

OTIPEMISIWAK

**NEW DAWN PRESIDENT
SEEKS EMPOWERMENT FOR
ALBERTA MÉTIS WOMEN**

**MÉTIS NATION OF
ALBERTA SPRINGTIME
PANCAKE BREAKFAST
A SUCCESS**

**GENEALOGICAL RESOURCE
CENTRE REMAINS
CANADA'S PREMIERE
MÉTIS CULTURAL CENTRE**

**MNA RESOURCE
DEPARTMENT ENSURES
EXCELLENCE IN CLIENT
SERVICES**

**MNA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ROUND
TABLE OPPORTUNITY FOR PROGRESS**

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ABOUT OTIPEMISIWAK

Otipemisiwak is a quarterly Métis Nation of Alberta Magazine published at Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter intervals. The magazine is designed to assist MNA members and stakeholders in staying informed regarding MNA related activities.

PUBLICATION SCHEDULE

Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter
March - May Published June 1	June - August Published September 1	September - November Published December 1	December - February Published March 1

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

I am proud to announce the reinstatement of the official Métis Nation of Alberta magazine, Otipemisiwak. The Métis Nation of Alberta is dedicated to ensuring a steady flow of communication between our office and our members and a quarterly magazine initiative is one method of ensuring such regular communication. This Spring edition of Otipemisiwak reflects upon past Métis Nation of Alberta events and additionally provides a venue for the promotion of upcoming Métis Nation of Alberta events. As the President of the Métis Nation of Alberta, I am optimistic for the trajectory of this new communication channel as a device to suit the needs of our ever-increasing membership.

Sincerely,



Audrey Poitras
Métis Nation of Alberta President



UPCOMING EVENTS

June	July	August	September
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Back to Batoche 2015 • Métis in the Mountains Festival 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Métis Nation of Alberta 87th Annual General Assembly • Hivernant Days 2015 	

EVENT DATES



Métis Nation of Alberta 87th Annual Assembly

August 6 - August 9
Ramada Conference Centre
11834 Kingsway
Edmonton, AB

Métis Hivernant Days - 11th Annual

July 31 - August 2
Big Valley, Alberta

For information, contact Marlene Lanz at 403-815-6720

Métis in the Mountains Festival

July 25-28
Castle River Rodeo Grounds

For more information or to register, call 403-627-1884

Back to Batoche

July 16-19
11 km north of Hwy 312, SK-225,
Batoche, Saskatchewan

EVENT FLASHBACKS

86th Annual General Assembly

The 86th Annual AGA was well-attended by all. Join us for the 87th Annual General Assembly in Edmonton this year!



Back to Batoche 2014

Back to Batoche 2014 was lively as ever! The Métis Nation of Alberta looks forward to seeing everyone at the 2015 Back to Batoche Festival. In particular, we look forward to working with our Métis Artists on a captivating art exhibit!



MÉTIS NATION OF ALBERTA SPRINGTIME PANCAKE BREAKFAST A SUCCESS

The Métis Nation of Alberta hosted a complimentary community pancake breakfast on May 14th from 8:00AM until noon. The event drew a considerable turnout of MNA friends, neighbours and business partners who gathered to socialize over a common interest - delicious food. The MNA head office staff worked together to provide a sumptuous feast of pancakes, fruit, and sausages.

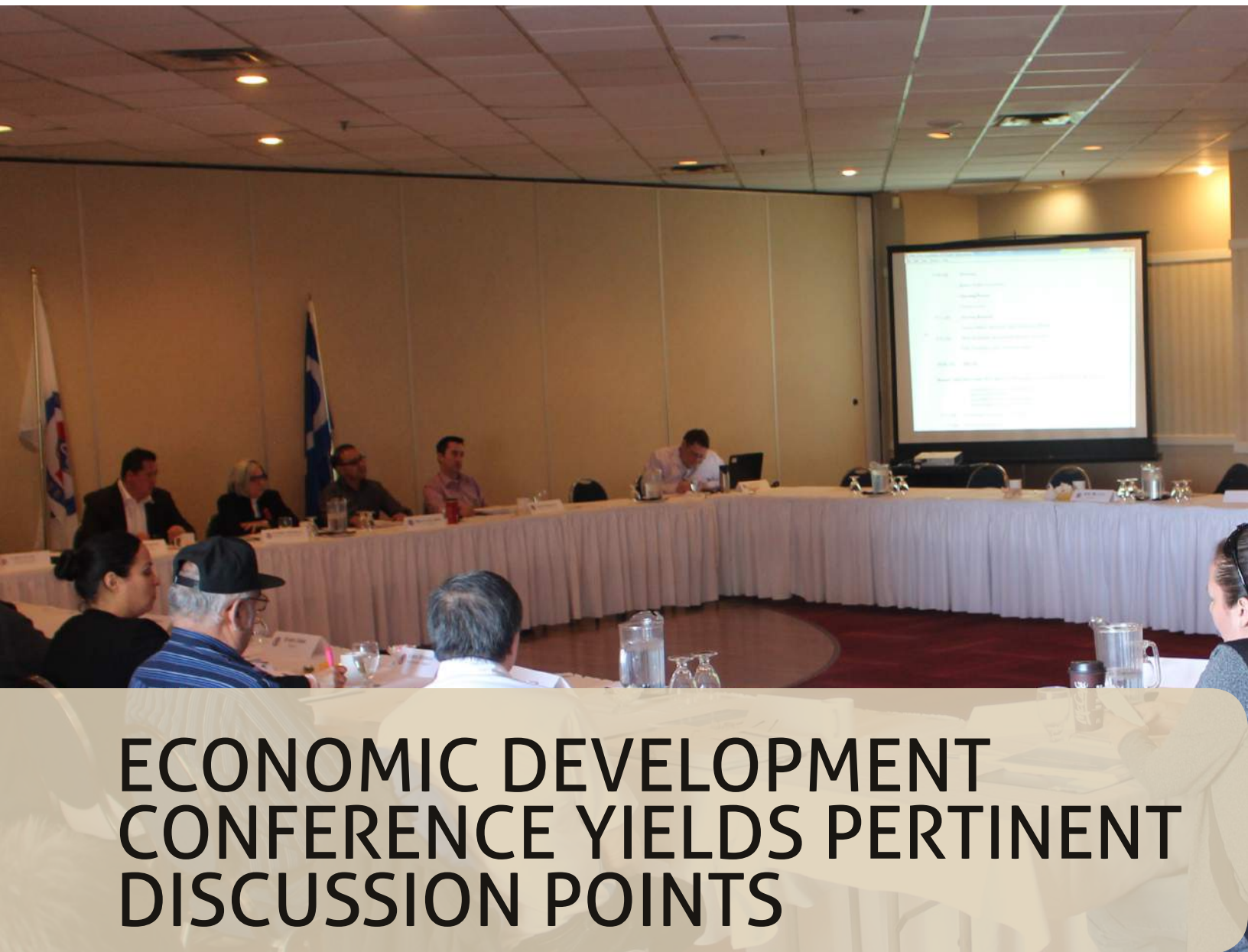
The breakfast drew an approximate 150 guests over the 4 hour time period and the MNA looks forward to hosting similar events in the future.

The MNA thanks everyone who attended the event to make it a success! We look forward to seeing you all again soon.









ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE YIELDS PERTINENT DISCUSSION POINTS

The MNA Economic Conference took place on March 05, 2015 at the Ramada Conference Centre on Kingsway. In attendance were representatives from all corners of the MNA including Regional Presidents, Vice-Presidents, and representatives from MNA affiliates, Apeetogosan (Métis) Development Inc, The Rupertsland Institute, and Métis Urban/Métis Capital Housing

MNA officials worked tirelessly to address pressing economic issues such as industry relations, community development, and education. The attendees attacked problems pertinent to their communities with both tenacity and veracity. The conference represents a significant stride in attending to economic issues that affect all Alberta Métis.

In terms of economic development, the assembly specifically examined issues within 1) community economic development, 2) business development, 3) Métis human capital development, and 4) partnerships and strategic priorities.



Top Left: MNA President, Audrey Poitras speaks with an MNC representative.

Top Middle Left: Region One Representative, Joe Blyan

Bottom Middle Left: MNA Region Two President, Karen (KC) Collins, speaks at the round table.

Bottom Left: MNA Region Five President, Bev New, addresses the assembly.





Top Right: MNA Community & Industry Liaison, Bob Phillips, and Business Development Officer, Nick Bourque review and discuss the agenda.

Bottom Right: Michael Ivy of MNA Affiliate, Apeetogosan gives a presentation at the round table event.

Left: Mr. Joe Blyan, Rupertsland Institute CEO; Mr. Lorne Gladu, and Mr. Bruce Gladue, Citizen of the Métis Nation of Alberta.







HISTORY LIVES AT THE GENEALOGICAL RESOURCE CENTRE

Look no further than the Genealogical Resource Centre (GRC) to learn about Métis history. The MNA centre boasts a vast array of documents, photos, and items; which together tell a lucid tale of the past. The centre's steward and caretaker, Beatrice Demetrius, understands the importance of each individual artifact in shaping our understanding of Métis culture by revealing the narratives of Métis families of days gone by.

The centre primarily serves as a resource for prospective MNA applicants who may use the centre to trace their family tree using records including (but not limited to) census data, marriage licenses, military documentation, letters, and baptism records.

A visit to the GRC provides applicants with ample resources including experienced guidance, a family tree template, and archives to fill in any blanks. Sound complicated? It really isn't. Beatrice assures me that the process is fascinating and helps build a sense of identity for prospective applicants seeking answers.



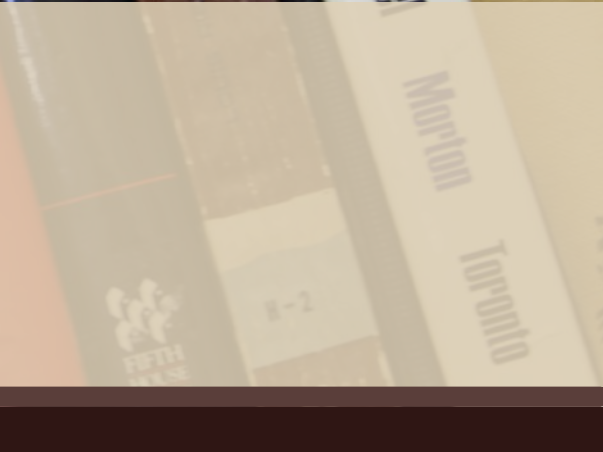
And you never know what might be hiding in the center's innumerable tomes because the GRC is constantly accruing historical fragments of Canadiana. For example, last year, MNA cultural team members Beatrice Demetrius, Sara Parker and Kelsey Bradburn, undertook an excursion to Winnipeg in order to acquire additional GRC documentation. Over a four day span, the team worked tirelessly to collect data from the Hudson's Bay Company Archives and discovered items dating back to the 17th century, including the original Pemmican Proclamation! Kelsey Bradburn, the MNA Child Services Manager and active cultural team member describes the process as an invigorating "challenge." It quickly became a challenge to hunt for rare and sought-after materials.

For the culture team, ensuring the proliferation of Métis artifacts is a labour of love and their prolonged efforts continually enhance the GRC library. Just recently, Beatrice paid her own way to visit Salt Lake City, the "genealogical capital of the world." Her trip included a visit to the famous Family History Library, which includes more than 2.4 million genealogical records! Beatrice remains enthusiastic about the trip and is optimistic that additions from the library will add great value to the GRC collection.

Top Left: A photo from the GRC's varied library reveals a large collection on Canadian hero, Louis Riel

Bottom Right: Beatrice Demetrius is the GRC Manager and resident Métis culture expert!

Bottom Left: Kelsey Bradburn scouring documents at Winnipeg's Hudson's Bay Archives





Of course, we cannot forget about the continued support of our donors in calculating the GRC's success. The continued generosity of our many donors have added layers of comprehension to the record books. Just recently, the GRC received a donation of photos and letters, which tell the Whitford family story. The donor, Ethel Sauer, poses with a photo of her grandmother, Flora Anderson (Whitford), which represents one of a multitude of photos that chart the family history.

Further donations include a substantial donation from Lloyd Hamilton, which consisted of military regalia, as well as an antique clock and trunk and the Gariepy family who donated a large number of pictures from their albums. The MNA would like to extend its deepest thanks to these and other donors who keep the center thriving.

TOP LEFT: Beatrice gives a tour of the GRC to visitors.

TOP RIGHT: Antique clock donation courtesy of Lloyd Hamilton



LEFT: Ethel Sauers presents a photo of her grandmother, Flora Anderson née Whitford

MIDDLE: Flora Anderson née Whitford

RIGHT A photograph of the Anderson née Whitford family

OUR DONORS

The Genealogical Resource Centre would like to thank the many individuals who have donated to the centre over the years. Please note that this list includes recent donors only and is not an exhaustive list of all donors. Donor Acknowledgment is an ongoing process and Otipemisiwak will continue to release donor acknowledgments in future editions!

- Ethel F. Kondro (Sauer)
- Lorretta Jobin
- James C. Atkinson
- Laura Horne
- Allan Goyer
- Carrie Aldridge
- Robert Doucette
- Danny Mantel
- Gordon & Audrey Poitras
- Doreen Poitras
- Derek Kirszewski
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- Lloyd Hamilton
- Toby Racette
- Herbert Rachel
- Joseph Lafortune
- Robert Kenneth Clark
- Jenny Lea Young
- Robert Swizinski
- Ruth Melhus
- Victor Maurice Lalonde
- Jerome Vandale



A NEW DAWN FOR MÉTIS WOMEN IN ALBERTA

March eighth rang in a new era for Métis women residing in Alberta. It was on this day that a group of Albertan Métis women known as the New Dawn Métis Women Society gathered to elect a new body of representatives for the next term. Among these elected officials are President, Marilyn Lizee; Vice President, Baily Oster; Secretary, Tammie Bouvier; and Treasurer, Maryann Stepien.

I had the privilege of both attending the event and speaking to President Marilyn Lizee about her plans for the group. The event proved lively and the New Dawn electorate turnout was enough to fill a sizable Ramada conference room from corner to corner. All around, the women in attendance exuded optimism. The election also took the opportunity to showcase the talent of Alberta Métis Women artisans including Doreen Poitras whose feather paintings are a marvel to behold and Doreen Bergum who crafts moccasins with exquisite beaded patterns.

Prior to the election, a group of New Dawn women gathered for a beading workshop. The election and events surrounding it served as a celebration of the abilities of Métis women, which are amplified through comradery. This sense of comradery will most certainly carry into the future through President, Marilyn Lizee's passion for empowerment through the social exchange of knowledge.

In a recent interview, Marilyn informed me of her plan to host New Dawn discussions at this summer's MNA Annual General Assembly. She is specifically excited to welcome new members to the group and encourages all interested MNA women to contact her for registration.



“If you are going to build something for a community, it has to come from that community”

Marilyn states that this year’s AGA will host an open forum for women to gather and discuss issues relevant to them and their communities. Nothing is off the table and Ms. Lizee ensures me that all ideas will be welcomed and respected.

It is this notion of respect and inclusivity that bodes optimism for New Dawn operations. Together, these ideals will work in tandem to facilitate the spread of skills, abilities, and knowledge that empower communities. Marilyn encourages all Métis women pondering community initiatives to attend the meeting and collectively devise a plan of action.

Potential New Dawn initiatives are as boundless as the imagination. For example, Marilyn is an advocate for the rights of elders and is able to teach about elder abuse and other issues impacting seniors. She explains that she is willing to share this knowledge with other women who are interested in running information sessions on elder’s issues in their respective communities. Marilyn is an adamant teacher and is more than willing to help women build the skills they need to implement successful strategies within their communities.

Marilyn welcomes women of all specialties ranging from social awareness to cultural awareness to spread their knowledge within the New Dawn circle. Mentioned areas of expertise include cultural expertise such as knowledge of Métis artisanship including beading, weaving, and jigging, while social awareness refers to life skills training such as elder care, abuse prevention, and youth empowerment.

“Everybody has a voice, everybody has a dream, and everybody has a right to their opinion”

Ms. Lizee’s vision for New Dawn is one of respect and tolerance. She specifically states that New Dawn upholds that “everybody has a voice, everybody has a dream, and everybody has a right to their opinion.” In the spirit of democracy, Ms. Lizee hopes that New Dawn meetings will serve to engage in respectful discourse with the intent of implementing meaningful change in Métis communities across Alberta.

Former MNA President and current President of the Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women, Muriel Stanley, addressed the assembly and expounded the need for a Métis women’s group by discussing the ongoing oppression of Métis women including the contemporary missing and murdered indigenous women pandemic. Her speech further emphasized the necessity to maintain a Métis women’s group as a social justice resource. Ms. Lizee’s community-based action plan has arrived just in time to tackle these pressing issues!

President, Marilyn Lizee;
Treasurer, Maryann Stepien;
Vice President, Baily Oster; and
Secretary, Tammie Bouvier.





Right Bottom: Conference attendees pose for a photo

Middle Bottom: Métis artisanal handiwork on display

Left Bottom: Métis Nation of Alberta President Audrey Poitras, Norma Spicer, and Vera Atkinson

Right: New Dawn President, Marilyn Lizee, addresses the assembly

Left: Former MNA Vice President and long time President of The Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women (IAAW), Muriel Stanley-Venne, speaks about social issues facing Indigenous women.





MNA RESOURCE WORKERS PROVIDE SUPPORT IN TIMES OF NEED

The Métis Nation of Alberta Resources Department is quickly becoming the cornerstone for Métis health, social, and economic resources. The MNA Resources Department has built a reputation for lending assistance to individuals in times of crisis. MNA Resource Worker, Tamara McDonald, discusses her recent excursion to a Vancouver Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) conference, which offered her a plethora of new resources to fill her burgeoning resources shelf and assist Métis families in need. Always on the hunt for the best health, social, and economic information, the role of Resource Worker is akin to a social archaeologist because it entails long and arduous searches for the best resources available; it is not always an easy job, but it is incredibly rewarding. Tamara has accumulated a veritable library of information in categories including financial assistance, housing, child support, family support, counselling, employment training, addictions help, and programming for youth and seniors.

Tamara proclaims that the department turns no one away and is always open to those in need. Indeed, the Resources department is a one-stop shop for anyone seeking information in areas of health, education, or economic assistance. The next time you find yourself in the MNA area and wanting information on social programming, stop by and see Tamara!



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