



MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Thursday, May 9, 2024

Speaker's Statement

Hon. Tom Lindsey (Speaker):

Sunday, May 12th, 2024, will mark the 154th anniversary of the day The Manitoba Act received Royal Assent in the Canadian Parliament. This Act created the Province of Manitoba and accordingly May 12th has been designated as Manitoba Day.

In honour of this occasion, Members will notice some treasured artifacts displayed on the Clerk's Table today:

- The star blanket cushion and beaded Mace runner, gifted to us by the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs in 2010;
- A Métis sash, gifted to us in 2023 by the Manitoba Métis Federation; and
- A soapstone polar bear carving, gifted to us by the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut in 2023.

These artifacts are displayed in the Chamber today to recognize and pay tribute to the Indigenous people of Manitoba as we celebrate this Day.

They serve as a reminder that this Chamber and Legislative Building reside on the traditional lands of Indigenous people, as we recognize each day in our land acknowledgement.

As your Speaker I am honoured and humbled to include these treasured artifacts in our annual celebration of Manitoba Day.

Additionally, as we have done for the past several years, in today's Speaker's parade our Sergeant-at-Arms carried our original Manitoba Mace.

This Mace made its first formal appearance on March 15th, 1871, on the first sitting day of the first session of the first Manitoba Legislature, held in the home of A.G.B. Bannatyne in the Red River Settlement. The Bannatyne home was destroyed by fire in December 1873 but thankfully the Mace survived. After 13 years of service, our original Mace was retired in 1884 when our current Mace debuted. The original Mace has a permanent home on display outside of the Speaker's office, coming out of retirement annually to mark this day and other special events.

This historical artifact sits on the Table today as a nod to our past, but also to remind all Members that we are part of a very select group of Manitoba citizens.

Since that Mace was first placed on the Clerk's Table in 1871 only 880 Manitobans – including all of us – have served as Members of this Assembly, in this room and the rooms which preceded it.

Out of the millions of Manitobans who have lived in this province over the last 154 years only this small, fortunate group has had the honour, privilege and solemn responsibility of serving our fellow citizens as their elected representatives.

Our system is certainly not perfect. Historically, not everyone in Manitoba has had the right to vote, as it took many decades for indigenous people and women to gain that right.

As we commemorate this event then it is worth remembering that our democracy is a fragile work in progress in need of protection. We should never take it for granted. I hope we can all remember that as we strive to do our best in this place each day.

In honour of Manitoba day and with this rich history in mind, I would encourage all Members to reflect on our shared responsibility to serve Manitobans with honour, respect and reverence. I would encourage all of us remember that our work in this place is part of a very long legacy of service to the people of this Province.

Thank you