



A.A.M.S. NEWSLETTER

February 2015

Interim President's Report – Donald W. LeBlanc

During the summer of 2014, the President of AAMS announced that he had to take a temporary leave of absence for personal reasons. It became apparent to the Board that AAMS would not be able to completely rely on the Vice-President to take over the presidential duties due to inexperience and other considerations. Therefore, the Board of Directors requested my assistance, as a founding member, and appointed me, Donald W. LeBlanc, as a temporary Interim President of AAMS.

Despite a resulting slowdown in AAMS activities, the AAMS membership continues to grow to 1000+ members. Before his leave of absence, the AAMS President signed a treaty of friendship and cooperation with the Metis Federation of Canada (MFC) on Aboriginal Day, June 21st, in Oshawa. This affiliation has already favoured AAMS by the intervention of MFC to prompt Indspire Scholarships to re-evaluate their qualifications that temporarily denied AAMS students. Another positive development is that MFC has recently announced that it will seek to become an intervener in an appeal of the Daniel's Case at the Supreme Court level, with the objective of establishing recognition for all Metis across Canada, including AAMS. The AAMS Board has decided to financially support this MFC cause for the benefit of its members.

In 2012, Katie MacLeod came to South-West Nova Scotia in order to do research for her Master's Thesis, to establish that the Acadians are culturally Metis. In September 2014, she returned to this area to do more research in cooperation with AAMS, and under the direction of Denis Gagnon of Saint Boniface University, who is the Canadian Chair for Metis Identity in Canada and who works for the recognition of unrecognized Metis in Canada.

AAMS is always involved in routine involvements such as the AAMS website, the AAMS Facebook page and the Newsletter. In 2015, AAMS is again offering three \$500.00 bursaries to deserving AAMS students. AAMS Directors and an appointed committee have worked on By-Law changes that will be presented for approval by the members at the upcoming Annual General Meeting in March. Members will soon receive a notice of the AGM details and hopefully many will attend. AAMS was also involved locally in gatherings and celebrations such as Aboriginal Day, Peace Pole Celebration, Canada Day, Thank Mother Earth Day, School Presentations, Seniors Visit, Pot-Luck Gathering, and a Story Telling Festival that featured a Metis friend from Quebec, namely, Robert "Seven Crows" Bourdon. More activities and events are anticipated for 2015.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2015

Saturday March 28, 2015

2 to 7 p.m.

EVELINA'S RAPURE

008 Highway # 1, Little Brook, Digby Co., NS

More Details to follow when they are available

EXPLANATION OF THE DANIELS' CASE

The Daniels' Case is highly significant to the Metis and Non-Status Indians. However the interpretation of the many sequent stages has become a source of confusion. The following is an attempt to clarify the case in simple terms.

In 1999, Harry Daniels (who died in 2004) and the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples (CAP) took the Federal Government to court with a claim of discrimination because the Metis and Non-Status Indians were not considered as "Indians" under section 91(24) of the Constitution Act, and were therefore denied certain benefits.



**Harry Daniels
(1940 – 2004)**

In January 2013, after 14 years, the Federal Court of Canada finally ruled that the Metis and Non-Status Indians are indeed considered as "Indians" under section 91(24) of the Canadian Constitution, and are considered to be the responsibility of the Federal Government in relation to rights and benefits. Since this decision implied an extended responsibility in relation to thousands of Metis and Non-Status Indians, the Federal Government soon launched an appeal in relation to this decision. During this appeal, the Metis National Council (MNC) from out West was accepted as an Intervener, with the objective of influencing the court to adopt a restrictive description of Metis. In this appeal decision, the MNC wanted to be considered as the only legitimate Metis, to the exclusion of others such as the Metis in the East of Canada.

In April 2014, the Federal Court of Appeal upheld its former decision in relation to the Metis, but excluded the Non-Status Indians with the claim that they should be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. The MNC intervention did receive enough consideration from the appeal judges to interpret their comments as possibly adopting a restrictive definition of Metis.

In June 2014, the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples (CAP) made application for an appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada, due to the deletion of the Non-Status Indians and due to the possible adoption of a restrictive definition of Metis that would exclude many Metis. After the filing of the CAP application, in August 2014, the Federal Government made a conditional application for involvement in the proposed appeal, in the case that the Supreme Court would accept to hear the CAP appeal. The Federal Government's position would be that the Metis should not be considered as "Indians".

In November 2014, the Supreme Court of Canada agreed to hear the appeal applications by the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples (CAP) and the Federal Government. This has prompted several organizations to apply for Intervener status in this appeal case to the Supreme Court. The Metis National Council (MNC) wishes to have the Metis identity restricted to themselves with the exclusion of other Metis; the Metis Nation of Ontario (MNO) wishes to be included in this restrictive Metis identity; and the Metis Federation of Canada (MFC) will apply for Intervener status to establish that "all Metis" from across Canada are considered as qualifying Metis in the Supreme Court Appeal Decision.

Important Announcement



L to R:

Sebastien Malette, MFC Director of Métis Rights,
Christopher Devlin, Solicitor,
Robert Pilon, MFC President

The Métis Federation of Canada is pleased to announce that we have obtained legal representation with Devlin Gailus Westaway, Barristers & Solicitors to seek Intervener Status in the Harry Daniels Federal Court of Appeal. As the only national Métis organization that represents all Métis – from coast to coast to coast – we believe it is important for us to be at the table for this historic case to ensure all Métis voices are heard.

From Sebastien Malette, Ph.D., MFC Director of Métis Rights: “It is important for the Metis Federation of Canada (MFC) to act as an Intervener to make sure that we support the decision of the Federal Court of Appeal that recognizes Métis as “Indian” as per the Constitution Act 1867—hence securing the fiduciary relationship that the Federal government own the Metis. It is also important that the voice of MFC be heard so that The Supreme Court of Canada understands that the MFC represents a distinctive organization in Canada that represents all Metis from all regions of Canada. In line with our unique philosophy, the MFC will defend that all Metis across Canada should be included in the coming decision of the Supreme Court.”

Robert Pilon, President of the MFC states: “I believe that this is a critical point in the history of all Métis people in Canada, regardless of where your ancestors are from. As we have affiliations with a number of Métis organizations in different regions of this country, we want to be sure that every Métis person’s rights are clearly represented.”

AAMS 2015 Bursaries

In 2015, three bursaries in the amount of \$500 each will be awarded

Applications may be submitted as of March 1, 2015. The applicant must be a member of AAMS

Applicants must be enrolled in a post-secondary institution, either community college or university. Proof of financial need is not required.

Applicants are asked to answer the following question: How do you see yourself as an Acadian Métis?

Deadline for application: May 1, 2015

For more information and application forms, please visit our website at:

<http://www.acadiens-metis-souriquois.ca/aams-bursary.html>

UPCOMING IN 2015

Please watch for information on the following activities in 2015

- FRAP – March 20, 2015
(La Fédération régionale des arts et du patrimoine de la Baie Sainte-Marie)
 - Battle of the Atlantic- May 3
 - Earth Day - April 22
 - Diversity Day - April 23
 - Aboriginal Day - June 21
- and more...

This year's election and meeting.....

Due to time constraints and costs, it was suggested/recommended that a Special Resolutions Meeting take place in conjunction with the Annual General Meeting on March 28, 2015.

There will be Board seats up for election at the AGM for those members who feel that they could be assets to the objectives of AAMS. If you can be present at the AGM and you wish to be nominated for election, please contact the Nominating Committee at:

aamsnomination@hotmail.com