

Olivine (née Bousquet) Tiedema. (b. 1928)

Olivine Bousquet-Tiedema is a Senator for the Métis Nation Ontario (MNO). In 2012, Olivine received the *Rochon-Burnett Volunteer of the Year Award* from MNO, which noted; “Senator Bousquet-Tiedema was instrumental in the founding of three MNO Community Councils; the MNO Toronto-York, Oshawa-Durham and Credit River Métis Councils. In recognition of her dedication and contributions to preserving Métis culture, the Oshawa-Durham Métis Council named their dance troupe the Olivine Bousquet Métis Dancers.”



Senator Olivine Bousquet-Tiedema receiving her award from MNO President Lipinsky

Olivine was born in St. Boniface, Manitoba on March 29, 1928. She is the grand-daughter of Napoleon Bousquet and his wife Camille Carrière. Napoleon was born circa 1868 in St. Boniface, the son of Henri Bousquet and Marie-Marguerite Wilkie who was the daughter of Métis hunting chief Jean-Baptiste Wilkie. Napoleon’s father died in 1873 and Marguerite remarried to Joseph Lagimodière in 1880. At the time of the 1885 Resistance, the widow Marguerite and her children were probably living in the Batoche area with one of her older sisters since her sister Madeleine was married to Gabriel Dumont and sister Agathe was married to Patrice Fleury.

Senator Olivine Tiedema, Napoleon’s grand-daughter, has recounted the stories her grandpa told her when she was growing up in St. Boniface.¹ He was at the Battle of

¹ See Laura-Lee Kearns, “(Re)claiming Métis Women Identities.” In Christopher Martin, Gregg Dahl and Ian Peach (Eds.), *Métis in Canada: History, Identity, Law and Politics*. Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2013: 78.

Batoche as a teenager, loading the men's muskets. She says he always had tears in his eyes when he recalled Louis Riel and her great-uncle Gabriel Dumont and great-aunt Madeleine Wilkie Dumont. Napoleon's aunts Julienne and Elizabeth Bousquet were married to Resistance activists, brothers William Boyer and Jean-Baptiste Boyer.

Olivine also recounts her own acts of resistance. When growing up in St. Boniface she attended Academy St. Joseph where Rita Riel, Louis Riel's niece, was a schoolmate. She says that the nuns at the school were teaching a pejorative account of Louis Riel, Gabriel Dumont and the Métis at Batoche, always referring to the Métis as traitors. Olivine notes that she would refute their accounts and refused to write their history when it came to exams. She notes that she never did pass French History, and after spending three years in grade eight, she left school at age 16.



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