

## **George Fleury.** (b. 1935)

George Fleury is one of the founders of the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF). In the first election in 1968, he was elected as Vice President from the South West Region.<sup>1</sup> He went on to serve on the MMF Board of Directors until 1979. The SW Region Board worked out of Minnedosa for three years then in 1971 George opened the first MMF office in Brandon.

George was born at Ste. Madeleine, Manitoba on March 12, 1935. He is the son of Jean Édouard Fleury (1900-1974) and Anne Ledoux (1902-1964). His paternal grandparents were François “Frank” Fleury and Margaret Lagimodière; his maternal grandfather was Napoleon Ledoux. The family lived at Ste. Madeleine until their home and land was expropriated by under the *Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act* and turned into community pasture. George first attended Balmarina School near Binscarth after the family had moved onto Wilbur Wright’s land at Binscarth. George returned to school for grade two when Family Allowances were established and children had to attend school for mothers to get the allowance. He then had to walk six miles to school; located at Fouillard’s Corner. George was out on his own working as a seasonal worker from age fifteen.

George married Edith Leaming in 1957. They were living in the valley at Binscarth and moved to Minnedosa in the 1960s. After George overcame an alcohol addiction problem, he went on to have a long career as a counselor with the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba, having started with them in 1980. Since his retirement in 1999, he has dedicated himself to music, reviving the old Michif<sup>2</sup> songs and has been a long-time member of the MMF Michif Language Committee. George sings and plays guitar. His father Jean Fleury was a well-known Métis fiddler.

His son John Fleury has followed his father into politics, and is a member of the MMF Board of Directors. He was first elected in 2000 and has held major portfolios in the Métis government. He also serves on the Board of Governors of the Métis National Council. George’s daughter Georgina Liberty is the MMF’s Director of Métis Tripartite Self Government Negotiations.



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<sup>1</sup> Steve Lavallée and Rita McTavish were elected as members at large from SW Region in that election.

<sup>2</sup> George refers to his Métis language as “Cree” as do most of the older Michif speakers.