

## **Claudette Courchaine, (Ek).**

By Gabriel Dufault.

Claudette Ek was born in the French speaking community of St. Adolph, Manitoba. She was one of six children. Her mother was a famous Manitoba Metis, by the name of Marie Thérèse Courchaine Manitobie. Marie Thérèse Courchaine Manitobie was a schoolteacher, poet, author, and a Metis activist. Her father was Joseph Courchaine who worked as a bridge constructor and a gardener. Claudette completed her schooling at the St. Adolph Convent. At age 17, she married and began her family. She relocated to the city of Winnipeg and raised her children. She was employed for 26 years at the Health Science Center in the Dialysis Unit and retired in 1996. Since then she has passionately pursued many volunteer opportunities within the Metis Community.

The following are a list of her endeavors:

- Member of the Elder's Local – Manitoba Metis Federation
- Vice-Chair for the Manitoba Metis Women
- Active member of the Pembina Cemetery Recovery project in Pembina, North Dakota
- Counselor of the L'Union National Metis de St. Joseph
- Member for the Residential School Program through the Aboriginal Healing Foundation
- Member of Elzéar Goulet Counsel – Manitoba Metis Federation Local
- Traveling member of the Red River Cart Journey
- Recently chosen as an Elder attached to the Aboriginal Chapter of the Canadian Counselors of Canada

She describes her interests and activities in these words: “I am very proud of my involvement over the past years with the Metis Community. My interests are my family, my culture, art and the youth in the community. I can't think of not being involved in promoting the Metis people. I enjoy being active. I am not a rich person in dollars and cents, but I am rich in my culture, memories and in my heart.” (Contributed by Gabriel Dufault.)



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