

Richard Harold Lafferty. (b. 1944)

By Leah Dorion and Albert Lafferty

Richard was born and raised at Fort Providence, Northwest Territories and now lives at Hay River. Richard is one of the most accomplished fiddlers in the Northwest Territories. He plays fiddle tunes learnt from “Old Time” fiddlers and the Métis who traveled up and down the Mackenzie River. His uncle the late Danny Bouvier (b. 1922) of Fort Providence, another top NWT fiddler, was one of his early musical influences and mentors. Richard carries on the musical traditions of the Lafferty family and the community of Fort Providence.



His musical performances and involvement in Northern Aboriginal communities is extensive. Richard was involved for many years as the fiddler for the NWT Métis Reelers. In 1992 he entertained at the inaugural gala of the Television Native Communication Network, which is now the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network.

Lafferty played to launch television station TVNC, now known as Aboriginal People’s Television Network. Some of his other accomplishments include playing for Queen Elizabeth II at Yellowknife during the Royal Visit to the North in 1994 and performances at the Canada Games in New Brunswick in 1985, the Aboriginal Pavilion at Expo ’86 in Vancouver and playing for the RCMP Musical Ride in 2003. In 1996, Richard was awarded a Metis Sash in the Northwest Territories for by the Métis Nation of the Northwest Territories for his contributions to Métis music and traditional dances.



Metis fiddlers Richard Lafferty and Wesley Hardisty and their band perform at Canada’s Northern House, February 2010, Vancouver Olympics

Richard is featured on the Gabriel Dumont Institute video, *Richard Lafferty the Muskeg Fiddler* (Saskatoon, 2002). This video is about Richard Lafferty's life, his music, and his efforts to preserve Métis style fiddling in the MacKenzie River Valley. It is also a documentary about the history of Métis fiddling in the Northwest Territories. He also contributed to a combined CD project entitled, *Drops of Brandy: An Anthology of Métis Music: and other Traditional Métis Tunes*. The project was recorded by the Gabriel Dumont Institute in 2001. His most recent CD of "Métis style" music was produced and released in 2003. He lives with his wife Ruth in Hay River, Northwest Territories.



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