

Jenny Meyer (née McLeod): Metis Artist and Entrepreneur

Jenny is a Metis woman of Ojibwa ancestry who comes from the farming and trapping area of Lundar, Manitoba. Her parents lived close to the land and she learned “to walk in a good way” from her father Alexander McLeod who was a traditional healer. Her grandparents, Pierre McLeod (b. 1859) and Jane Monkman (b. 1854) were original residents of the Metis community of Oak Point, Manitoba. Their names appear on the 1870s public notice broadside listing the “children of Half Breed heads of families” admitted for scrip distribution in the Parish of St. Laurent.

Jenny and her late husband “Red” Meyer, and her daughter Jennine Krauchi have been driving forces in the preservation, promotion and teaching of the Aboriginal Decorative Arts in general and Metis beadworking and clothing design in particular.

The presentation beaded Metis coats that Jenny and Jennine make are highly sought after and these have been presented to Prime Minister Paul Martin (at the Kelowna Accord meeting), MNA President Audrey Poitras, MMF’s David Chartrand and to Canadian Senator St. Germain.

She has spent more than two decades assisting the Manitoba Museum in these cultural areas as a volunteer. The beaded moosehide jacket she made for her late husband is on display at the Manitoba Museum and a photograph of this jacket is featured on page 215 in *Metis Legacy Volume I* (Pemmican Publications and Gabriel Dumont Institute, 2001). She was commissioned by the Manitoba Museum to manufacture traditional Aboriginal clothing for the Boreal Forrest Gallery and she contributed many of her family’s household treasures for the Metis Kitchen display.

She has previously been honored by presentation of the *Golden Eagle Award* by the Indigenous Women’s Collective and the *YWCA Women of Distinction Award* (Business Management) in 1988.

She has worked with the Brandon School division to establish high school credit courses on Aboriginal cultures and served on the boards of the Brandon YWCA-Community Women’s Shelter and the Downtown Business Improvement Centre. She worked as a volunteer Court Communicator with the Indian and Metis Friendship Centre. Her business in Brandon, the Brandon Handicraft Shop (1969-1982) was instrumental in providing work experience opportunities for Aboriginal students. In Winnipeg she has been a strong supporter of the Metis Resource Centre.

Jenny has been a counselor at both the Manitoba Home for Girls and Manitoba Home for Boys. From 1982-1997 she was the Production Manager for Fleece Line Industries in Brandon and had much to do with this firm’s success as an Aboriginal-based business.



Compiled by Jennine Krauchi and Lawrence Barkwell
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