

Norman Fleury (b. 1949)

Norman Fleury is the son of Flora Fleury¹ and stepfather Joseph Edward Fleury. His mother's maiden name was Leclair; her parents were Jean Baptiste Leclair² and Flora Lepine.³ Norman's great-grandfather was Joseph Fleury Sr. born 1829 at St. Boniface. He was the older brother of Patrice Fleury, one of the Métis leaders during the 1885 Resistance at Batoche. Patrice was a member of Way-ke-ge-ke-zhick's Band of Chippewa Indians and appears on the annuity rolls in 1868 as Band # 176. His wife, Agathe Wilkie and her father Jean Baptiste Wilkie had been members of the Little Shell Band then Way-ke-ge-ke-zhick's Band of Chippewa Indians during the 1860s. Agathe was Gabriel Dumont's sister-in-law.

Norman has travelled throughout Canada, the United States, and the world (Japan and the Scandinavian countries) to educate people on the intricacies and history of the Michif language. Norman has also worked with the Louis Riel Institute and the Gabriel Dumont Institute to do numerous book translations into Michif and to provide a spoken record of Michif on the CDs that accompany these publications.

Norman Fleury was the Director of the Manitoba Métis Federation Michif Languages Program and National; Co-chair of the Métis National Council's Michif Language Revitalization Program. Norman credits his 101-year-old mother and her mother with teaching him the importance of the Michif language. "When you went to her (grandmother's) place and spoke to her in English, she'd say, 'Speak to me in our language. I don't understand you. I'm not an English woman and my language is Michif.' My grandmother looked at our language as a spiritual language, a God given language." Norman was born and raised St. Lazare, Manitoba close to the historic HBC, Fort Ellice on the Carlton Trail.

Norman Fleury (left) with Harry Daniels



Norman took teacher's training through the IMPACTE program offered by Brandon University. He was the direc-

¹ Florence "Flora" LeClair born June 22, 1902 in the Rural Municipality of Ellice, near St. Lazare, Manitoba; married Joseph Edward Fleury born circa 1902 in St. Lazare district, Manitoba. They were married on November 6, 1923 in St. Lazare. Joseph was the son of Edouard Fleury and Natalie "Rose" Boyer. Norman's father was Bernard Fleury son of Jean Fleury and Marie Vermette.

² Jean-Baptiste-"John"-LeClair-LeClaire, LeClerc was born September 2, 1878 in Swan Lake District, near Boggy Creek, Manitoba d: in St Lazare, Manitoba, the son of Joseph LeClair and Louise Bousquet. Jean Baptiste married Flora Lepine b: November 1881 m: July 30, 1901 in Ellice, near St. Lazare, Manitoba.

³ The parents of Flora Lepine (1888-1972) were Jean-Baptiste Lepine and Julie Fleury. Jean Baptiste Lepine was born February 7, 1844 at SFX, the son of Jean Baptiste Lepine Sr. (b. 1820) and Suzanne Gariepy. Julie Fleury born 1845 was the daughter of Louis Fleury (b. 1820) and Marguerite Trottier.

tor for the drug and alcohol abuse program of the Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council, a health liaison worker and a Life Skills Coach at the Oo-Za-We-Kwun Centre at Rivers, Manitoba.

Norman taught Michif Language at Brandon University for the 2012-2013 academic year and is currently teaching both Michif and Cree languages for the 2013-2014 academic year. In addition he teaches community groups in southwest Manitoba.

Norman has served as a Chairman of the MMF Local at St. Lazare and as a Manitoba Métis Federation director from Southwest Region. For many years Norman served on the Advisory Board of the Aboriginal Court Work Program. He currently serves on the Elder's Advisory Council of Brandon University, a position he has held for many years. Norman is currently working with the Turtle Mountain Chippewa Indian Tribal Council at Belcourt, North Dakota on development of Michif Language curriculum.

Besides French and English, Norman speaks seven of the Aboriginal languages common to the Métis. Norman is author of *La Lawng: Michif Peekishkwewin: The Canadian Michif Language Dictionary* (Winnipeg: Métis Resource Centre and Manitoba Métis Federation, 2000). In March of 2004, Peter Bakker and Norman Fleury completed *Learn Michif: Kishkeehtha Michif*. This language CD is intended to assist the student to learn Michif by listening. There is an accompanying handbook.

Norman has a great love of horses and farms near Woodnorth in south-western Manitoba.

Publications and Projects:

Manitoba Association of Native Languages. *An Interactive Guide to Seven Aboriginal Languages*. (Cree, Dene, Michif, Ojibwe, Dakota, Oji-Cree and Saulteaux). K.I.M. Interactive CD-ROM. Winnipeg: One World Media and Manitoba Association of Native Languages, 1998.

Norman Fleury was the consultant and Michif-Cree speaker for this interactive CD ROM. Topics such as days of the week; months, weather; feelings and other descriptive vocabulary are covered in each language on this material aimed at early elementary school children. A teachers guide with picture cues can be purchased with the CD.

Fleury, Norman and Lawrence Barkwell (Producers). *A Michif Feast*. Camperville, Manitoba: Michif Language Project, Manitoba Métis Federation, 1999.

This video portrays the preparations for a Michif feast at Grace and Walter Menard's lodge south of Camperville Manitoba. Norman Fleury, the Michif Language Project director interviews Louis Ledoux Sr., an 89 year old Michif elder. All the speech on this video is in Michif-Cree. The video also features fiddle music by Rene Ferland who is accompanied by Patrick Gambler on guitar.

Fleury, Norman. *Michif language video of Joyce Laroque and George Boyer*, recorded October 30, 1999. Copy on file with Manitoba Métis Federation.

Fleury, Norman. *Michif language video of Pearl Belcourt and Lionel Allard Sr.*, recorded October 31, 1999. Copy on file with Manitoba Métis Federation.

Fleury, Norman. *Tawnshi en Itwayk en Michif?* Winnipeg: Manitoba Métis Federation Michif Languages Project, 1999.

This is a booklet which gives Michif and English translations for various Michif language conversational terms. Norman Fleury is a Métis from St. Lazare Manitoba; he is currently director of the Michif Languages Project of the Manitoba Métis Federation and coordinator of the Michif Language Revitalization Project of the Métis National Council.

Fleury, Norman. *Michif Vocabulary*. Winnipeg: Manitoba Métis Federation Michif Languages Project, 1999.

This is a small primer of basic Michif vocabulary.

Fleury, Norman. *La Lawng: Michif Peekishkwewin: The Canadian Michif Language Dictionary*. Winnipeg: Métis Resource Centre and Manitoba Métis Federation, 2000.

This 42-page primer has a pronunciation guide, vocabulary, conversational phrases, a short verb listing and examples of Michif prayers and invocations.

Mushkeg Media. *Finding Our Talk: Episode 7 Michif, Getting Into Michif*. Montreal: Mushkeg Media and APTN, 2002.

Norman Fleury was the primary Michif consultant for this film and appears in the video. This has played numerous times on APTN.

Fleury, Norman and Larry Geisbrecht (Co-producers) *Speaking Up: Michif*. (Video) Winnipeg: Manitoba Métis Federation, 2003.

Fleury, Norman. *La Lawng: Michif Peekishkwewin, The Heritage Language of the Canadian Métis, Volume One, Language Practice* Winnipeg: Pemmican Publications, 2004.

Norman wrote six of the ten chapters that appear in Volume one of this book.

Bakker, Peter and Norman Fleury. *Learn Michif: Kishkehta Michif*.” Authors, March 2004.

This language CD is intended to assist the student to learn Michif by listening. There is an accompanying handbook.

Fleury, Norman. *Tawnshi en Itwayk en Michif?* Winnipeg: Manitoba Métis Federation Michif Languages Project, 1999.

This is a booklet which gives Michif and English translations for various Michif language conversational terms. Norman Fleury is a Métis from St. Lazare Manitoba; he is currently director of the Michif Languages Project of the Manitoba Métis Federation and coordinator of the Michif Language Revitalization Project of the Métis National Council.

_____ *Michif Vocabulary*. Winnipeg: Manitoba Métis Federation Michif Languages Project, 1999.

This is a small primer of basic Michif vocabulary.

_____ (Lawrence Barkwell, Editor). *La Lawng: Michif Peekishkwewin: The Canadian Michif Language Dictionary*. Winnipeg: Manitoba Métis Federation, 2000.

This 42 page primer has a pronunciation guide, vocabulary, conversational phrases, a short verb listing and examples of Michif prayers and invocations.

_____ “Michif Invocations and Prayers,” in Lawrence J., Leah M. Dorion and Audreen Hourie (Eds.). *Métis Legacy, Volume Two: Michif Culture, Heritage and Folkways*. Saskatoon, Gabriel Dumont Institute, Winnipeg: Pemmican Publications, 2007: 193-195.

Fleury, Norman and Peter Bakker. *La Pchit Sandrieuz an Michif – Cinderella in Michif*. Winnipeg : MMF Michif Language Program and authors, 2007.

This CD and the accompanying text tell the Michif version of the story of Cinderella. This story has been passed down over many generations in Michif folklore. Norman Fleury, director of the MMF Michif Language Program narrates the story. The text was transcribed by Peter Bakker and translated by Peter Bakker and Norman Fleury.

Fleury, Norman, Gilbert Pelletier, Jeanne Pelletier, Joe Welsh, Norma Welsh, Janice DePeel and Carrie Saganance. *Stories of Our People - Lii zistwayr di la naasyoon di Michif: A Métis Graphic Novel Anthology*. Saskatoon: Gabriel Dumont Institute, 2008.

These Métis stories seamlessly blend characters and motifs from Cree, Ojibway, and French-Canadian traditions into an exciting, unique synthesis. Métis stories are an invaluable treasure because they tell familiar stories in interesting ways while preserving elements of storytelling which have become rare to the Métis' ancestral cultures. The book includes stories about the three Métis tricksters (Wiisakaychak, Nanabush, and Chi-Jean), werewolves (Roogaroos), cannibal spirits (Whiitigos), flying skeletons (Paakus), and of course, the Devil (li Jiyaab). Steeped in Michif language and culture, this graphic novel anthology includes the storytellers' original transcripts, prose renditions of the transcripts, and five illustrated stories.

Bouchard, David; art by Dennis J. Weber, fiddle music by John Arcand, translation by Norman Fleury. *The Secret of your Name: Proud to be Métis; Kiimooch Ka_shinikashooyen: Aen Kishchitaymook aen li Michif Iwik*. Markham, Ontario: Red Deer Press, 2009.

Award winning Métis author David Bouchard C.M. wrote this non-fiction bi-lingual children's book to honour his Anishinaabe, Chippewa, Menominee and Innu Grandmothers. The text is in English and Michif. The book is illustrated by well-known Métis artist Dennis Weber of Kelowna B.C.; the book has an accompanying CD featuring the fiddle music of John Arcand. The CD reading in Michif from the text is done by Norman Fleury a noted Métis linguist from Woodnorth, MB. He provided all of the Michif translation as well.

Dorion, Leah (author and illustrator), Norman Fleury translator. *The Giving Tree: A Retelling of a Traditional Métis Story*. Saskatoon: Gabriel Dumont Institute, 2009.

This illustrated children's book is in both English and Michif. The story behind “The Giving Tree” was told to Leah by Saskatoon Métis Elder Frank Tomkins. The story contains all the Métis values of giving, family and respect and it teaches a lot of the values and the cultural traditions of being Métis. In the accompanying CD Norman Fleury tells the story in the Michif language.

Panas, J. D. and Olive Whitford, Michif translation by Norman Fleury. *The Beaver's Big House - Lii kas-torr leu groos maenzoon*. Saskatoon: Gabriel Dumont Institute, 2004.

This children's book written in English and Michif has an accompanying CD of Norman Fleury telling the story in the Michif language.

Patton, Anne and Wilfred Burton, translated by Norman Fleury, illustrated by Sherry Farrell Racette. *Fiddle Dancer - Li daanseur di vyaeloon*. Saskatoon: Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research, 2007.

This illustrated children's book is in the English and Michif languages. There is a CD in the pocket of the cover with the narration in both languages.

Rosen, Nicole and Heather Souter with Grace Zoldy, Verna deMontigny, Norman Fleury and Harvey Pelletier. *Piikishkweetak añ Michif!* Winnipeg: Manitoba Métis Federation Michif Language Program and the Louis Riel Institute, 2009.

The goal of this book is to support adult Michif language courses for people with English as their main language. It does not presuppose any knowledge of any other language, and is meant to be taught over twelve weeks, with each chapter taking a week to complete. Of course, students (and teachers) may move more quickly or more slowly through the chapters if they prefer. At the end of this course, students will have a grasp of many of the basic concepts of the language and be able to communicate in simple sentences in a finite number of contexts. It is a good introduction to the language for anyone planning on doing a Master-Apprentice program with Michif elders, but should not be considered the final word on the language by any stretch of the imagination. The best place to learn Michif is orally, alongside the Michif Elders; this manual is an attempt to support students who find written word helpful and who do not have daily access to Elders, so that they may have another reference to help them with their studies.



Norman Fleury and Lawrence Barkwell in Bruce Dumont's teepee.
Back to Batoche 2004, photo by Warren Dudar, courtesy Gabriel Dumont Institute.



Compiled by Lawrence Barkwell
Coordinator of Métis Heritage and History Research
Louis Riel Institute