



The Journey to Maniwaki

The beginning of a journey starts with many small steps, with a number of important milestones along the way. Yesterday was one of those key milestones. Leaving early in the morning, a contingent of us from the MFC left from Oshawa, picked up Helene Savard (recently returned from Dubai) and met with members from Montreal in the beautiful town of Maniwaki. The scenery along the way was gorgeous, the town quaint and welcoming, and our purpose, historic.

The members of the Communauté Métis Autochtone de Maniwaki welcomed us warmly to their Annual General Meeting, beginning with a great meal served by the Board members. We enjoyed caribou, deer and bannock along with some great baked beans. We met a community of very warm people, who actively participated in the meeting and obviously care very much about their community.

Later in the afternoon, the President, Serge Paul, announced that we would be speaking to a Treaty between the Métis Federation of Canada and the Communauté Métis Autochtone de Maniwaki. As the discussion began, Theresa Lizotte did a smudging for all those in attendance. Sebastian Malette provided detailed insight to the audience on the MFC and the benefits of joining together, with good questions posed by the members and answered by Sebastian and Serge. The discussion concluded with the signing of the Treaty by myself (Robert Pilon) and Serge Paul, and photos of those in attendance.

This is the first of many important affiliations for the MFC. It is also a particularly historic event as our first treaty is with a Métis community from the province of Quebec – the birthplace of many of our family lines. We are particularly proud of this, it has been a pleasure working with the Maniwaki board members, and we look forward to a long and productive relationship. I would like to sincerely thank the leadership of the Communauté Métis Autochtone de Maniwaki – and all of their members – who welcomed us to their meeting yesterday and participated in this very historic event and I look forward to trips back to their beautiful community in the future. It was an honour to be part of the MFC contingent who attended, and represented the many other founding members - who were there in spirit – and have worked hard over the past couple years to move our organization forward.

In the coming week we will be meeting with members from the British Columbia Métis Federation for further discussions on how we can support each other. We believe that by working together and joining communities and individuals, we will only grow stronger and more effective in representing and supporting Métis culture, identity and rights. I would personally like to speak to anyone – whether from a Métis organization or community, or an individual - who has questions, would like to discuss mutual priorities, and is interested in finding a way to work together towards our common goals. There is much work to be done, but together I believe we can be successful in progressing Métis priorities – from coast to coast to coast.

Robert Pilon

Interim President

Phone: 905-725-1635

Cell: 905-409-5843

Email: wpilon5188@rogers.com or rob.pilon57@gmail.com