect as a self-governing Nation. This process is fundamental in acknowledging our nationhood and the historical injustices we have faced as the Red River Métis.

The implications of this treaty are profound. It not only cements our relationship with the federal government, it also affirms our connection to the governance and authority that we have consistently fought for.

The long delays following our ratification were tough for all of us, and I recognize that our Citizens had to exercise far more patience than we ever anticipated.

None of us can ever forget the way Canada treated our Ancestors, back in the time when we were the unquestioned force of the Prairies. Instead of approaching us with open hearts and working documents to negotiate a partnership rooted in respect for our Nation, we faced hostility. Canada came to us armed with blazing guns, carried by a military that demonstrated open aggression and racism against us.

Citizens know the fight for our right to self-determination has never stopped. It has continually fueled our hearts and minds, helping us not only survive the dark times, but also thrive in recent years.

What Canada and their military force didn't seem to understand is what we all know, and our modern-day friends and foes understand today – the Red River Métis never give up. Just as we did not give up in the past, we did not give up on securing our modern-day treaty.

I know the successful culmination of our work on this treaty means a great deal to all of us. The treaty not only permanently establishes our recognition as a government across Canada, it also honours the pride we all felt as we consulted and discussed it last year.

It was a long road to get here, and many of the necessary steps and building blocks were slow in coming. In 1982, Canada was securing its place in the world as an independent nation, which required a constitution beyond the *British North America Act*, and a charter of our rights and freedoms. Led by then Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau, Canada adopted a new constitution that spoke of Aboriginal rights. In it, the Métis were listed in section 35 as rights holders.

The Right Honourable Brian Mulroney, Canada's 18th Prime Minister, visited us in Winnipeg in October 1991, where he recognized the historic Métis Nation followed by his government's passage of a resolution through the House of Commons recognizing Louis Riel as the founder of Manitoba and supporting the attainment of the constitutional rights of the Red River Métis.

Then, the 2013 landmark *MMF v. Canada Supreme Court of Canada* decision clearly stated that the Red River Métis interests were represented by the MMF. It further stated that Canada failed to

diligently implement s.31 of the *Manitoba Act*. And then in 2021, we signed the first ever historic *Self-Government Recognition and Implementation Agreement* for the Métis of the Red River, no matter where they live. This was followed by the powerful and emotional treaty consultations of 2023, which I know many of our Citizens still recall with great clarity.

I want to make sure that all our Citizens and all those who are paying attention are fully informed of our steps in the ongoing advancement we have made in seeking our treaty that was promised in 1870. It is clear that one of the first processes to undertake with any treaty is the necessary and important consultation process with our own people. Secondly comes consultation with those who are not our people. These consultations involve reaching out to many entities, bodies, organizations, and individuals, some of whom take the liberty to create opposing positions on recognizing our Red River Métis treaty. Some simply want clarity, but others take it as an opportunity to hold us back from moving forward for their own reasons.

Now that this consultation process is complete, our treaty will go through several more steps: First, it will go before the federal government's Cabinet for approval, and then find its way to Parliament, and from there go to a federal committee on Indigenous affairs. Then, the treaty goes to Canada's Senate, which is again made up of different parties and interests. Then, the treaty goes back to Parliament for final ratification before it receives Royal Assent. I know it sounds like a lengthy process, but if all parties agree, this could all happen in a matter of a few weeks or months. To make sure our treaty achieves Royal Assent and becomes law in this country, we are, of course, educating as many people as possible from all political stripes. We will work tirelessly until they understand the importance of what this treaty means to our Nation, as it corrects the historical wrongs of the past.

I would find it disappointing and challenging if we were to find any political party that would go against righting this historical wrong or who felt the need to clog the passageway to reconciliation and doing the right thing. I hope this won't happen, but I will keep you all posted.

Finally, the treaty that was stolen from us 154 years ago is coming back to us, and with it the fulfillment of the promise by Canada to our people in the *Manitoba Act* is finally going to be honoured, just as it always should have been.



All these moments strengthened our Nation and led us to where we are today. Louis David Riel, our historic leader, began this journey for us 154 years ago. I am proud, as another David, to complete this journey alongside our Cabinet, staff, Citizens, and the leaders and trailblazers who gave so much to advance our "Little Métis Nation."

From the bottom of my heart, I thank you for that patience and your steadfast faith in your Red River Métis Government as we worked tirelessly behind the scenes to continue advancing our historic treaty with Canada.

Never forget that we are the Red River Métis, the creators of the *Manitoba Act*, 1870, and the people who negotiated Manitoba's entry into Confederation. We are the Flower Beadwork People, Otipemisiwak, the Michif. We are the people of the Red River Cart and the Red River Jig. The Red River Métis are the people of the Buffalo Hunt, who wrote the Laws of the Prairie. Be proud of our heritage and celebrate it.

I send my well wishes to Citizens who are honouring our traditions by harvesting from our Homeland to feed family and community. Stay safe and

remember – your Red River Métis Government has your back.

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

Meeqwetch,

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

FROM THE SIXTIES SCOOP TO PUBLISHING SUCCESS: A RED RIVER MÉTIS SURVIVOR'S JOURNEY OF RECONNECTION AND COMMUNITY

Andrea Currie has spent the last three decades helping Indigenous communities heal from the effects of colonization, and now it's her turn to share her story.

In her debut book, *Finding Otipemisiwak: The People Who Own Themselves*, the therapist and activist shares her experiences as a Sixties Scoop survivor through a collection of lyrics, poems, and essays. Her book addresses topics like the vulnerability of Indigenous children in the child welfare system, the devastation of cultural loss, and the rocky road some people must walk to get to the truth of who they are.

"I wanted to write the book primarily for other survivors of the Sixties Scoop and also from all of the other colonial interventions that have hurt Indigenous peoples," she said.

Currie's collection of work diverges from the norm of mainstream storytelling, showcasing a style traditional to Indigenous storytelling.

"There's a lot of Indigenous writers who, and I humbly hope to be considered one, are saying that colonial frameworks don't make sense for our storytelling, (especially) colonial definitions of what makes a story, or what makes a book," she said. "I want to disrupt those systems in everything I do. Whether it's my healing work with people as a therapist, whether it's my activism, whether it's my writing, I want to say no to colonial definitions and categories, and I want to express myself in ways that create new norms."

The 64-year-old author first discovered she was Métis after reconnecting with her birth family when she was 38 years old. Prior to this reconnection, she had always felt like a part of herself was missing.

"(In) the family I grew up in, myself and my younger brother experienced a lot of physical and emotional abuse. He was also Métis, Sixties Scoop, and we just felt that we didn't really fit in that family," she said.

The experiences with Currie's adopted family caused a disconnect from herself and her



*In her debut book, *Finding Otipemisiwak: The People Who Own Themselves*, Andrea Currie shares her experiences as a Sixties Scoop survivor through a collection of lyrics, poems, and essays. Photo credit: Ken Woroner.*

Homeland, leading to her leaving Winnipeg for the Maritimes, where she has remained for decades.

"I didn't really know completely why, but I just knew I couldn't be myself in that setting, and so I took off and I got a train ticket to the Maritimes. I was headed for Halifax," she said. "I made a brief stop in New Brunswick for a few months, and I just felt like I had nothing that tied me to Manitoba. That's how cut off I was from my relationship to my people, and my land."

After connecting with her birth family in the late 1990s, Currie immersed herself within her family and community, which she acknowledged as a privilege.

"I visited as much as I could, but I was a single mom. I didn't have a lot of money to travel back and forth, so it was once a year, once every couple years. It took a long time for me to make relationships with the family members that were so open and loving

to welcome me back," she said. "I know that's not the experience of every Sixties Scoop Survivor, and I'm very aware of that and I'm very grateful. My heart goes out to all my Sixties Scoop sisters and brothers who have not had that experience and are still feeling adrift. And, you know, a bit lost. I really understand that (because) I lived that way for 38 years of my life."

While exploring her own Indigenous identity, the Red River Métis author has also helped Indigenous communities heal from the traumas of Residential and Day Schools through her work as a community-based therapist.

"I knew that I needed to somehow connect with Indigenous teachings, Indigenous worldview and cultures," she said.

Currie was hired as a community-based therapist in We'koqmaq First Nation in Unama'ki (Cape Breton), where she worked for 15 years.



“Part of the work I did there, and still do because I haven’t been able to leave them, is to support and facilitate an amazing group of Residential School Survivors, one of the only groups we know of certainly in the Mi’kmaw territory, where a group of survivors have met together once a month and have done a lot of activities for over 20 years now. The healing that I got to support and be part of in that group has just been the biggest honour and privilege in my life and taught me so much,” she said.



“PART OF WHAT I SUPPORTED THE SURVIVORS I’VE WORKED WITH OVER THE YEARS TO DO WAS TO TELL THEIR STORIES AND TO REALLY UNDERSTAND HOW TELLING THEIR STORIES WAS PART OF THEIR HEALING. SO, I GUESS IT’S NOT A SURPRISE THEN, THAT IT EVENTUALLY CAME HOME TO ME THAT I NEEDED TO TELL MY STORY.” – ANDREA CURRIE, AUTHOR, FINDING OTIPEMISIWAK: THE PEOPLE WHO OWN THEMSELVES



She continued working with Mi’kmaw people from many communities in Mi’kmaki in her private practice, while also working with Indigenous students at St. Francis Xavier University as the Indigenous therapist on campus. Currie also consults with a broad range of organizations in the area of Indigenous mental health and healing.

As a community-focused worker and activist, Currie has firsthand experience in seeing the healing that comes from survivors sharing their stories.

“Part of what I supported the survivors I’ve worked with over the years to do was to tell their stories and to really understand how telling their stories was part of their healing,” said the author. “So, I guess it’s not a surprise then, that it eventually came home to me that I needed to tell my story.”

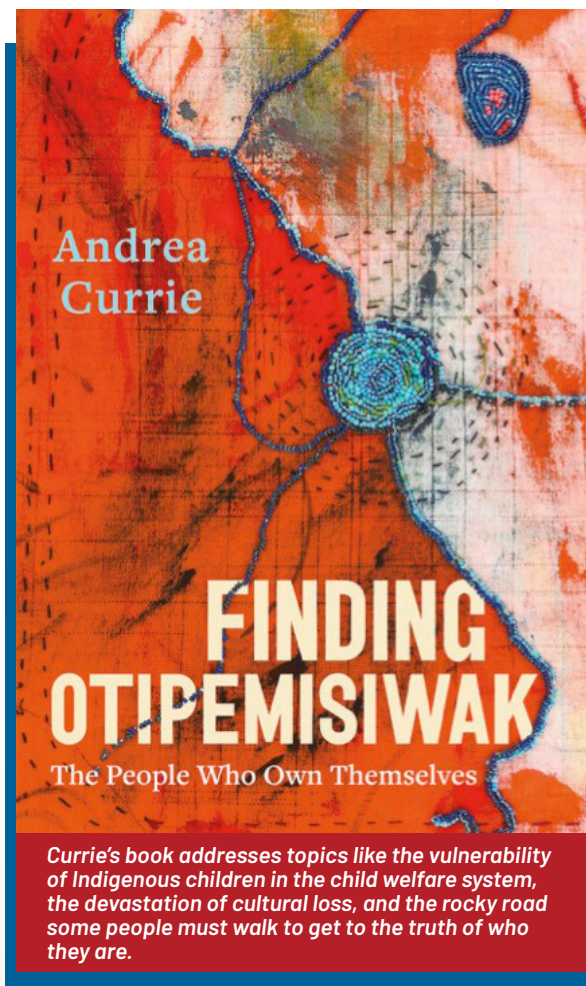
Writing her book has been helpful in her healing journey, but that wasn’t Currie’s initial intention.

“I want to make it really clear this is very important to me. This book was not written to help me heal,” said the author. “I’ve been working on my healing since I was 38 years old. It’s over three decades now, and I did not need to write this book for my own healing. I’m sure it has been helpful in my healing and in lots of ways. I think (the book) is going to help some other people with their healing, and because of Indigenous identity, because the concept of the self is collective, healing also needs to be collective.”

Currie also sees her book as a way of connecting with other survivors in a way that encourages them to share their own lived experiences.

“So, for me too in a way, the book is a portal, a link, a way to connect with other survivors, to share our stories, to see which of our all very unique experiences resonate with each other, and to be part of a collective healing of (surviving) the Sixties Scoop,” she said.

The Red River Métis author also hopes that her book can go beyond the scope of survivors and



help others who have not experienced colonial interventions learn more about Indigenous experiences.

“Beyond that, I think it is part of a broader movement of Indigenous peoples’ healing from many different impacts of colonization,” said Currie. “I also hope the book will be read by others as well, and whatever experiences, perspectives, and essays that are included in the book can be a tool for people’s learning.”

Finding Otipemisiwak: The People Who Own Themselves released on October 8, 2024.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT SEATING AT THIS YEAR’S AGA



The MMF’s Annual General Assembly will take place on October 18–20 at Assiniboia Downs.

At this year’s AGA, seating in the main hall will be reserved for Registered Delegates and will be assigned based on Local. This seating system encourages active participation in community discourse and ensures all voices across the Homeland are represented equally in our democratic process. In addition to this system, there will be reserved seating for Registered and Elder Delegates located near the front of the main hall.

Citizens will be asked to find seating in their Local’s designated sections. If unable to find seating in the main hall, Citizens are encouraged to find seating on the lower level of the Assiniboia Downs.

We look forward to celebrating with you at this year’s AGA!

MONSTER BINGO

Date: October 18, 2024
In person only at the Assiniboia Downs Main Hall.

\$50,000 in prizes to be won!

Payment by cash only

All proceeds raised at the MMF AGA Monster Bingo will go toward MMF Bereavement Fund

\$100 for 9 cards to view.



Congratulations to the Manitoba Métis Federation on their 55th Annual General Assembly!



LRCC has proudly supported the Red River Métis business community since 1992, offering Commercial Loans and Grants to support start-ups, expansions and acquisitions.

LRCC Manages the First Time Home Purchase Program, which provides funding by way of a grant for Red River Métis citizens who are purchasing their first home.

Recently we have introduced a new Personal Loan Program that is designed to assist our Red River Métis citizens with personal loans up to \$40,000.

OUR SERVICES:

- Commercial Loan and Grant program
- Women's Entrepreneurship Loan and Grant program
- Fisher and Trappers Loan and Grant program
- Red River Métis Personal Loan program
- MMF First Time Home Purchase program



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