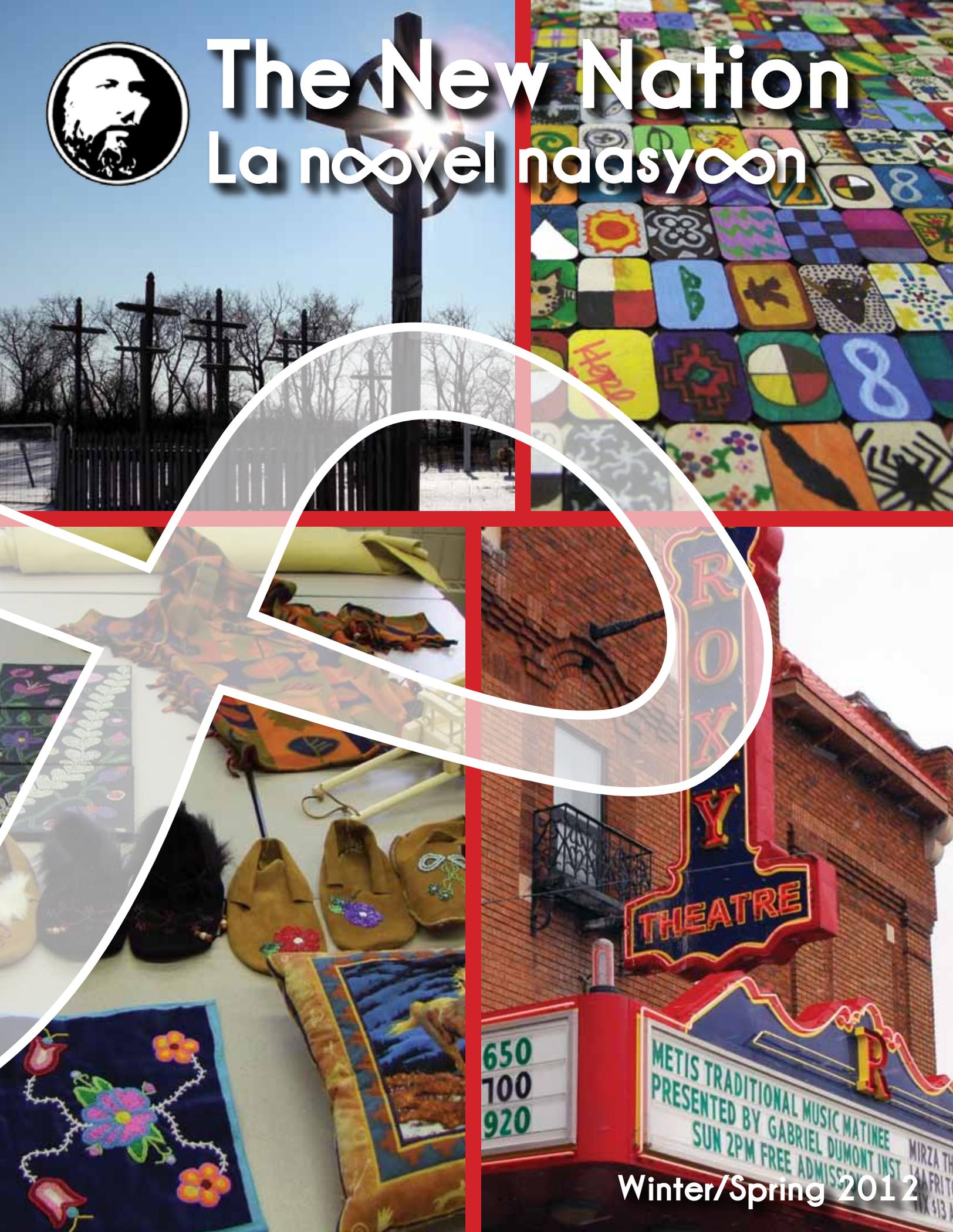




# The New Nation

## La noovel naasyoon



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Winter/Spring 2012



# The New Nation

## La noovel naasyoon

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# A Fiddler's Experience at the Canadian Grand Masters

Article by Nathan Baker

If you ask a fiddler what they hope to do with their music, you would hear a variety of different things: from recording their first CD, to travelling the world with a band. Every fiddler you ask will have a different goal and dream in mind. My name is Nathan Baker and for a long time, my dream was to compete in the Canadian Grand Masters Fiddling Competition, and this year (2011), I did. When I first got the invitation from Patti Lamoureux, I felt a wave of excitement. I knew that there was more importance in attending the contest than just competing; this was my chance to represent

Saskatchewan on a national level. I had never competed against the calibre of playing that the contestants of the Grand Masters have to offer. As nervous as I was, I was able to enter the competition with a stress free and relaxed attitude because I knew that all I had to do was try my best, and most of all, have fun.

Aside from practicing, a huge part in preparing for the competition was fundraising. My mother, who accompanied me to the Grand Masters, was extremely supportive and helped to organize a dance for

myself and also for Saskatchewan's Junior Showcase, Celine Hounjet. We were able to successfully raise enough money, and in turn were able to offer a night of great entertainment featuring Karrnell Sawitzky, Daniel Koulack, Cathy Sproule, Louis-Charles Vigneau, Dean Bernier and

his son Wyatt, Kim de Laforest, myself, and Celine. Without my mother's support, I wouldn't have been able to attend. I wouldn't even be playing the fiddle if it wasn't for her.

The competition itself was very similar to any other competition that I'd attended. It started off with a round of preliminaries, then on to the finals, finishing off with a contestant jam and the announcement of the winners. The order in which we were to play was chosen by random draw. Fortunately, I drew to play second. I wouldn't have any chance to get psyched out. After all was said and done, I unfortunately did not make it into the finals. Of course, I was saddened by this, but I chose to look at the situation optimistically. The competition was over, and the stress was gone. I could spend the rest of my time in Ottawa and just sit back and relax. Now I know what to expect for next year, and I could go in with a better idea of what is needed to be done to claim the prize. The final round of the contest was a display of incredible style, groove, and technicality. These



players deserved to be there, and you could feel that every single one of them was focused to reach for their goal. It was a remarkable experience to see how far these players have gone with their music. In the end, the winner of the 2011 Canadian Grand Master Fiddling Competition was an Alberta-based fiddler by the name of Daniel Gervais. After he had played his set, it was clear that he more than deserved to claim the title.

After the competition was over, the real fun began. Everyone came together at a nearby pub to jam, drink, and dance the night away. The thing I enjoy most about being involved in the fiddle world is the extremely strong sense of community that is created instantly upon joining with other fiddlers, even those you have just met. The pub was packed. Tables were pushed aside to make room for the gigantic circle jam. Even a number of dancers entered the centre of the circle. Guitarists, pianists, and spoon players alike sat on the outskirts to play along to the tunes. I had never seen a jam of this size. It was absolutely incredible. I found the unique style of each player very interesting. Every province had a different variation and feel for the music of each tune.

I find that the different energies

I deliver on stage during a contest and during a gig are like night and day. During a gig, you are given a lot more freedom to do as you please and are able to interact with the crowd on a much more personal level. In turn, they offer you a lot more of their energy and the environment is one of relaxation and fun. In a competition, the performance usually tends to lean towards a more focused energy. You are being evaluated and judged based on your skill as a fiddle player, and your time on stage is more focused on delivering a flawless set of tunes.

I will admit, I do let the stress of a contest get to me, and I know that it affects my playing. However, at the Grand Masters I decided to try a different approach. I decided that I would let all my worries fall away. Most importantly, I would try my best, but I would also treat it as a show, and I would just have fun, regardless of the results. I knew that my skills in competing were a lot lower than the rest of the players who had a lot more experience in the contest cycle. I had entered the competition expecting not to make it into the finals, not because I doubted my playing, but because I knew that there were going to be players there who had been competing in this contest in previous years. There will be many more years of the Canadian Grand Masters, and I

can say that I tried my best, both at competing and representing the style and attitude to playing music that Saskatchewan has taught me.

Although I didn't leave the competition with a placement in the finals, I did end up leaving with something which is more valuable to me at this point in my musical career. Yamaha donated one of their brand new, electric violins to the Grand Masters to give away in a draw to one of the contestants. Can you guess the winner? I am a lot more excited now that I have a high quality, electric instrument to add to my tool box of toys to play with to help advance myself as an artist. Even more exciting than winning the violin was the chance to show it off on stage in front of the entire audience. Everyone got a chance to see my style, my groove, and the energy I bring to the stage. I played a medley of tunes that I wrote and was more than thrilled to share it with everyone. To me, this was better than winning the competition. Now, everyone knew what I could do as an artist. There will be plenty of chances to compete at the Canadian Grand Masters, and I am thankful that I realize it. I will keep practicing and working towards that goal. Don't be surprised if somewhere down the road, you see my name on that first prize plaque.

# Tortured Spirits of the Past: Swift Current Métis remember their forgotten Veterans in special ceremony

Article and Photographs by Tim Kalinowski. Kindly reprinted from the *Gull Lake Advance*, January 10, 2012

On December 31 a moving ceremony was held at the Entrepreneurial Centre in Swift Current to honour local Métis veterans of the Great War, Second World War, and the Korean conflict. Métis Elder and President of Prairie Dog Métis Local 123 veterans' organization Cecile Blanke acted as ceremonial leader. Special guests on hand were Swift Current Legion representative Hewitt Murch, Swift Current Deputy Mayor Gord Budd, Captain Mike Ramsey of the Swift Current Salvation Army and Nelson Bird of the CTV Regina's Indigenous Circle. The official ceremony of remembrance began just after 2 pm with a prayer and smudging ceremony conducted by Elder Blanke, followed by speeches and a wreath laying by special guest WWII veteran Hewitt Murch. After the wreath laying, Elder Blanke told the stories of the dozen or so local Métis veterans who signed up and volunteered to take the same risks as every other Canadian soldier, received the same training, and fought alongside our other Canadian



*Elder Cecile Blanke.*

veterans on the front lines of both World Wars and the Korean War, but who did not receive the same treatment and benefits those other veterans received upon their return to Canada. Most of the local Métis veterans Elder Blanke spoke of were from the Val Marie area and they returned to the same life of hard conditions of poverty and hopelessness they had lived before the War. Blanke never pulled any punches and was fearlessly honest about these local men and women: some of whom returned to farm as their ancestors had in previous

generations, others who lived wandering lives on the rodeo and ranch circuit never to settle down or have families, others who ended up dead of drink, others who ended up in jail and still others who went on to hide their Métis heritage so they could fit in better in mainstream Canadian society, forbidding their children to ever speak of their ancestry.

As the stories rose up into the air, and all around listened, the spirits of these local, forgotten and discarded heroes seemed to be present. Tears welled up in



*Elder Cecile Blanke and WWII Veteran Hewitt Murch. Honour sashes provided by the Gabriel Dumont Institute.*

people's eyes and something like a sense of catharsis and emotional release raised the spirits of all who assembled when the talking ceased; such was the power of Elder Blanke's stories. After the ceremony and stories were concluded a grand Métis feast was served to those who came out with meatball soup, bannock, homemade baked beans, cold cuts, fresh veggies, and various desserts, while fiddle music played quietly in the background.

The Advance spoke to Elder Blanke about the importance of holding such a ceremony,

especially on New Year's Eve—a day of cultural significance and preparation to the Métis people.

"Why I feel this ceremony is important to have on New Year's Eve day was the preparation we did as Métis people; this was the biggest day of our year, New Year's Day. We celebrated every year, and went from home to home and we feasted, we danced, we jigged. New Year's Eve was the day of preparation and getting things ready for the feast and New Year to come, and our veterans would have been happy we were having this

ceremony today," said Blanke.

Elder Blanke explains why she felt such a ceremony would help to give peace to the spirits of our local Métis veterans, many of whom had a very hard time of it during and after they returned from the wars.

"My reasoning was they (local Métis vets) never got treated very well, and when they came back, and they were on the front lines, and they were treated very badly when they came back. And I thought we had to make people aware of what

happened to them. And even though they aren't here no more, their spirits are still around; and they were hurt. So when we bring this forth it makes us feel better that we can tell about it, and it just gives a better feeling to the relatives; and the general public needs to be aware of what happened to these veterans... They enlisted voluntarily. So when they went they were equal, on the front lines, and in their training, they were equal. But when they got home they were not equal; they could not get the same benefits as other veterans who were given land or education."

Blanke, who was a young girl in the Val Marie area when local Métis veterans came home, feels a deep, personal connection to the stories of the men and women she shared with onlookers during the remembrance ceremony; as she knew many of them.

"I was old enough to remember the Second World War, and I had a lot to do with these veterans I spoke of today. I knew every one of them, and I experienced what the feeling was during the war, what the families felt, just like any other families. These veterans were so happy to go do something for Canada, for their country, because before that the Métis weren't treated very well ... along the history line of the Métis they weren't

treated very well. By us bringing this forth is to know the history; to know what the Métis did for this country, including our soldiers."

2011 was designated the *Year of the Métis Veteran* here in Saskatchewan so Elder Blanke felt that this ceremony of remembrance was very timely. She also encourages anyone who might know of any other Métis veteran's names in the local area to contact her and tell her their names and their stories.

"This is the *Year of the Métis Veteran* in Saskatchewan," said Blanke, "and they are making a monument to our veterans at Batoche, and they want anyone who knows of any Métis soldiers' names to be sent forth and they'll put it on a plaque on site so their names will be remembered for future generations."

To contact Elder Cecile Blanke call (306)-773-4533 or email [prairiedogsMétis1.2.3@gmail.com](mailto:prairiedogsMétis1.2.3@gmail.com)



**GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE**  
of Native Studies and Applied Research

### **Métis Veterans Memorial Monument Project**

The importance of Métis veterans to the Métis community cannot be understated. Our veterans occupy a point of honour at all Métis gatherings and cultural events. The Métis Veterans Memorial Monument will be a landmark for generations of Métis people to gather and pay homage to the servicemen and servicewomen who have served our country.

The Gabriel Dumont Institute has been chosen to oversee the building of the Métis Veterans Memorial Monument at Batoche, and is seeking donations to cover the total project cost of \$300,000. Donations over \$10 are eligible for a tax receipt.

Donations over \$25 will receive the CD, *Honouring Our Heroes: A Tribute to Métis Veterans*, featuring Métis performing artists—Donny Parenteau, Andrea Menard, Ray St. Germain, Jess Lee, Mike Gouchie, and Krystle Pederson.

Donations over \$50 will receive the CD as well as the book: *Métis Soldiers of Saskatchewan: 1914-1953* by Cathy Littlejohn.

Our goal is to ensure that the monument recognizes and honours all of our Métis veterans, past and present. If you know of a Métis veteran who should be recognized, please visit the website below for submission information.

For more information, please contact the Gabriel Dumont Institute at 1-877-488-6888 (Toll-Free in Saskatchewan), Amy Briley at 1-306-657-5719, by email: [amy.briley@gdi.gdins.org](mailto:amy.briley@gdi.gdins.org), or visit the website: [www.gdins.org/veteransmonument](http://www.gdins.org/veteransmonument).

Donations can be mailed to:  
Métis Veterans Memorial Monument Project  
c/o Gabriel Dumont Institute  
917-22nd Street West  
Saskatoon, SK S7M 0R9

GDI Mission: To promote the renewal and development of Métis culture through research, materials development, collection and distribution of those materials and the design, development and delivery of Métis-specific educational programs and services.

# Country Wives and Daughters of the Country

## Art Exhibit, Batoche National Historic Site

Interview by Brenda Hryciuk, Friends of Batoche Historic Site Inc.

FRIENDS OF BATOCHÉ HOSTS  
HISTORIC MÉTIS WOMEN'S ART  
SHOW BY LEAH MARIE DORION

From May until September 2012 the Friends of Batoche in conjunction with the Batoche National Historic Site of Canada, Gabriel Dumont Institute, and SaskCulture/SaskLotteries will host the art show called *Country Wives and Daughters of the Country: Métis Women of this Land* by Métis artist Leah Marie Dorion. This art show honours the important historical roles played by Métis women in the development of Canada. The following is a conversation between the artist and Brenda Hryciuk representing the Friends of Batoche organization.

**What inspired you to create this art show?** Well, the concept was birthed in my mind at least five years ago when I was at the Batoche National Historical Site co-facilitating a family history research workshop with Métis Elder Grandma Rose Fleury. At that event we were passionately discussing the historic role of our First Nations grandmothers in developing the Métis people, and the important role of their

daughters and granddaughters in building the concept of Métis identity. As we all looked at our collective family trees, it became evidently clear how important these First Nations women were in creating the Métis Nation. In this conversation, Métis Elder Joanna Potyondi, said to me, "We need to start recognizing these women in our family histories because our written and visual history has typically been so male-centered." I really must credit the spark of inspiration, or my "ah-ha" moment, to Joanna because she said to me, "Leah, there are no pictures of these women; you should paint them back into existence." Her words spoke volumes to me because my artistic practice already centered on honouring Aboriginal women and their beautiful gifts as life givers. So, since that time I have been working on this show and I have dedicated specific paintings to historical Métis women.

**Why dedicate these paintings to specific Métis women?** I wanted our communities and the general public to hear the actual names of some of these documented First Nation and Métis women in history who contributed so much

to the social, cultural, political, and economic development of our people. I found myself dedicating many paintings to the Métis women who worked rigorously behind the scenes with our men leaders such as Madeleine Dumont (the wife of Gabriel Dumont), Sara Riel (sister of Louis Riel), and Marguerite Riel (the wife of Louis Riel). I have acknowledged a specific woman in history who is known to have participated in the growth of fur trade society. I also focused on historical women matriarchs such as Nahoway Sinclair and Granny McGillis who were vital Métis family leaders, community sentinels, and traditional knowledge keepers. From my observations, Métis culture, at its heart centre, is a matriarchal system and remains matriarchal to a variety of degrees, despite efforts made by the church and state to change our cultural practices into patriarchal models of western culture.

**What key themes and teachings are in your art show?** Many of the themes in this *Country Wives* art show and its related imagery focus on the intergenerational transmission of traditional knowledge of using

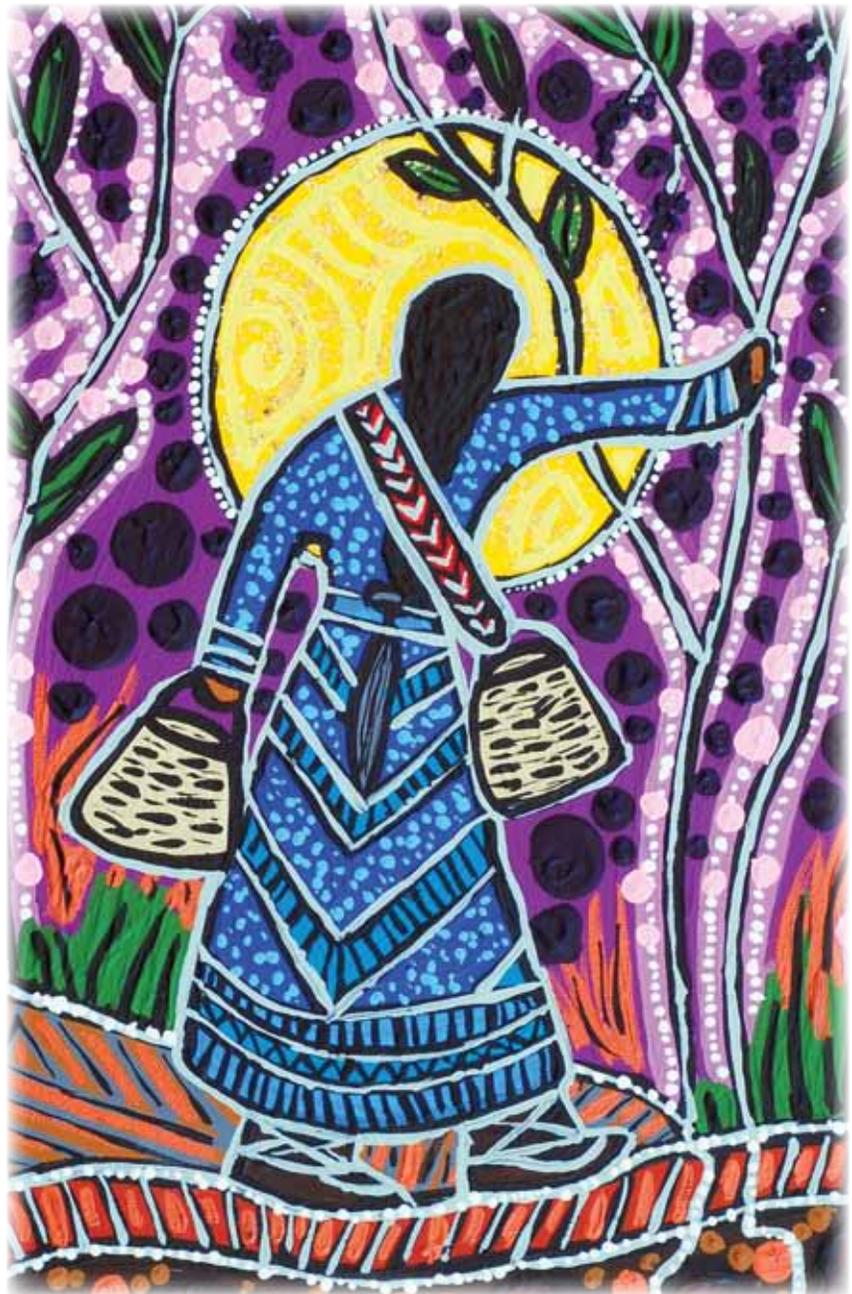
the land and resources. I also visually represent Métis women's work duties such as chopping wood, picking berries, unloading canoes, travelling with Red River carts, and riding and working with horses and dogs. The beauty and strength of Métis women is a core philosophy and concept in my work, and I have done my best to respectfully demonstrate these values by utilizing my own unique artistic playful style. I believe that art can be a wonderful way to reinterpret the world, and if this show helps our children and public see our Métis women in a more culturally appropriate way then I have accomplished my goal for healing and recognition. I have seen the negative effects of racism and stereotyping on our Métis women, and I want to use my art form to show another side of us as beautiful contributors to this world.

Why did you approach the Batoche National Historic Site and Friends of Batoche to host this show? I am so grateful that the *Country Wives* show will be hosted at the Site because I consider this land a sacred space, a healing space, an educational space, and a place for telling stories. During the past ten years BNHS has engaged in several wonderful projects to uncover the women's stories related to the history of Batoche. I feel my work really complements the direction taken to reinterpret and tell the whole

story of the Métis of Batoche. Of course, I want to recognize the scholarship of Diane Payment as she has really influenced my own personal understanding of the vital role of Métis women in the Batoche region. I hope the visitors enjoy the show as much as I do. Due to limited gallery space, I have only elected several works from the larger body of work in this

show, but I feel the seventeen art works selected for this Batoche show are well representative of my larger collection of *Country Wives* work.

What are your future hopes for this art collection? My hope for the future is that the *Country Wives* art collection stay intact for a large duration of time and



Close-up of Chokecherry Woman by Leah Dorion.

that it travels to key institutions, museums, and art galleries, in order to tell our Métis women's historical story to a broader audience. I want Canadians to know about our role as Métis women in developing this nation. I would also like to see a future publication of the entire *Country Wives* art so that teachers could utilize my art work for educational purposes. I am very happy that the Gabriel Dumont Institute, Parks Canada, and Friends of Batoche, are publishing a scaled down exhibition catalogue version of this show. I think if students learn

about the lives and stories of the Métis women I've featured in this art show they will appreciate our resilience as women.

**Closing by Brenda:** I'm very excited and honoured to work in partnership with you, Leah, in your art exhibit. This show will have a strong impact in educating people and create awareness about our history. I agree with your belief that women are the first teachers to the next generation, and that women play a key role in passing on vital knowledge for all of humanity.

I would like to give many thanks and gratitude to you for your time and knowledge. I would also like to acknowledge Gabriel Dumont Institute and Parks Canada for their support and assistance.

Funding for this Art Exhibit is supported by SaskCulture/ SaskLotteries.

[www.leahdorion.com](http://www.leahdorion.com)

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# SUNTEP Regina— Nurturing Métis Knowledge and Traditions

Article by Russell Fayant

It is not uncommon for university students of other faculties and programs to wander over to SUNTEP Regina's offices to inquire about the possibility of taking SUNTEP classes. Smaller class sizes and quality instruction are important factors, yet both of these may be accessed in any of the University's three Federated colleges. What makes SUNTEP Regina unique is its innovative nature and its drive to make Métis knowledge and traditions accessible in an academic setting.

In 1980, it was recognized

by SUNTEP's builders that the general education program lacked a class wherein students could learn to understand, deconstruct, and combat the social "ism's" that plagued our communities. In response, ECCU (or Cross-Cultural Education) was designed and implemented by SUNTEP faculty. The class was so effective that it became foundational to our programming, and has since been expanded into two separate ECCU classes.

It was in this context of innovation and adapting to our students'

needs that SUNTEP Regina recently developed a new course entitled ESST 190 (Métis Traditions and Knowledge). The theoretical basis for the class was established by Program Coordinator Joanne Pelletier and researcher Dr. Sherry Farrell Racette, and is instructed by Faculty member Russell Fayant. The primary objective of the class is to re-introduce students to prominent Métis traditions while giving them the skills to incorporate those same traditions into provincial school curriculum. The need for the class came out of observations of both our students and the university

at large. For our students, who are increasingly urbanized and lacking in opportunities to engage in their culture, the class offers opportunities to get to know Métis cultural carriers such as Norma and Joe Welsh, Erma Taylor, Maria Campbell, John Arcand, Sherry Farrell Racette, and Wilfred Burton. As Farrell Racette observed, “Unlike First Nations students, there are no Métis-controlled elementary and secondary schools, and no home communities/territories outside of northern Saskatchewan. Increasing urbanization, and the ongoing impact of colonizing/inferiorizing practices embedded within mainstream media and education are complicated by the emphasis on First Nations content and history. It is possible that this class will be the

initial phase in assessing and further strengthening Métis knowledge and practice throughout the program.” (Farrell Racette, 2011)

In class, students participate in Métis traditions such as rug braiding, beading, constructing a Red River cart, Métis dance, speaking Michif, oral storytelling, and cooking. Students are introduced to these traditions by community experts who often employ the “listen, watch, do” technique of teaching. The result is that students can begin the cultural reclamation process while learning how to help their future students in elementary schools do the same. They learn how a Red River cart can be used to teach geometry, how a Métis recipe can be used to teach measurement,

how retelling a story can involve analysis and synthesis, how decoding historical pictures can deconstruct societal biases, and how a Red River jig is a great way to culturally engage children while getting a work out! The benefits for themselves and their future students are endless. For the university at large, ESST 190 contributes to the greater movement to “decolonize the academy.” In other words, to assert our cultural presence and to make the university a more welcoming and inclusive place for Métis students and Indigenous knowledge in general.

The creation of ESST 190 is just a small step in a larger process that is seeing SUNTEP grads make significant cultural, economic,



*Students Maurice Longman and Dalton Burzminski have Norma Welsh in “stitches” as they braid rugs.*

and social contributions to the Métis community and to the Province of Saskatchewan. In the words of Dr. Farrell Racette, "This is not learning about, this is learning to become—with the specific goal of citizenship and leadership development within the larger context of sovereignty and self-government." (2011) As SUNTEP Regina students and faculty continue to engage in the decolonization process, it is hoped that like a braided rug, the knowledge gained in ESST 190 will be woven into the mosaic of school-based learning adding to the richness, colour, and depth of Métis knowledge, and traditions.



*Erma Taylor shares her knowledge of Michif with first-year students.*



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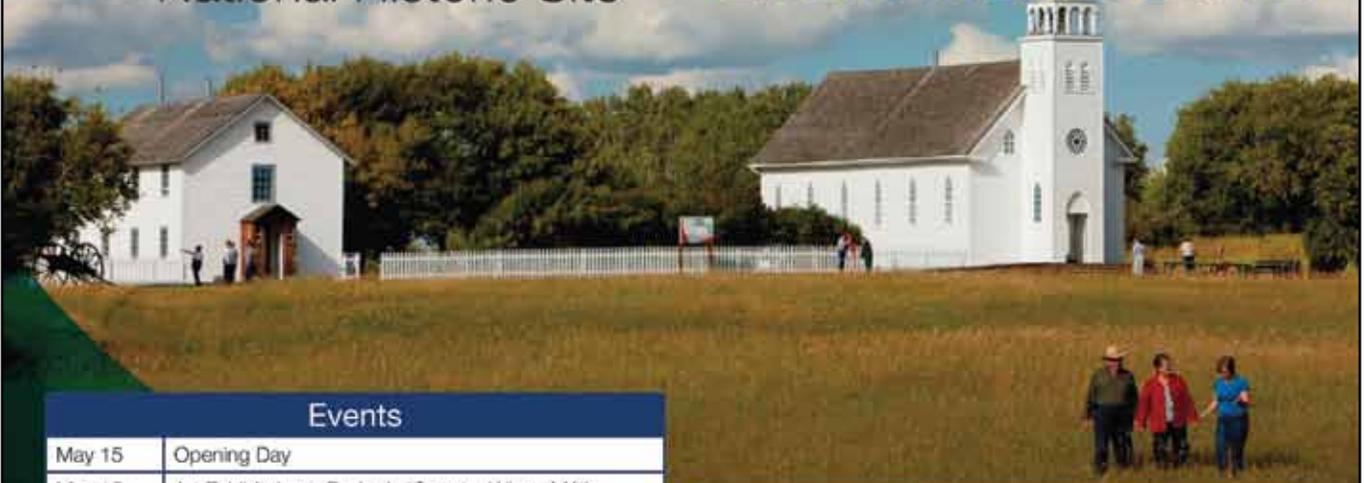




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# 2012 Events Batoche National Historic Site

# Lieu historique national de Batoche Événements 2012



Events	
May 15	Opening Day
May 15- Sep 10	Art Exhibit: Leah Dorion's "Country Wives-Métis Women of the Land"
May 24	Gathering at Battle of Tourond's Coulee / Fish Creek National Historic Site
Jun 21	National Aboriginal Day
Jul 1	Canada Day Celebrations (Free Entry)
Jul 15	Experience the Heart of History
Jul 19	Mass at Historic Church
Jul 21	Parks Day-Going Royal at Batoche
Aug 18	Experience the Heart of History
Sept 10	Site Closes
Nov 16	Louis Riel Day - Honoring our Heroes (In collaboration with Gabriel Dumont Institute)

Partner Events	
Jul 6-8	La Fête Fransaskoise
Jul 19-22	Back to Batoche Days

Événements	
15 mai	La journée d'ouverture
15 mai- 10 sept	Exposition d'oeuvres d'art: "Country Wives - Métis Women of the Land", par Leah Dorion
24 mai	Rassemblement au lieu historique national de la Bataille-de-la-Coulée-des-Tourond - Fish Creek
21 juin	La journée des Autochtones
1er juillet	Fête du Canada (Entrée gratuite)
15 juillet	Faites une incursion au coeur de l'histoire
19 juillet	Messe à l'église historique
21 juillet	Journée des parcs -Des airs de royauté à Batoche
18 août	Faites une incursion au coeur de l'histoire
10 sept	La journée de fermeture
16 novembre	Journée Louis Riel - honorer nos héros (en collaboration avec l'institut Gabriel Dumont)

Événements partenaires	
6-8 juillet	La Fête Fransaskoise
19-22 juillet	La Fête de Métis

306.423.6227

batoche.info@pc.gc.ca  
www.parkscanada.gc.ca  
www.parcscanada.gc.ca



Parks Canada Parcs Canada

Canada

# Pe piihtikwe! (Come on in!)

Article and Photographs by staff of the Gabriel Dumont Institute Library in Regina

More often than not, the first words uttered by someone walking through the doors of the Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) Library in Regina for the first time are, “I had no idea you existed!” While staff are always happy when someone discovers the GDI Library, this reaction actually signifies a problem for any self-respecting library: if people don’t know you exist, you’re missing all kinds of opportunities to serve.

With this in mind, GDI Regina Library Staff thought it was high time they got the word out about what the Library has to offer GDI students and staff, the Métis community, and the wider, non-Métis public (although the Library is often thought of as the “SUNTEP Regina Library” because of its proximity to the SUNTEP offices on the University of Regina campus. Ideally, Library staff would be serving students and staff from the entire GDI family in Regina as well as members of the general public wanting to learn more about the Métis).

As one part of a larger organization whose mission is “to promote the renewal and development of Métis culture through *research*, materials development, *collections* and the *distribution of those materials* and



***The Red River cart (made by George and Richard Fayant) and student projects on display at the library’s entrance attract a lot of interest from passersby.***

the development and delivery of Métis-specific education programs and services” [emphasis added], staff of the GDI Regina Library work towards their parent organization’s goals in a variety of ways:

- supporting the research and information literacy needs of students who are enrolled in the Métis-specific education programs offered by the Institute;
- supporting the research needs of the staff who are developing materials to be used in those education programs as well as by teachers in the wider non-Métis community;
- through library lending, providing students, graduates, Institute staff, and members

of the Métis and non-Métis community with free access to the materials created by GDI’s curriculum developers.

In addition to these direct efforts in support of the GDI’s mission, Regina Library staff are also working to cultivate a first-rate, in-depth, and wide-ranging collection of materials by and about the Métis and other Aboriginal peoples. This collection is developed by focussing on and giving priority to the needs of GDI staff, students, and the Métis community, but also with the aim of facilitating increased awareness of Métis history, culture, and world view

among the non-Métis members of the public who visit the Library.

Along with the Library's collection of traditional library materials such as books, videos, CDs, and magazines, its collection of original research, regalia, and artefacts is growing as generous graduates of various GDI programs give back by donating some of their projects and research to the Library. Over the past several years, the Library has been the beneficiary of donations of student-created beadwork, sashes, embroidery, braided rugs, parfleche, and Métis-specific lesson plans, which are now part of the circulating collection. In addition to these resources, staff are developing a significant collection of genealogical resources which, when used in conjunction with the resources available at the Prairie History Room at the Regina Public Library, provide an excellent starting point for anyone researching their Métis ancestry. A preliminary guide to using these resources is available in the "Research Aids" section of the Library's website.

Not yet convinced to come in for a visit? The GDI Regina Library is fortunate enough to double as an art gallery several times a year when student-created artwork and traditional Métis artefacts and handiwork are on display. It also houses a non-circulating

collection of beadwork, photographs, pencil sketches, and regalia (including a traditionally constructed Red River cart and birchbark canoe) on permanent display. These permanent and temporary exhibitions clearly mark the Library as a Métis space, and help to make our students and staff feel at home.

If you're not tempted to visit for the art on display or the research materials available, perhaps you can be reeled in with the promise of storytelling! The Library also plays host to storytellers and other special guests from time to time. Over the past several years, Joe and Norma Welsh, Simon Moccasin, and Joseph Naytowhow have regaled listeners with stories that range from the side-splittingly hilarious to the profound, and cover all the territory in between. Perhaps it has to do with the shelves and shelves of stories in written format that fill the Library, but there's something about the space that also lends itself particularly well to the older oral traditions, as SUNTEP Regina faculty member Russell Fayant observes: "The Library plays an important role in creating an environment conducive to storytelling. I don't think the stories would be as rich if they were told in a classroom setting." If you're curious to see what special events may be coming up, check the "Library

News" page on our website (see address below) for information.

Now that you know a bit more about the GDI Regina Library, *paykeewikay ahpee!* (Come and visit sometime!)

*Anyone with questions about library services (or suggestions for how the GDI Regina Library could better meet your specific needs) is encouraged to get in touch. Detailed contact info and hours of operation may be found on the GDI Regina Library's website:*

<http://www.gdins.org/reglib.htm>



*A birchbark canoe handcrafted by B-boy (Stewart) Daigneault and artwork by Sherry Farrell Racette are on permanent display in the library, and help to make the space more inviting.*

# Project of Heart Brings Hope, Humility, and Healing to SUNTEP

Article and Photographs by Christina Johns

Armed with Sharpie markers, small wooden tiles, a legacy to honour, and the “heart” to make a difference, SUNTEP Regina students went to work to preserve and reclaim the memory of the many Métis and First Nations children who attended and lost their lives in residential schools. All SUNTEP students participated in the artistic social justice project entitled *Project of Heart (POH)* over the past two semesters.

Project coordinator Sylvia Smith, a high school teacher from Ottawa, describes POH as a “hands-on, collaborative, inter-generational, inter-institutional artistic endeavour. Its purpose is

to commemorate the lives of the thousands of Indigenous children who died as a result of the residential school experience.” After learning about the truths of Indian Residential schools in Social Studies class, Sylvia Smith’s students wanted to do more to bring greater public awareness to the large number of deaths that had occurred in residential schools across Canada. Along with their teacher’s help, they developed a social justice project that is now growing in recognition and has recently been awarded the *Governor General’s Award for excellence in Teaching Canadian History*.

A key objective of POH is to encourage “ownership” of this historic injustice by the non-Indigenous community. By doing so, non-Aboriginal Canadians can then be moved to take responsibility for the continued oppression of Indigenous people in Canada, and be inspired to take action. She also explains that the project “commemorates the families and communities to whom those children belonged. It is designed to bring awareness both to the settler community of predominantly European Canadians and communities of new Canadians from other parts of the world.” Many students of all ages, all across Canada, have been involved in the project, by decorating tiles, doing research, visiting with Elders and becoming more aware of the effects of residential schools on generations of Indigenous people.

POH also seeks to expand the opportunities available for the wisdom of Aboriginal Elders to be heard within mainstream-educational/religious institutions. By joining with other groups who are making a space for Indigenous knowledge, institutions can help to change



attitudes and behaviours— hearts and minds—as Elders give voice to the traditions that were suppressed by residential schooling.

During their involvement in this unique social justice project, SUNTEP students shared stories of people and relatives they knew who attended residential schools. Some were stories of pain, some were stories of relationships that developed while in residential school, and some were humorous anecdotes passed down from grandparents and great-grandparents. Through the sharing of stories, we gathered together as students, teachers, artists, and activists to remember the forgotten and piece together this influential, yet poignant part of Canadian history. Being able to talk about the residential school experience has been hurtful to some students, but in some ways it started a healing process aided by research, including the sharing of the experience with family members, the smudging of the tiles and visits with an Elder/residential school survivor.

On this journey for understanding through heart and spirit, SUNTEP students decorated 10-12 tiles each (400 in total) with imagery, words, and symbols created in memoriam to the Aboriginal culture, language,

and self-esteem stripped away by assimilation and racism embodied at residential schools. Through their art, SUNTEP commemorated Île-à-la-Crosse, a northern Saskatchewan community with a high Métis population. As evidence of the project's lasting impact, as the social justice activism component of the project, SUNTEP students have developed lesson and unit plans to use in their field placements so POH will continue to be shared and honoured.

The project's goal is to have 50,000 decorated tiles, each one representing a life lost in the many residential schools across Canada. Although the future and final resting place of the tiles is still uncertain, there is a possibility of an installation of the tiles as a part of the new Canadian Museum for Human Rights in Winnipeg. This is only a small gesture of reconciliation for the past and continued oppression of Aboriginal people in Canada.

Art has the power to bring together people from all ages and all walks of life. It can bring about awareness and understanding, promote critical thinking, and can also work towards healing. Drawing on tiles will, of course, never erase



the horrors of residential schools or reverse the damage done to families and communities, but it can bring about hope; hope that we can someday eradicate the perils of hatred, racism, and ethnocentrism. Sylvia and her students had the vision to bridge the emotional and spiritual power of art to bring about healing to communities who are still in crisis despite governmental “apologies.” This art project is a demonstration of the resiliency of Aboriginal people and their resistance to the cultural collision between Canada’s Aboriginal peoples and European colonizers. We are still valiantly fighting to reverse the devastating impact that years of oppression has had on Canada’s Aboriginal cultures and traditions. We hope that the inter-generational damage will not be forgotten but used as a reminder that this cultural genocide must never happen again!

You can check out the SUNTEP Regina’s tiles and more about the program at [www.projectofheart.ca](http://www.projectofheart.ca).

# Superintendent's Awards at Parks Canada

Article by Rose-Marie Carey and Photograph by David Morin

Every year, superintendents across the Parks Canada Agency request nominations for the *Superintendent's Awards of Excellence*, which celebrate the exceptional achievements of individuals and teams in the field units. This allows special recognition for contributions and shows appreciation for work done in different categories.

GDI has worked in partnership with the Parks Canada Sask South Field Unit for several years now. It was a privilege to be able to attend the 2011 award ceremony at Batoche National Historic Site of Canada (NHSC).

Two groups of people were honoured.

1) Brenda and Eugene Hryciuk  
Brenda and Eugene were nominated by the site. They work as Commissionaires, providing janitorial and security services for Batoche NHSC. Over the years, their worth has grown. Batoche NHSC has consistently benefited from their commitment and consideration for the site and the visitors. Many times as they go about their work in the evening, they are the only ones that visitors see. We can count on them to clean the site, protect it, and keep it secure all the while giving necessary information to visitors.

They are never too tired to give a helping hand as they watch

over the rental of golf carts, lock up doors or assist staff to put away supplies. They have helped Asset Management to maintain the carts, seal up a roof so that the rain didn't pour in, stop a tent from blowing away, and have even changed tires.

Brenda and Eugene have volunteered countless hours to help with special events. They can be found washing dishes, peeling potatoes, making rope, or putting up tables. They have worked side-by-side with site partners and stakeholders, picked chokecherries for the community, or drove presenters or Elders home.



Eugene brought a bison head home to clean and treat, and we now use it in programming. Brenda, manager of Friends of Batoche, was able to apply and get funding so that Batoche had special programming at the East Village in honour of 2010—*Year of the Métis*. All staff at Batoche felt that their spirit and devotion should be recognized

by a *Superintendent's Excellency award*. They are amazing to work with.

2) The Batoche NHSC staff and crew

They received the certificate of recognition for exemplary behaviour in response to unusual and difficult circumstances in

2010. Their teamwork and good humour was evident all season as they provided client services in trailers throughout an anniversary year—125 years since the Resistance. They encouraged each other, supported their partners, and demonstrated professionalism with all visitors who came to their doors.



**Sasipenita**  
**NEVER GIVE UP!**  
**EDUCATIONAL EXHIBIT INC**

**SĀSĪPENITA** (*“never give up” in Swampy Cree “N” Dialect*) is dedicated to developing hands-on, active exhibits that will celebrate and honour the struggles, contributions and achievements of Saskatchewan’s first citizens.

**The Sasipenita Educational Exhibit Inc. Board of Directors is pleased to announce the appointment of Susan McKenzie as Executive Director of Sasipenita Educational Exhibit Inc.**

Susan McKenzie is Métis. Her primary work focus surrounds community, arts, culture, and heritage. Susan remains active as a writer and documentary producer, and brings

many years of local, provincial, and national experience in connecting the community to arts, culture, and heritage. She has demonstrated a deep passion and commitment to this work. Susan gained much of her experience from her positions with arts organizations and with Parks Canada where she was a Program Policy Officer for Aboriginal programming at Batoche National Historic Site and Prince Albert National Park of Canada.

As Sasipenita’s Executive Director, she is excited about its 2012-13 programming and fundraising plans, which include making a funding application for *Living History*, a nineteen-month long workshop series that focuses on developing Aboriginal curatorial leadership. *Living History* will be dedicated to developing educational exhibits and interpretative programming development. The series includes ten different workshops to be held at thirteen diverse venues.

For more information on future workshops, exhibitions, fundraising initiatives, and special events, please call Susan McKenzie at 306.764.0805/Fax: 306.764.0807 or e-mail her at [sasipenitaed@sasktel.net](mailto:sasipenitaed@sasktel.net).

Visit the Sasipenita Educational Exhibit Inc. on Facebook or at [www.sasipenita.ca](http://www.sasipenita.ca).

# *Gabriel Dumont: Li Chef Michif in Images and Words* Address by Darren Prefontaine, Saskatchewan Book Awards Brunch, Saskatoon, March 11, 2012

Article by Darren R. Préfontaine

...

I would like to thank the Saskatoon Book Awards Brunch Committee for providing me with the opportunity to speak at this event. I also want to congratulate all other shortlisted authors present today and wish them the best of luck on April 28. There are so many talented authors and great publishing houses that have been shortlisted for these awards, I am truly humbled and honoured to be included in this group, and I am equally honoured to speak to you all today.

Before speaking about my book, *Gabriel Dumont: Li Chef Michif in Images and in Words*, I would like to acknowledge my employer, the Gabriel Dumont Institute, for providing me with the opportunity to spend so much time to compile and write this book. I worked on it, off and on, for three years. A special thank you must be extended to the GDI Publishing Department, particularly Karon Shmon, Publishing Director and David Morin, who did the book's layout and provided a good eye as an editor. This book is truly a

community project and dozens contributed to it. I can't name them all here; however, it would be amiss not to acknowledge Don Ward for the book's excellent copyedit and Dennis and Jean Fisher who made a gracious donation of a large collection of Métis-related artefacts to the Institute—many of which found their way into the book. Finally, I would like to acknowledge the Office of the Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada for funding the book.

*Gabriel Dumont: Li Chef Michif in Images and in Words* is a tribute to Gabriel Dumont and includes hundreds of images relating to him as well as hundreds of newspaper articles. It involved the efforts of dozens of people and is truly a community-based book.

What drew me to write a book about Gabriel Dumont? Working for the Gabriel Dumont Institute for the past 15 years naturally helped me gain an appreciation for him as did my academic training in History. However, the passion expressed by Métis community people and artists is what mainly drew me to compile and write a book about "old Gabe." While much has been written about the 1885 Resistance, and much in



*Imperial Photograph of Gabriel Dumont, John Burke and Other William F. Cody Performers, circa 1886. Cowan Auctions, y6345.*

particular about Louis Riel, not a great deal of historical analysis has been done on Gabriel Dumont. This is a glaring omission because for many, if not most Métis—here in Saskatchewan anyway—Gabriel Dumont is the people’s hero, while Riel is the martyred hero.

Seeing hundreds of visual representations of Gabriel Dumont over the past decade and half, led me to conclude that an image intensive book about the Métis leader would make a real contribution to our understanding of him as a historical figure and an iconic cornerstone of Métis identity. Therefore, I documented as many Dumont-related images, ranging from 1875 until the present, as humanly possible.

However, visual representations, through time and place, are not the only way in which Gabriel Dumont has been remembered. He first appeared in newspapers in the 1860s Red River Settlement, and his memory still appears in newspapers and in online blogs. Therefore, besides being a visual tribute to Gabriel Dumont, this book also includes an extensive listing of various journalistic and first-hand accounts of him from the 1860s until the present.

Another reason why I thought that this book would be useful is



***Gabriel Dumont Rescues Children from a fire in Montréal 1889—Robert Freynet, Oil on Canvas, 45 cm x 60 cm (18" x 24"), 2009. GDI Archival Collection.***

because so little is really known about Gabriel Dumont during key stretches of his life. I wanted to write a book that would fill in the gaps of his extraordinary life without writing a biography. That’s when I decided to research and write a book which focused on Dumont-related images and on newspaper and old book accounts. Much of this information is readily available online, which made the research of this book much easier.

While researching this book, I found out some very interesting things. For instance, how many people know that Gabriel Dumont saved some children from a fire in 1888 in Montreal? To paraphrase Gabriel’s response to a crowd of

bewildered French-Canadian onlookers at the rescue of the children: “How could I stand by and listen to the children suffer?” and “I don’t burn like other men!” How many here know that a rich French-Canadian widow in Montreal, who owned a large restaurant and other properties in the city’s Quartier Latin, proposed marriage to Gabriel, but while flattered, he declined because his heart belonged to his people? Hollywood couldn’t make this stuff up.

Other vignettes proved more tragic as I learned even further of the terrible aftermath of the 1885 Resistance on many Métis and First Nations families. Right here in Saskatoon, at the U of S Archives, there is a ration card by the Duck



**Gabriel Dumont Medal and portrait—  
Prince Albert Historical Society.**

Lake Indian Agent which is dated from October 1885. Madeleine Dumont, Gabriel's beloved wife who would die prematurely in Montana in 1886, was one of the recipients of this aid. How galling and terrible for her that she had to accept assistance from the same government whose soldiers burned down her home and looted all her property.

War creates widows and orphans. How many people know that one reason that Gabriel entered the Wild West show was to help provide for Métis and First Nations orphans in Montana whose parents died as a result of the 1885 Resistance? Those iconic photographs of Gabriel cradling *le petit*, his beloved rifle, were sold for \$2.00 US in order to contribute to this cause. Today, these photographs of Dumont known as "Cabinet Cards" sell for upwards of \$4,200-\$8,500. In his day, Gabriel Dumont

and his exploits were covered in newspapers throughout the English-speaking world. There are even newspaper stories about him written in Welsh. And that in itself raises an important point which historians have generally failed to address: no one has yet tried to put the 1885 Resistance in the context of the British Empire and its colonial struggles during the 1880s. During the 1880s, newspapers throughout the Empire discussed border wars in Afghanistan, the smashing of Gordon's column in the Sudan by an Islamic force, the grave threat of war between Britain and Russia, and the 1885 Resistance—which took place here in central Saskatchewan. While a minor event in terms of casualties and the number of combatants, the 1885 Resistance was a topic of interest for a large international audience. Gabriel Dumont's exploits were read in Auckland New Zealand, Sydney Australia, Glasgow Scotland, Cardiff Wales, Birmingham England, and here in the large, sparsely populated

Dominion of Canada. The Americans also wrote about him: Press coverage of Dumont was extensive and ranged from the *New York Times* to small town newspapers in Montana and North Dakota.

A story about Dumont receiving a medal for valour by the Old World French living in New York City appeared in a *New York Times* article in 1886. That very same medal is part of the Prince Albert Museum's collection. It was sold in the 1930s for \$10 by Dumont's nephew to a Prince Albert jeweller. In 1887, the Fort Benton (Montana)

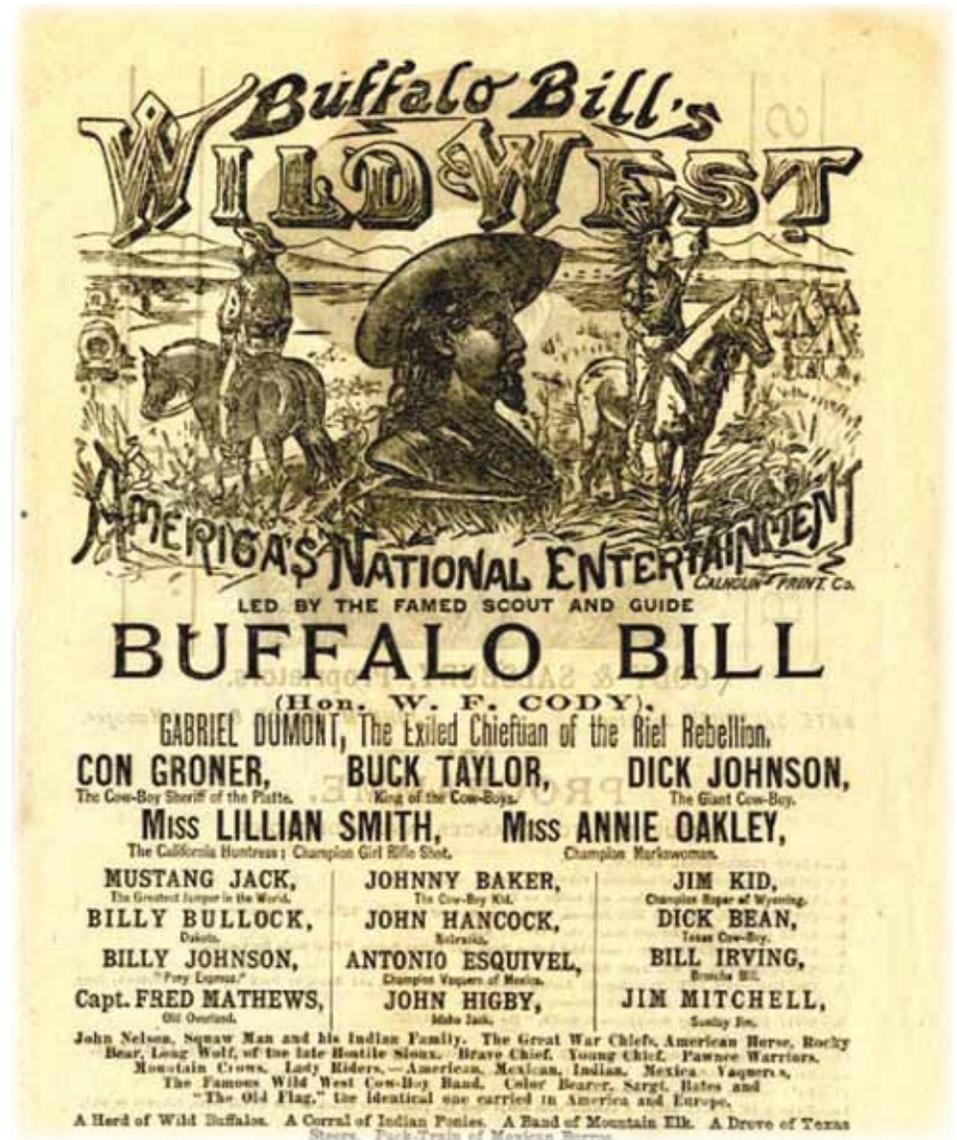


**Gabriel Dumont's Watch. Duck Lake Regional Interpretative Centre, 92-40-1.**

River Press reported that French Canadians in New York gave Gabriel Dumont a gold watch. That very watch is now in the Duck Lake Museum. We are indeed very fortunate that these precious pieces of material culture relating to Dumont's person remained in Canada and are closely located to his Batoche-area home.

The public transformation of Gabriel Dumont into a Pan-Canadian hero is an important story that has been overlooked. I wanted to address this appropriation in the book. While he has always been a hero to the Métis, he is now a Pan-Canadian hero: institutions, streets, and buildings bear his name from British Columbia to Québec. An eclectic array of individuals and groups have made Dumont their hero, including John Diefenbaker, who met him as a child in Wakaw and announced in the 1950s, when he was Prime Minister, that the Métis leader was one of his heroes, and a revised cell of the FLQ which chopped off the head of a statue of John A. Macdonald on the anniversary of Louis Riel's execution in 1992.

Ville de Québec, Quebec's four-hundred year old capital city, even renamed a street for



*Gabriel Dumont—Buffalo Bill Cody's Wild West Play Bill, 1886. Buffalo Bill Cody Historical Center.*

Gabriel Dumont after it had long been named in honour of Adam Dollard des Ormeaux—a one time martyr of New France, who proved less than altruistic in his final dealings with the fledgling colony's Iroquois rivals.

Gabriel, who died in 1906, even has a Facebook profile. Although, I am not sure he would approve

of his head being superimposed on the body of Scarface's Tony Montana firing a machine gun at his enemies. Now we have Gabriel—the Gangsta—a new imagining of the Métis hero.

Maarsii. Thank you for listening.

# Winds of Change for the Gabriel Dumont Scholarship Foundation

The Gabriel Dumont Institute has been administering scholarships for Saskatchewan's Métis since the early 1980s through the *Gabriel Dumont Scholarship Foundation* (GDSF). The scholarship fund is based on a \$2.5 million dollar capital investment. Twice per year, scholarships are awarded on the interest earned on the fund's principal by a scholarship trustee and selection committee. In recent years, GDI has partnered with several industry companies to deliver additional scholarships through the foundation. As the number of scholarships delivered continues to grow, so does the number of qualified applications being received. In the 2010-2011 fiscal year, 171 scholarships were awarded equating to \$124,900.

For many years, Lorraine Amiotte, Administrative Coordinator for the Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP), did an amazing job of organizing all aspects of the scholarship foundation in addition to her other duties as Administrative Coordinator. This June, Lorraine will be retiring from GDI after almost 30 years of service. The staff and Board

of Governors thank Lorraine for her dedication to the Institute, and wish her all the best in her retirement years.

As we say goodbye to Lorraine, a new position has been created for overseeing all aspects of the foundation. As of April 1<sup>st</sup>, Amy Briley, who has been with the Institute full-time for four years, has taken on the role of Program Coordinator for the Scholarship Foundation. Amy is a SUNTEP graduate who worked for the Institute during the summer months and part-time throughout the academic year while completing her Education degree. Upon graduation in 2008, Amy was hired as a Curriculum Developer in the Publishing Department. When asked about her employment with GDI, Amy said, "working in the Publishing Department for the past four years has been very rewarding, and I will miss the creative outlet it has given me. But when an opportunity to take on new challenges within the Institute arose, I wasn't able to pass it up, especially one that involves helping Métis students achieve academic success in pursuing their educational goals. Also, I personally want to

thank Lorraine Amiotte for her unconditional support during this transition and for allowing me to learn from her these past years. Lorraine, I wish you all the best in your retirement. You are a great asset to the Institute and it will be difficult to fill your moccasins."

For more information on the *Gabriel Dumont Scholarship Foundation* or to get an application please visit, [www.gdins.org](http://www.gdins.org) or contact Amy Briley at (306) 657-5719 or [amy.briley@gdi.gdins.org](mailto:amy.briley@gdi.gdins.org).

### Gabriel Dumont Scholarship Foundation—Partnership Programs

- Computer Science
- Other fields of study related to SaskTel

### Gabriel Dumont Scholarship Foundation—Independent Scholarships

#### *SaskEnergy Incorporated Scholarship Program*

The *SaskEnergy Incorporated Scholarship* rewards academic achievement, recognizes leadership and community involvement, and provides scholarships to Métis students pursuing undergraduate degrees, certificates, or diplomas in the following disciplines:

- Business Administration
- Computer Science
- Commerce
- Public Administration
- Economics
- Office Education
- Engineering
- Other fields of study directly related to SaskEnergy

#### *SaskTel Métis Scholarship Program*

The purpose of the *SaskTel Métis Scholarship* is to recognize leadership, academic achievement, financial need, and community involvement of Métis students pursuing post-secondary accreditation in the following disciplines:

- Engineering (electrical, electronic or telecommunications)
- Business Administration/Commerce

#### *GDI-Cameco Scholarship Program*

The *GDI-Cameco Scholarship Program* recognizes leadership, academic achievement, financial need, and community involvement of Métis students pursuing post-secondary education in the following fields:

- Treads
- Business Administration
- Computer Science
- Other fields of study related to Cameco

#### *GDI-Saskatoon Health Region Scholarship Program*

GDI and the Saskatoon Health Region have partnered to provide scholarships to Métis students in pursuit of a post-secondary education leading to health careers in the following areas:

- Management
- Therapies
- Science and Technology
- Nursing, Social and Community
- Applicant interested in working in Saskatoon Health Region rural communities
- Other fields of study related to the Saskatoon Health Region

#### *Napoleon Lafontaine Scholarship Program*

The *Napoleon Lafontaine Scholarship Program* was established to encourage Saskatchewan Métis to pursue full-time education and training in academic studies that lead toward Métis social, cultural, and economic development. Scholarships are awarded under the following categories:

- Entrance
- Undergraduate
- Graduate
- Loan Remission
- Graduation
- Special

#### *Adult Basic Education Scholarship Program*

The purpose of the *Adult Basic Education (ABE) Scholarship Program* is to recognize leadership, academic achievement, financial need, and community involvement of Métis students pursuing ABE levels 3 and 4. *The ABE Scholarship* is designed to support the transition from school to work or further training. Applicants must be enrolled full-time in a Level 3 or Level 4 ABE program and anticipate completion prior to the next scholarship deadline. The

following criteria must be met:

- Overall 90% attendance rate in the three months preceding the application deadline
- 75% academic average in the most recent school term

### GDC Graduate Student Bursary Program

The *Gabriel Dumont College (GDC) Graduate Student Bursary Program* is designed to provide financial support to full-time graduate studies at the Masters or Doctorate level. The intent is to encourage Saskatchewan Métis to pursue full-time graduate studies and conduct research in fields relevant to Métis people. The following criteria must be met:

- Academic achievement and ability to successfully complete graduate studies
- Financial need
- Service (past and/or projected) to the Saskatchewan Métis community



*Gabriel Dumont Scholarship Foundation*

# GOLF TOURNAMENT

**Format:**  
4 Person  
Texas Scramble  
- Best Ball

**When:**  
Thursday May 31st, 2012  
11:30 a.m. Registration  
12:30 p.m. Shot Gun Start

**Where:**  
  
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# Do you “Like” Gabriel Dumont Institute?

Article by Michelle Suteau

Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) has a Facebook account. It is currently being moderated by David Morin, a curriculum developer with the GDI Publishing Department, but will be moderated by representatives from other departments as well. I recently had the pleasure of interviewing David to discover the history behind the Institute’s decision to use social media as a marketing and communication tool.

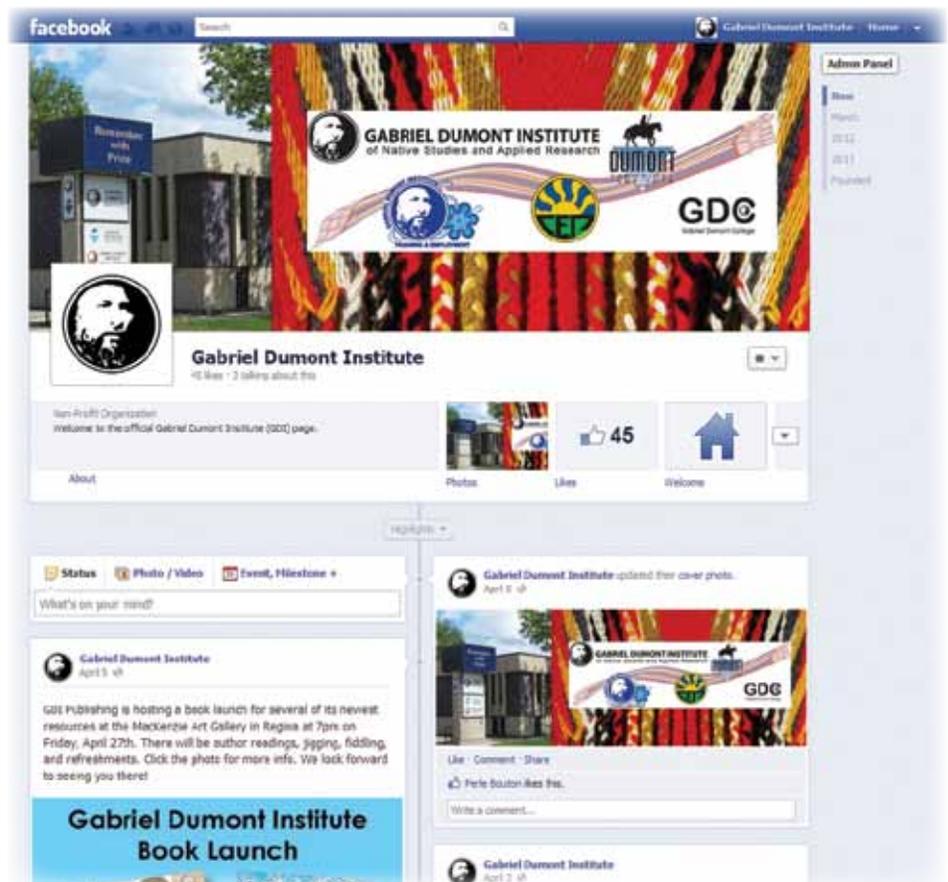
David is a Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP) graduate who has been working at the Publishing Department for the past 8 years. As a curriculum developer, he develops resources that “fill in gaps of what’s out there,” meaning he helps develop resources that fill in the deficits in the accurate representation of Métis people, history, and culture in the education system. So how did he get involved in creating a Facebook page for the Institute? I wondered the same thing myself.

In the fall of 2011, Geordy McCaffrey, GDI Executive Director, asked David to head the social media committee. After attending a conference put on by CACEE (Canadian

Association of Career Educators and Employers), Tim Metz, a Program Coordinator with GDI T&E in Meadow Lake had developed a proposal highlighting the benefits of social media in marketing and in creating brand awareness which got the ball rolling. When referring to the shift many companies, both big and small, have made in the way they market their wares, Tim states “How, then, is our organization fitting in to the trend of Western, no, worldwide communication shift? Are we providing the public with every opportunity to

develop an understanding of who we are? Are we presenting every opportunity for our clients’ success in this ever changing landscape? I believe the answer to all of these questions is: we are not.”

David, Tim, and Chantelle Gagnon, a DTI Program Coordinator, attended a social media conference delivered by Skill Path. They debriefed after the conference and established a social media committee. Soon after, they were put in touch with Delaney Tait, a DTI Career



Counselor who also joined the committee. It was recognized that GDI was not currently reaching the demographic it was targeting with the current use of advertising media. Newspaper, radio, and poster ads may be reaching the parents and grandparents of our desired clientele, but for the most part it was not reaching the actual clientele. What social media tool was? FACEBOOK! So, understandably, their first decision was to “tackle” Facebook, and then move into other social media. When I asked David why they chose Facebook he states matter of factly, “you can do more on Facebook.” They considered Twitter, but decided that Twitter was just not at the same level as Facebook considering what they were wanting to do.

After their decision to tackle Facebook, the social media committee developed another proposal outlining their plan and presented it to Geordy. Geordy presented the proposal to the directors and they in turn presented their concerns; their primary concern being, “How do we deal with the risk of negative comments?” David responded by researching other educational institution’s Facebook pages, and didn’t see a lot of posts by students. He adapted a comment assessment flow chart created by

the US Air Force to fit GDI’s needs, and used the U of S Facebook page as a model to create a statement that explained how the Facebook page would be moderated, which basically stated all negative comments would be deleted and all misinformation would be clarified.

They were given approval to go ahead, and the Facebook page was created. They decided to start small so currently the GDI page encompasses Gabriel Dumont Institute and its related affiliate companies, specifically, DTI, GDI Training and Employment, GDI Publishing and GDI Scholarship Foundation. Individual programs may decide to branch off in the future with their own page if they wish to do so, but right now they are sticking to one all encompassing page.

Recently, DTIIT Gordon Holtslander, joined the committee, and has created a link from the GDI web page to the Facebook Page. So far it is mostly Institute staff that have “Liked” GDI, but David is hoping the page’s popularity will grow as word spreads, and word spreads fast in the social media world.

When I originally searched for it, I encountered two pages with the same name. Ours is the Non-Profit Organization with the Gabriel head logo, not the University

group. The page contains information about the Institute, new books from the Publishing Department, job postings, deadlines for scholarships, and photographs.

Do you want to know more about GDI events, news, book releases, scholarships, programs, and more? “Like” GDI on Facebook.



[www.facebook.com/  
gabriel Dumont Institute](http://www.facebook.com/gabriel Dumont Institute)

# GDI Resources on Amazon.ca

Article by David Morin

In an effort to make Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) resources available to a broader market, it was decided that the Publishing Department would partner with Amazon.ca to sell their books.

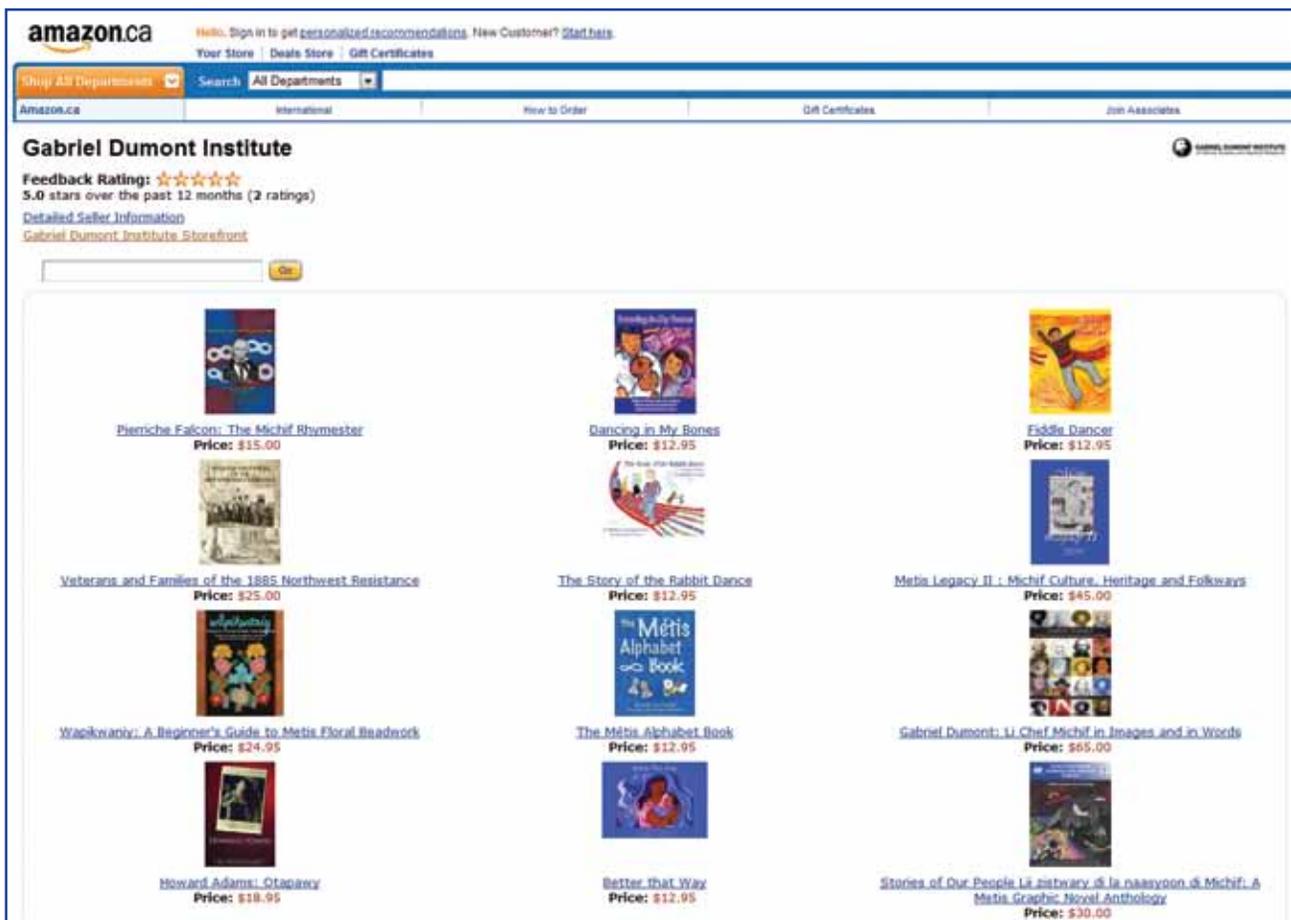
While still available at the Institute's own online shop, <https://shop.gdins.org>, it was felt that the exposure of having

resources available through Amazon.ca was important to reach people not familiar with GDI.

Since opening the Amazon store, many resources have been purchased with the majority of orders going out of our province.

For the first three months of sales on Amazon, *wapikwaniy: A Beginners'*

*Guide to Méis Floral Beadwork* is the current bestseller for GDI resources with *Stories of Our People: A Métis Graphic Novel Anthology* and *Veterans and Families of the 1885 Northwest Resistance* tying for second.



# Louis Riel Day Celebrated at Batoche National Historic Site

Article by Bradley Brown and Photographs by Peter Beszterda

On November 16, 2011, Gabriel Dumont Institute and Parks Canada hosted a Louis Riel Day celebration at Batoche National Historic Site. There were approximately 80-90 guests on hand to take in the event. The purpose of the celebration was two-fold: to mourn and pay homage to Riel and the sacrifices he made for the Métis, and to honour and celebrate the contributions and sacrifices of all veterans.

There were a number of prayers, presentations, and performances

relating to Métis veterans throughout the day. The event began with an opening prayer from Métis Elders Rose Fleury and Nap Arcand. Following their words, Métis Elder Harriet Oaks St. Pierre sang "O' Canada" in Michif, and helped deliver a poem dedicated to veterans in Michif and English lead by Métis Veteran and Elder, Edwin St. Pierre. Mr. St. Pierre then led a procession to the cemetery on the stunningly beautiful November day, where he shared some words and laid a wreath of remembrance to

commemorate veterans and Riel.

Lunch was then served, and everyone in attendance was delighted to hear Métis fiddle player Dallas Boyer accompanied by Métis guitarist Phil Boyer share some traditional Métis music.

Following lunch, there was a series of presentations and performances relating to Métis history and veterans. Dennis and Jean Fisher were acknowledged for their generous donation of Métis artefacts to the Gabriel Dumont



Institute (GDI). The artefacts relate to the Batoche area and the 1885 Resistance, and represent a unique collection which took over 50 years to amass. Some of the pieces among the collection consist of bullet casings from both the Métis and Canadian militia, rifles, remnants of Gabriel Dumont's house, as well as other timeless artefacts.

Dr. Cathy Littlejohn King, researcher, shared her knowledge about Métis veterans with the audience. She has been hired by the Métis National Council to conduct research on Métis veterans. She graciously shared highlights of her trip to Europe to find the graves of Métis soldiers and explained how she endeavours to try to document all Saskatchewan Métis veterans who were involved in World War One, World War Two, and the Korean War.



*Harriet Oaks St. Pierre and Edwin St. Pierre.*

Gregory Scofield, a renowned contemporary Métis poet, shared some pieces from his latest book, *Louis: The Heretic Poems*. The book consists of a series of poems that document the life of Riel from childhood to death, and is published in collaboration with Nightwood Publishers and GDI.

The day ended with a special guest appearance from Donny

Parenteau who shared an exclusive new song about Métis veterans with the audience. The song has been commissioned by the Institute for a CD which pays tribute to Métis veterans and showcases a number of Métis performing artists including Andrea Menard, Jess Lee, Mike Couchie, Krystle Pederson, and Ray St. Germaine.

The day made me recall one of Riel's most attributed quotes. "My people will sleep for 100 years, and when they awake, it will be the artists who give them back their spirit." This Louis Riel Day celebration at Batoche made his words ring true as all the Elders and presenters demonstrated how their artistic, historical, and spiritual passions aid in promoting and preserving Métis culture and history.



*Phil and Dallas Boyer.*

# GDI Acquires Rare Artefact

Article by Lisa Bird-Wilson and Artefact Photographs by Mark Taylor

GDI has acquired a white doe-skin suit to add to the Institute's collection of artefacts. The suit is adorned with Métis-style flower embroidery. The suit was brought to the Institute's attention by Gregory Scofield, who has a keen eye for all things Métis, and noticed the suit for sale online. Scofield's outstanding beadwork design and instruction has become part of one of GDI's latest publications, *wâpikwaniy: A Beginner's Guide to Floral Beadwork*, which he co-authored with Amy Briley.

The suit comes from Manitoba and had been in Kenneth Fergusson's family since about 1920. Fergusson provided a written account, as told to him



*Peter C. Fergusson, c.1930s, wearing the suit. Photograph submitted by Kenneth Fergusson.*

by his father, of how the suit came to be made for his father. The account indicates that his father, KC Fergusson worked for the Winnipeg Electric Company,

and was stationed at the Great Falls generating station on the Winnipeg River in 1920. The people of the Fort Alexander First Nation lived in the area and traditionally travelled the Winnipeg River for annual wild rice harvesting. The 90-mile journey required the people to portage around no less than five waterfalls.

During the construction of Great Falls, KC made arrangements to help the travellers from Fort Alexander by rail so as to avoid three portages, after which the people continued on their annual journey to the wild rice lakes. The same transportation arrangements were made by KC for the return trip in the late fall.





the Red River and began teaching at the Catholic mission schools, the art form was taught to Métis and First Nations girls as part of their instruction in domestic activities. The floral embroidery inspired the Métis flower beadwork patterns for which the Métis have become known as the ‘flower-beadwork people.’”

GDI would like to thank the Office of the Federal Interlocuter for Métis and Non Status Indians, for the financial support in purchasing this rare artefact.

Fergusson notes, “The Native people were very appreciative of this service and approached KC and offered to make him a hunting suit. KC was to provide about three doe skins for this project.” The custom-made suit was then made for KC by a group of Aboriginal people, headed up by Mrs. Butcher Kent of the Fort Alexander First Nation. The suit remained in the Fergusson family since it was made in the 1920s.

“This splendid Métis artistry gives GDI a unique, well-cared for example of the design and skill that went into this form of Métis artistic expression,” said Karon Shmon, GDI’s Publishing Director. “While many artists still bead, only a few carry on the tradition of silk embroidery in the Métis floral pattern, and because we know so much about it, including

information about the artist, the owner, and the significance, it makes it even more interesting and adds to our knowledge about our heritage and traditions.”

The suit consists of a number of pieces, including a jacket, pants, belt, knee-high muklucs, and a hat. All are adorned with immaculate “floral silk embroidery similar to the Métis style. Usuline nuns taught the floral silk embroidery to both Métis and First Nations girls and women in the seventeenth century. Once the Grey Nuns came to

(Source: “Métis Embroidery,” *Virtual Museum of Métis History and Culture*. Available online at [www.métismuseum.ca](http://www.métismuseum.ca))



# Longest Serving GDI Employee Bids Farewell

Interview by Karon Shmon with Lorraine Amiotte and Photograph by Laurel Amiotte



*Karon Shmon, Director of Publishing, interviewed Lorraine Amiotte, SUNTEP Central Coordinator, who will be retiring from GDI at the end of June, 2012.*

KS: First, let me begin by saying that I wish you well in your retirement and that I really appreciate that we've had the opportunity to work together at GDI. Can you tell us a bit about your personal background and your work at GDI?

LA: I am from Elphinstone, Manitoba and most of my relatives still live in the area. My daughter, Laurel, and I visit regularly. Laurel is my only child and a proud graduate of SUNTEP Saskatoon, as is my niece, Nicole Amiotte-Bilinski. I have lived in Saskatchewan

since 1969 and prior to working at GDI, I worked in many government departments: Health, Agriculture, Provincial Library and Social Services. I also worked for the Saskatoon Region Community College and Potash Corporation.

KS: When did you start working for GDI and what kind of jobs have you had with the Institute?

LA: I came to GDI 28 ½ years ago. I was hired as a clerk steno for the Native Studies Program. Over the years, I was employed as a clerk steno, administrative coordinator and program coordinator. I worked within many departments: research and development, early childhood education, SUNTEP, library, publishing, human resources and finance.

KS: I guess you've worked with most of the Executive Directors as well?

LA: I worked with a number of Executive Directors since 1994.

KS: Given the changes and growth in the Institute, you've

certainly been adaptable. What observations can you make about what you've seen over the nearly three decades you've spent here?

LA: I've seen GDI change many lives because it opens so many doors. I also find it heartening to see a positive impact on the Métis over the generations, as the sons and daughters of our early graduates have also attended programs at GDI.

KS: What do you plan to do once you are retired?

LA: I plan to relax and spend more time with my family.

KS: You've certainly earned it. Is there something you'd like to add?

LA: I've really enjoyed working with the wide variety of people I've met at GDI - the students, my colleagues and the Board members. I'll miss them.

KS: Thank you, Lorraine, and all the best for your retirement.

# Closing the Aboriginal Education Gap Makes Economic Sense

Article by James Oloo and Photographs by Peter Beszterda

The 1996 Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples' Report highlighted the fact that gaps existed between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians in almost all socioeconomic indicators. The 2010 Council of Ministers of Education, Canada Summit on Aboriginal Education Report underscored the gap in academic achievement between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal learners. C.D. Howe Institute scholar John Richards argues that the Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal educational attainment gap is one of the great social policy challenges facing Canada today, while Dr. Eric Howe posited that the Aboriginal education gap presents the greatest economic opportunity for Saskatchewan.



**GDI Executive Director, Geordy McCaffrey.**



**Elder Dorothy Aubichon gives opening prayer at Bridging the Aboriginal Education Gap Press Conference.**

Dr. Howe's report, *Bridging the Aboriginal Education Gap in Saskatchewan*, has challenged policy makers, governments, education systems, and stakeholders to address the need to bridge the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal student outcomes. The choice is to meet this challenge or to continue along a well-trodden path and arrive at "more of the same," but with worse consequences given the recent Aboriginal population trends and Saskatchewan's economic outlook.

As success stories by a number of current and former GDI clients and students reveal, education and training are, perhaps, some of the most effective forces that shape human capital. Dr. Howe's report shows that benefits of education accrue to both the individual and to society. The individual may get a well-paying job, will have benefits, will have improved health, and will pay higher taxes.

However, economics aside, governments have a duty to build each individual's human capital by fully educating its citizens as much

as possible. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) defines human capital as “the knowledge, skills, competencies and attributes embodied in individuals that facilitate the creation of personal, social and economic well-being.” The importance of education to human capital is supported by Dr. Howe, who asserts that the Aboriginal educational gap is a waste of potential.

GDI is doing its part to bridge the Aboriginal education gap. It is one of the two biggest producers of practical nurses in Saskatchewan, has graduated over 1,000 Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students, and its Aboriginal Apprenticeship Initiative will increase the number of Aboriginal apprentices in Saskatchewan by at least 120. Further, GDI’s numerous programs continue to



*Dr. Eric Howe.*

empower Métis individuals to get the skills that they need for gainful employment as well as to develop Métis culture through research.

Métis individuals who are looking to increase their education

and help bridge the Aboriginal education gap are encouraged to contact any GDI office or call 306-242-6070 or toll-free 1-877-488-6888 for more information on GDI programs.



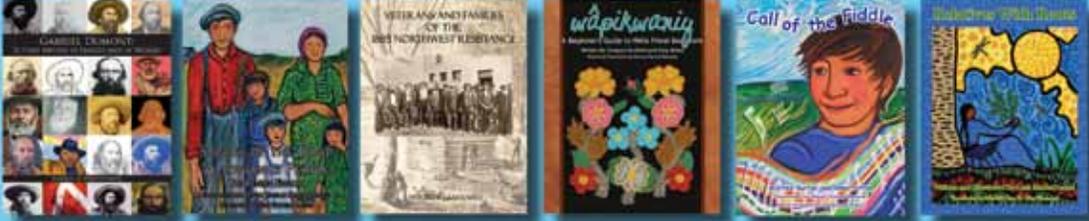
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# Aboriginal Education Task Force Announced

Article by Lisa Bird-Wilson

In May 2011, the Saskatchewan Ministry of Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration (AEEI) signed an agreement with the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN) to establish a joint task force on Aboriginal education and employment with the express aim of increasing First Nations and Métis peoples' participation and success in advanced education and in the labour force. Individuals interested in being on the task force were invited to submit expressions of interest.

On March 26, 2012, AEEI and the FSIN announced the three panelists who will lead the Joint Task Force on Improving Education and Employment Outcomes for First Nations and Métis people in Saskatchewan. The Joint Task Force members are Gary Merasty, Vice President Corporate Social Responsibility of Cameco and former Grand Chief of the Prince Albert Grand Council; Rita Bouvier, researcher/writer and community-learning facilitator; and Don Hoium, Executive Director, League of Educational Administrators, Directors and Superintendents of Saskatchewan.

Rita Bouvier has a long history

and association with Métis education in the province. She is a former GDI board member, was appointed chair of the GDI board nominating committee in 1994 during a period of restructuring, and is a former Director of SUNTEP. Bouvier's Master of Education thesis at the University of Saskatchewan was on a case study of specialized training within SUNTEP. *Better That Way* (2008), Bouvier's collaborative work with Sherry Farrell-Racette and Margaret Gardiner, was published by GDI Publishing.

"Through this partnership with FSIN, the Joint Task Force will consult with First Nations and Métis peoples and provide advice on practical solutions to eliminate education and employment gaps," AEEI Minister Rob Norris said. "I want to thank the task force for agreeing to lead this process in support of First Nations and Métis people gaining the skills and knowledge needed to fully participate in Saskatchewan's economy."

The role of the task force is to be inclusive and consult with Métis and First Nations people and stakeholders throughout the province to help identify practical, grassroots solutions for eliminating the current gaps in education

and employment outcomes for First Nations and Métis people in Saskatchewan. The Joint Task Force will focus on several key goals including:

- Improved early childhood outcomes and transition to school;
- Increased high school and postsecondary completion rates;
- Improved participation in the labour force; and
- Greater quality of life and enhanced self-sufficiency.

Although the agreement to develop the Joint Task Force is exclusively between the Government of Saskatchewan and the FSIN, assurances were made at the announcement of the agreement regarding Métis participation. In response to the question "Will the Métis Nation—Saskatchewan be involved in the work of the Joint Task Force?" the answer has been, "Yes, the Government of Saskatchewan is in discussion with the MN—S to determine how best to ensure Métis participation." Updates will be provided once the results of such discussions are announced.

The Task Force will begin its public consultations in spring 2012, with the final report to be completed in 2013.

# Métis Traditional Music Matinee

## Photo Highlights

Photographs by Peter Beszterda



*Victor Rose and John Arcand.*



*Another happy GDI customer!*





*Trent Bruner, John Arcand, Victor Rose, and Desmond Lagace.*



*Victor Rose and Tina Rose with children and grandchildren.*

# Gabriel Dumont Institute's History

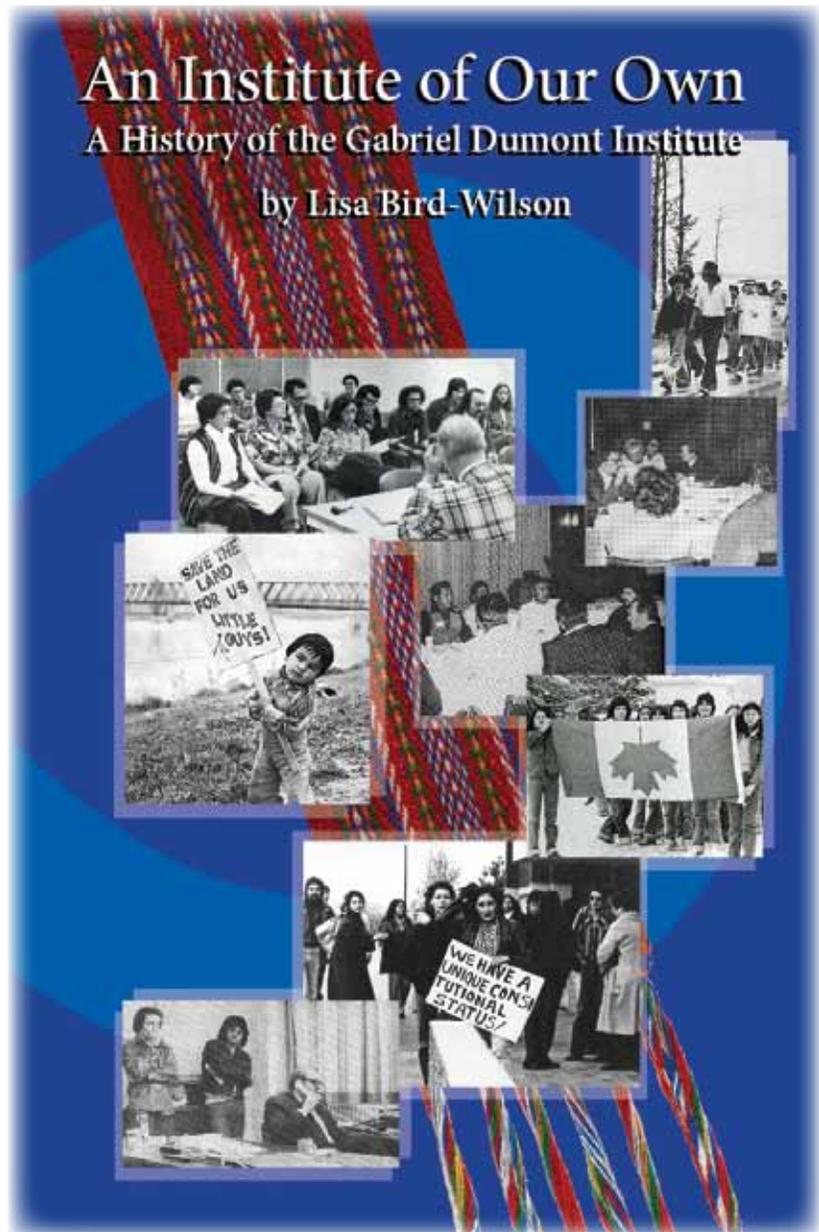
## Revealed in New Publication

In the early 1970s, Saskatchewan was a hotbed of Native activism. Inspired by examples from the Red Power and American Indian movements, Saskatchewan's Métis and Non-Status Indians took up various forms of public protest, including road blocks, sit-ins, and occupations of government buildings as a means of drawing attention to the most pressing Native issues. Jobs and education were top concerns; Native people were faced with harsh economic and social conditions, and Native leaders could see that education was the key to improving peoples' lives. The activism of the early '70s sowed the seeds for the eventual development of the Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI)—Canada's first, largest, and most prominent Métis institute. Breaking ground as the first wholly-owned and operated Métis-specific institute, GDI is also unique because of its dual focus to provide for the education and training needs of the province's Métis and to preserve and promote Métis history and culture.

In clear and precise prose, Lisa Bird-Wilson chronicles the Institute's history from the early

activism of the '70s to the celebration of the Institute's 30th anniversary in 2010. Her account includes details of a financial crisis that nearly killed the Institute and the rebuilding that followed. Based on personal interviews with

many of the Institute's founders and champions, Bird-Wilson paints a compelling picture of the issues, the times, and the people involved with building one of the Métis Nation's treasures.

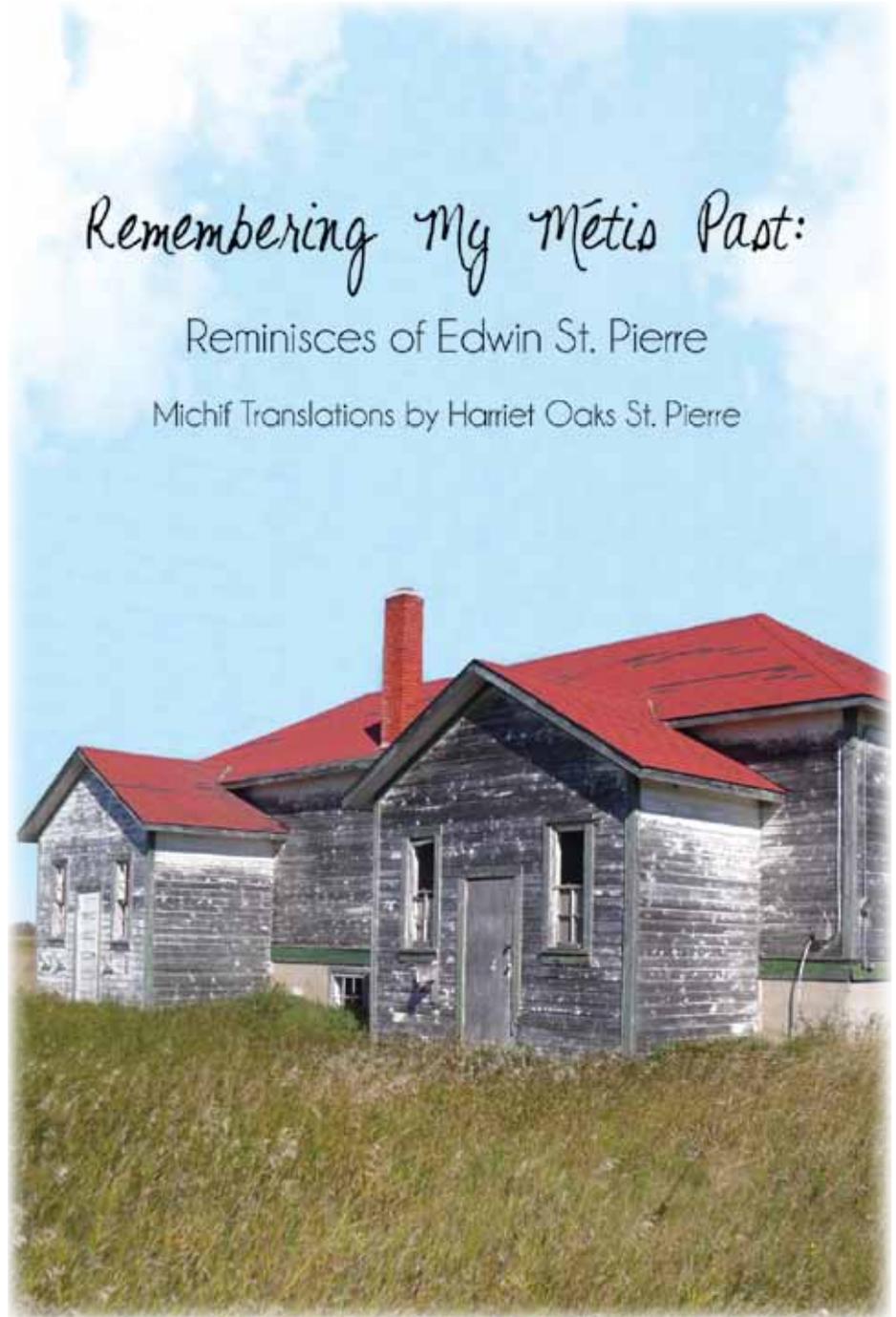


# Remembering My Métis Past: Reminisces of Edwin St. Pierre Released

Article by David Morin

In this memoir, Ed St. Pierre brings the reader back in time, showcasing how life was lived by the Métis in the road allowance community of Crescent Lake in the 1940s. He shares stories of his early life, including hunting with his father, searching for mudhen eggs, and the games that he played as a youngster. He also describes how the Métis lived with stories about grease lamps, rubaboo, chokecherries, and much more. Harriet Oaks St. Pierre translated many of the stories into Michif, which was spoken in Crescent Lake.

For a copy of this resource, please contact the Gabriel Dumont Institute Publishing Department at 306.934.4941, or by email at [bradley.brown@gdi.gdins.org](mailto:bradley.brown@gdi.gdins.org)



# GDI Launches Four New Resources

Article by David Morin and Photographs by Murray Lindsay

On April 27, 2012, the Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) held an event at the MacKenzie Art Gallery in Regina, showcasing four of the newest resources from the Institute's Publishing Department. Three of which received a total of 11 nominations in 9 different categories at the 2011 Saskatchewan Book Awards (SBA).

The turnout was so great that more and more chairs came out from hiding to accommodate all in attendance!

The evening started with an introduction from Publishing Director Karon Shmon, followed by a reading of *Call of the Fiddle* by authors Wilfred Burton and Anne Patton. Sherry Farrell Racette's beautiful images from

the story played beside them, projected onto a large white wall as they lovingly told the story of Nolin, showing off his fancy steps in his first *Back to Batoche* competition. *Call of the Fiddle* received nominations for the *Regina Book Award* and the *First Peoples' Publishing Award*.

Following the reading, attendees were entertained by the Regina Riel Métis Council's Little Jiggers as they danced the "Dance du Crochet" and the "Red River Jig." Nathan Baker provided live fiddling for the jiggers as the crowd clapped in unison. A huge thank you goes out to Dallas and Betty Anne for bringing the jiggers out and also to all the youth jiggers and to Nathan for an excellent performance!



**Leah Dorion.**

Leah Dorion took to the podium next to read *Relatives with Roots*, which she wrote and illustrated. Leah emphasized the importance of respecting the land as we are all related. Her book was nominated for five SBAs including *First Peoples' Publishing*, *First Peoples' Writing*, *Children's*



**Wilfred Burton and Anne Patton.**



**Darren Préfontaine.**

*Literature Award, Publishing in Education, and the Book of Year.*

Darren Préfontaine followed Leah. He highlighted many images featured in his award-winning book, *Gabriel Dumont: Li Chef Michif in Images and in Words*. He also shared stories that he found while researching Ol' Gabe like the time Gabriel saved four children from a burning house in Montreal. As the firemen at the scene looked at him with their mouths open, he shrugged and said, "I don't burn like other men." *Gabriel Dumont: Li Chef Michif in Images and in Words* received SBA nominations for the *Saskatoon Book Award* and *Non Fiction Award*, and won the top two awards for the year, the *Award for Publishing* and the *Book of the Year*!

The evening was capped off with Lisa Bird-Wilson reading a selection from her book, *An Institute of Our Own: A History of the Gabriel Dumont Institute*. Lisa's book documents the history of GDI from the early 1970s to the present. Published following the SBA deadline for the 2011 awards, the Institute is hopeful to see Lisa's work recognized for its quality at the 2012 SBAs!

Thank you to all who attended our event, the helpful staff of the MacKenzie Art Gallery, and to Terri McPhail who provided our guests with delicious bannock and refreshments!



**Lisa Bird-Wilson.**



**Regina Riel Métis Council's Little Jiggers.**

# GDI Wins Big at Saskatchewan Book Awards!

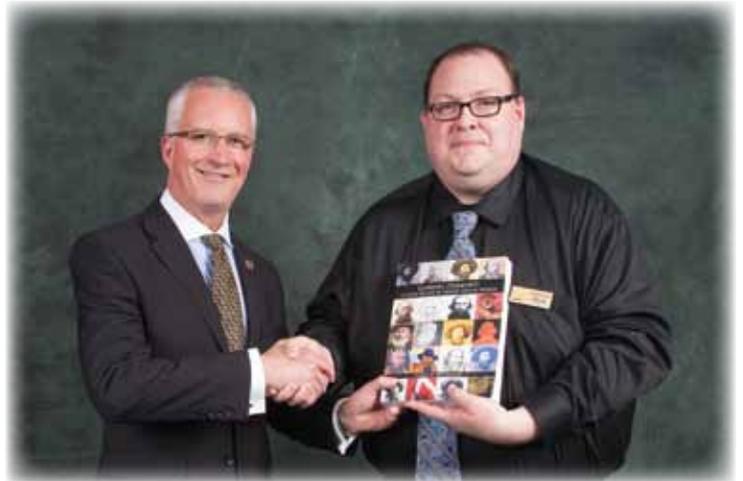
Article by David Morin and Photographs courtesy of Brian Cobbledick - unBound Images Inc.

The 2011 Saskatchewan Book Awards were held on April 28, 2012 at the Conexus Arts Centre in Regina. With over 300 in attendance, a thunderous applause erupted in the room as Darren Préfontaine was called up as the winner of the *Book of the Year Award* for his book, *Gabriel Dumont: Li Chef Michif in Images and in Words!* The *Book of the Year* was chosen under the following criteria: this award is presented to a Saskatchewan author (or pair of authors) for the best book judged on the quality of writing and the quality of presentation including visual appeal, illustrations, and photography.

Darren's book was three years in the making, and was also recognized as the winner of the *Award for Publishing*, which is presented to the Saskatchewan publisher of the best book, based on literary or artistic value, the quality of editing, book design, production and content.

Darren was quite humbled by both awards and made sure to thank those involved with its production. He said that it was a true community resource with many people contributing.

GDI was also honoured by receiving nine other nominations throughout the evening. *Gabriel Dumont: Li Chef Michif in Images and in Words* was also nominated in the *Saskatoon Book Award* and *Non-Fiction Book Award* categories. Wilfred Burton and Anne Patton's *Call of the Fiddle* was nominated for the *Regina Book Award* and *First Peoples' Publishing*. Leah Dorion's *Relatives with Roots* was up



*Dr. Thomas Chase, Provost and Vice-President (Academic) of the University of Regina and Darren Préfontaine.*

for five awards, including *First Peoples' Publishing*, *Publishing in Education*, *First Peoples' Writing*, the *Children's Literature Award*, and the *Book of the Year*.



*David Morin, Lisa Bird-Wilson, Amy Briley, Bradley Brown, Collette Robertson, Karon Shmon, Guy Blondeau, Darren Préfontaine (sitting).*

# Sharing the Stories of Aboriginal Peoples

Article by Chantelle Ducharme

On Wednesday, May 23, APTN will air the one-hour documentary *Jim Brady: In the Footsteps of the Métis Leader* at 10pm central time.

The documentary explores and celebrates the life of James Patrick Brady, who is one of Western Canada's most intriguing and influential Métis political leaders and activists. In 1939, with the help of Malcolm Norris and Joseph Dion, he founded *L'Association des Métis de l'Alberta*.

The film depicts Brady's achievements as a Métis man, father, socialist community organizer, and teacher who rose through his many leadership roles and government positions.

When the Second World War broke out he enlisted in the Canadian military and was admitted into the Royal Canadian Artillery, but not after first being refused because of his Communist affiliations. Brady's experience in the war changed his view of the world and made him further aware of the oppression that Métis people face in Western Canada.

In 1947, he moved to northern

Saskatchewan, where he worked as a prospector and for the Department of Natural Resources. In the north, Brady and Malcolm Norris were reunited and began organizing the northern Métis and non-status Indians through the Métis Association of Saskatchewan. Then, in a sudden and bizarre occurrence in June 1967, Brady and fellow prospector Abbie Halkett disappeared while on a prospecting expedition in the Foster Lakes area. A widespread RCMP search followed, but they were never found.

Be sure to tune into APTN to enjoy more stories about Indigenous Peoples from around the world. The network aims to share the stories of our Peoples.

...

Interested in celebrating National Aboriginal Day with APTN? Join hosts Jennifer Podemski and Crystle Lighting in Regina on Saturday, June 23

on the campus of the First Nations University of Canada. APTN's day-long celebrations are completely FREE and are family-friendly. For a complete list of activities and performers, stay tuned to [www.aboriginaldaylive.com](http://www.aboriginaldaylive.com). If you're interested in volunteering or running your own food or arts booth, you have until June 1 to apply. Click on the "Contact Us" link for information on how to get involved.



*Jim Brady. Saskatchewan Archives Board, R-A13459-3.*

# Claude Adams (1926-2011)

Article by Darren R. Préfontaine and Photographs, Gabriel Dumont Institute Archival Collection

On December 26, 2011, Métis war veteran Claude Adams passed away in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. I didn't know Claude very well, but I was struck by his humility and pride in being both a Métis and a Canadian war veteran. In 1997, after the opening of the Prince Albert Métis Fall Festival, Claude and I talked briefly before we launched the Gabriel Dumont Institute book, *Remembrances: Interviews with Métis Veterans*. In a fashion so typical of Canadian war veterans, Claude told me a few things about his war service and indicated that the Canadians were underappreciated in World War II, but that they were "just doing their duty." He further told me that he was a paratrooper, and that his unit had "done something very great," leading up to the D-Day landings in June 1944, but that the men "all swore to take this secret to their grave." I never asked any further questions about what action that these brave Canadians achieved, but I always remained curious.

Later, I learned that Claude was a member of the First Special Service Force or the "Devil's Brigade,"—an elite American-Canadian military formation that terrorized the Wehrmacht in Italy



*Max Lucier (raising Métis flag) and Claude Adams (right), Prince Albert Métis Fall Festival Launch, 1997.*

and in southern France before it was disbanded in 1945. After a German soldier was stealthily killed in one engagement, another German soldier called the First Special Service Force

member who did the killing a "schwartzter teufel" or "black devil." In film, this elite unit was chronicled in "The Devil's Brigade" in 1968, and in 2009, Brad Pitt wore their red arrowhead insignia with

“Canada” and “USA” on it in the Quentin Tarantino film, “Inglorious Basterds.”

Hollywood movies, however, romanticize and glorify what is a grim, terrible business. Every war veteran that I ever met speaks about how terrible war is, and Claude certainly wrote about and discussed the horror of war. In 2001, *New Breed Magazine* published a poem that Claude wrote entitled, “Ode to the Métis Veterans.”

Ode to the Métis Veterans—  
Claude Adams

A Métis won't tell you  
The horror he's seen  
As comrades were facing  
That horrible scene

And yet he could tell you  
Just what he fought for  
Your and my freedom  
Was the price of that war

Instead he is thankful  
For good things in life  
And glad he has lived through  
The sorrow and strife

He remembers his comrades  
Each day he's been home  
And just for a moment  
His memory will roam

To the time when they found them  
“Killed in Action” they said  
Two of his Métis  
But know they were dead

They laid them on stretchers  
And he moved to the rear  
He helped with the carry  
To a truck waiting near

Did he do the wrong thing?  
Did he lead them astray?  
Did he give the wrong order?  
It still haunts him today

He clearly remembers  
How can he forget?  
The last chance to see them  
Is a life long regret

As they loaded the bodies  
He waved his Goodbyes  
But how could he see them  
Through the tears in his eyes?



*Claude Adams (right, head bowed), Prince Albert Métis Fall Festival Launch, 1997.*



# The New Nation

## La noovel naasyoon

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# The New Nation

## La noovel naasyoon

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*The New Nation: la noovel naaysoon*, is a publication of the Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI), which promotes Métis history and culture, the Institute's activities and programs, and the larger Métis community in the province. Four issues a year will be published, one for each season: winter, spring, summer, and fall. Subscription rates to *The New Nation: la noovel naaysoon* will remain relatively low as we would like to see as many people as possible read it, and these rates are only meant to recover the costs associated with shipping the magazine. *The New Nation: la noovel naaysoon* will be available for free at the GDI Publishing Office, at cultural events in which GDI has a display, as well as online at the *Virtual Museum of Métis History and Culture* ([www.metismuseum.ca](http://www.metismuseum.ca)).

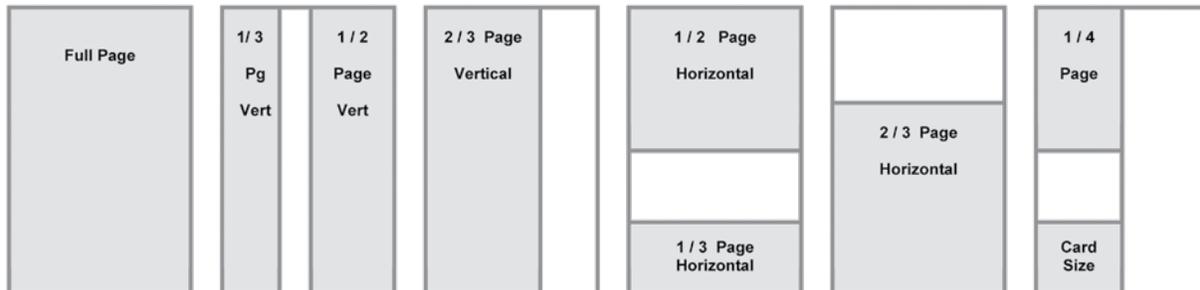
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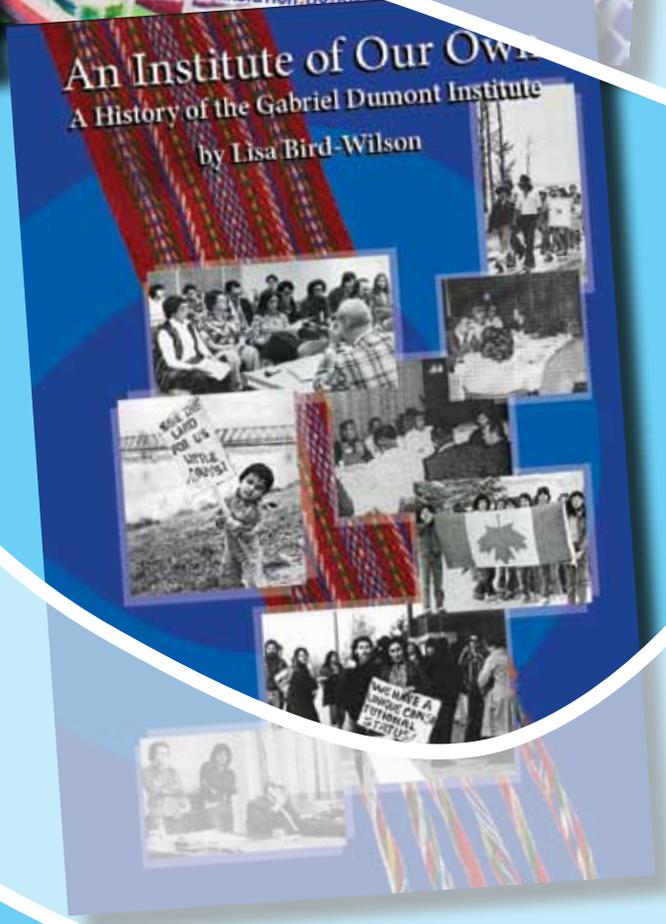
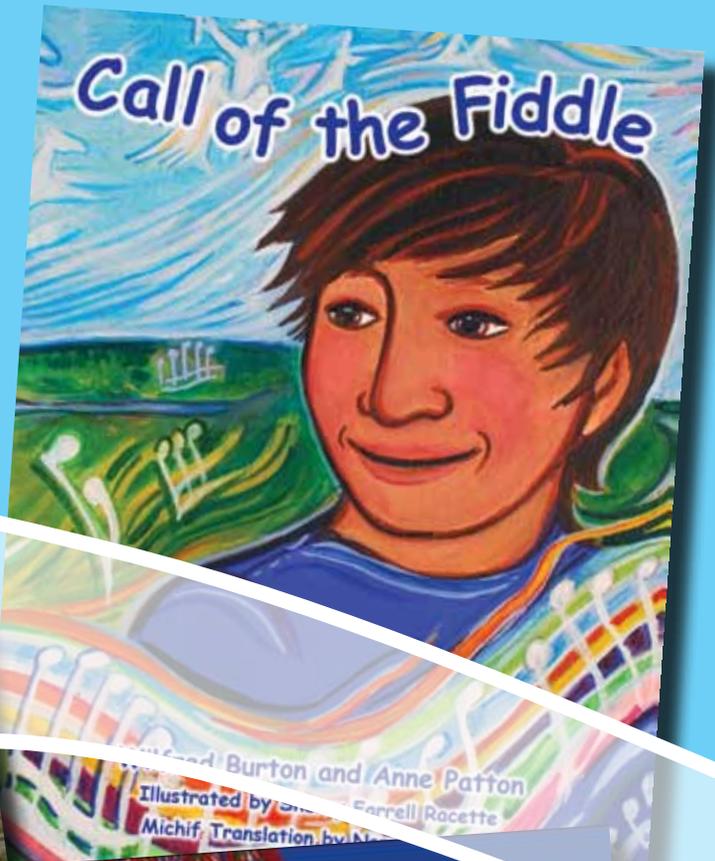
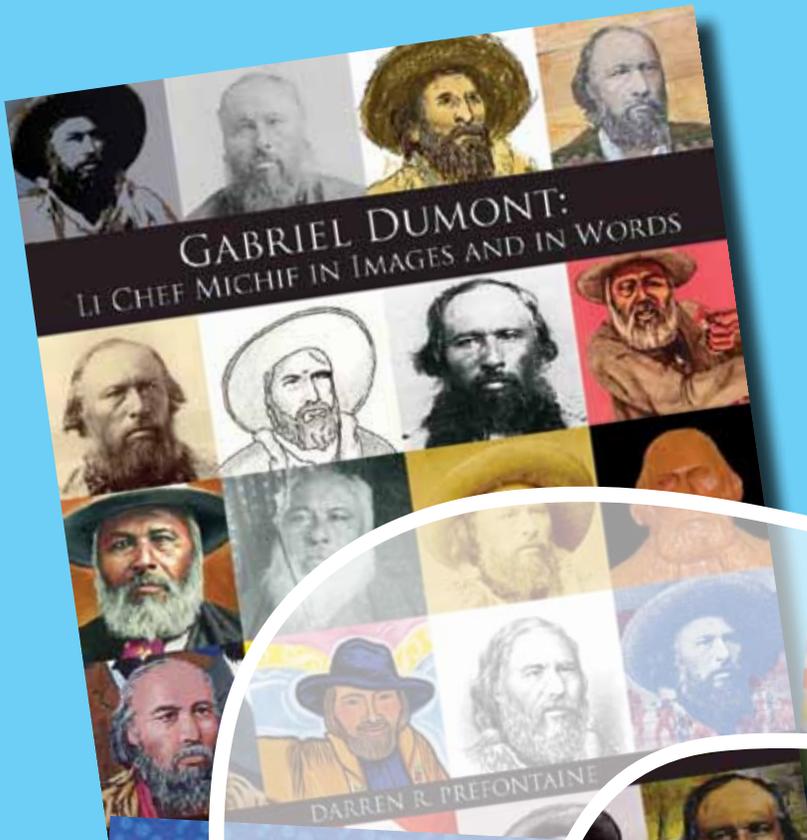
*GDI mission: To promote the renewal and the development of Métis culture through research, materials development, collections and the distribution of those materials and the development and delivery of Métis-specific educational programs and services.*

For inquiries regarding *The New Nation: La noovel naasyoon* feel free to contact us by telephone 306.934.4941, by fax 306.244.0252 or by email ([david.morin@gdi.gdins.org](mailto:david.morin@gdi.gdins.org)).

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