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Le Forum, Vol. 42 No. 1

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Marie-Anne Gauvin

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Le FORUM



“AFIN D’ÊTRE EN PLEINE POSSESSION DE SES MOYENS”

VOLUME 42, #1

SPRING/PRINTEMPS 2020

*See story: One Chilly
Morning on page 35*



Photo by Martha Whitehouse

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other pertinent websites to check out -

Les Français d’Amérique / French In America

Calendar Photos and Texts from 1985 to 2002

http://www.johnfishersr.net/french_in_america_calendar.html

Franco-American Women’s Institute:

<http://www.fawi.net>





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Les lettres de nos lecteurs sont les bienvenues — Letters to the Editor are welcomed.

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L'équipe de rédaction souhaite que *Le Forum* soit un mode d'expression pour vous tous les Franco-Américains et ceux qui s'intéressent à nous. The staff hopes that *Le Forum* can be a vehicle of expression for you Franco-Americans and those who are interested in us.

Le Forum et son staff — Universitaires, gens de la communauté, les étudiants — FAROG,

Sommaire/Contents

Lettres/Letters	3	Query the Past	21-23
L'État du ME	4-20	<i>by Patrick Lacroix</i>	
Monseigneur Arthur Décarry.....	4-6	L'État du NH	24-25
<i>by Gérard Coulombe</i>		D'où Je Viens <i>by Wilfred H. Bergeron</i>	
Biddeford Hall of Fame.....	6-7	2020 NH PoutineFest Event Date	
<i>by Biddeford Cultural & Heritage Center</i>		L'État du VT	26
La Pie Bavarde.....	8	Reflections From Graniteville	
<i>by Marie-Anne Gauvin</i>		<i>by Xavier de la Prade</i>	
Today in Maine's Franco History: Jan 8		L'État du MA	27-29
.....	8-10	Lowell's Franco Veterans March On	
<i>by James Myall</i>		Les Vieux Soldats <i>by Suzanne Beebe</i>	
Information 1755.....	9	Two Sets of twins, four friends for life.....	
<i>by Jim Belanger Sr.</i>		<i>Courtesy of The Sun</i>	
Photograph in an exhibition with a dark		L'État du MO	29-33
history lesson.....	11-12	Keelboat <i>by Jeffrey D. Pratte</i>	
<i>by Juliana L'Heureux</i>		L'État du WI	33
"All Work and No Play" child labor		The Girard's of Chippewa Falls	
exhibit at Museum L-A.....	12-13	<i>by Pierre Girard</i>	
<i>by Juliana L'Heureux</i>		MUSIC/MUSIQUE	34
Part III: What do you believe in?.....	14	Mémère's Notebook <i>by Robert Sylvain</i>	
<i>by Daniel Moreau</i>		COIN DES JEUNES	35
St. John Valley Times Madawaska		One Chilly Morning	
Historical Society.....	14	<i>by Martha Whitehouse</i>	
<i>by A.J. Michaud</i>		BOOKS/LIVRES	36
Van Buren Area Man Claims to be		POETRY/POÉSIE	37
"World's Strongest Man".....	15	FRANCO BUSINESSES	38-44
<i>St. John Valley Times</i>		GENEALOGY	46-51
Franco-American artist, Mercedes		1850 (Cyr Plantation)	
Gastonguay.....	16	<i>by Sister Marie-Agnes LaPierre S.C.I.M.</i>	
<i>by Juliana L'Heureux</i>		On the road to 1642/Sur la route pour	
Le Fruit Défendu - Forbidden Fruit...17-19		1642 <i>by/par Don Levesque</i>	
<i>by Jacqueline Chamberland Blesso</i>		LaFontaine..... <i>by Robert Chenard</i>	
Thoughts of Spring.....	19-20		
<i>by Pat Gervais Flynn</i>			

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Le FORUM

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Lettres/ Letters

Dear Le Forum;

Many thanks for another great issue of *Le Forum*. The article authored by Kerri Arsenault was especially moving. It should be required reading for the citizens of Northern Minnesota where mining interests want to destroy the clean water.

Best Wishes!

**John England
St. Paul, MN**

Merci John,

Le Forum is because of our continued community support and our readership!

Thank you for letting us know that our work is appreciated!

Le Forum

Endowment

One way to support Le FORUM while at the same time reserving life income is the establishment of a charitable gift annuity with the Franco-American Centre Le FORUM Fund at the University of Maine Foundation. Call 1-800-982-8503.

N.D.L.R. This letter to the Editor first appeared in the St. John Valley Times, June 3, 2015)

When the Irish and the French ‘sat together’

To the Editor,

One world: Sunday morning, St. Bruno’s Church (the choir - the Gloria - the chimes - the Elevation); Sunday evening, The Gayety Theatre (the soft seats - secure arm-rests - the stage - the projected light - the news and cartoons preview the show). Two worlds on the same day, the day of rest. St. Bruno - les français. The Gayety Theatre - les Irlandais.

Yes the Gayety Theatre - the world of the Irish opened to the public. It was one world to me - but how did it all come to be? That’s history and genealogy - the history and genealogy some folks do not want to hear.

It took money from Philadelphia to get the iron rails forged in Pittsburgh to be laid from Boston to Van Buren, but the track from

Dear Le Forum;

International of the Language article that appeared in the Winter Issue, by Meghan Murphy was great!

Language should be taught as soon as our children start school and don’t tell me it’s too early, it’s the best time, they pick it up quickly at that age and keep it up as they get in high school & college.

We had four children and when they graduated from college they found their first jobs because they were bilingual. That made us very proud of them, we are Franco-American.

**Cecile Vigue
Fairfield, ME**

Merci Cecile,

Totally agree with you! Language should be taught when our children are young. They are like sponges.

Thank you for taking the time to write us!

**Merci bien!
Le Forum**



St. John, New Brunswick to St. Leonard, New Brunswick beat the American line by 20 years. When it got there, the Van Buren Lumbering & Manufacturing Co. set the first steam power saw mill on the St. John River. J Edgerton Reyerson Burpee of Bangor was its president but Isaac Burpee of Sheffield, New Brunswick laid the rails for him. The day after the Maine legislature chartered the company, the legislature incorporated the town of Van Buren.

The Keegans of Van Buren were Democrats, but the manager of Van Buren Lumbering & Manufacturing Co. was a Republican, a - Keegan, no less - and Democrats needn’t apply (for jobs).

Later, at the St. John Lumber Company, George Keegan took up the labor union cause. He left the sawmill and headed to law school to beef up his defense of the union. But no one in the streets knows of George Keegan today. He became the father of General George Keegan.

I was never close to my Irish relatives. I only remember my father had a high regard for them. But my father was a Republican, and in his times, it was the Republicans who need not apply.

Are you interested in genealogy? Do you need help?

Consider joining our genealogy group, “Orono Franco-American Research Opportunity Group (OFAROG)”. We have a genealogist available to help answer any questions you may have regarding research and sources. We have a library dedicated to Genealogical research, filled with materials and resources, the Adrian Lanthier Ringuette Library.

We are here from 8:00 to 4:30 and by special appointment.

***Contact Lisa Michaud at
Lisam@maine.edu***

or

207.581.3789

or our Genealogist:

Debbie Roberge at

deborah.e.roberge@gmail.com

Two banks in Van Buren - The Van Buren Trust (Democrat) and The First National Bank of Van Buren (Republican). But on church and one theater, where both the Irish and the French sat together.

It was different in Lewiston, Waterville, Brunswick, Old Town, Augusta.

Over there, the French fought the Irish, but here in Maine’s *Acadie*, the French married the Irish. Marguerite Violette married James Smith; Julie Dubay married Michael Farrell; Luce Parent married James Keegan. In the next generation, Joseph Dubay married Catherine Keegan; Maggie Smith married Fred Parent. Almond Smith, son of Thomas Smith and Methaide Cyr, married Dora Keegan, so Peter Charles Keegan became grand-uncle to Bill Smith’s father and became grand-uncle to my father.

One world; Peter Charles Keegan put his money in the Gayety Theatre. My Acadian grandfather, Belonie Violette (a state representative in 1867) put his money into St. Bruno’s - gave \$800 for the new altar. But neighbors teased him crying out: *“Belonie, Belonie, autre-toi donc le nez des jambes, qu’on peut voir l’église!”*

Guy Dubay, Madawaska, ME

(N.D.L.R. Photos courtesy of the Biddeford Cultural & Heritage Center)

Monseigneur Arthur Décary

From: Leaving Maine: A Franco-American Memoir

By *Gérard Coulombe*
[Formerly of Biddeford, Maine]

In 1940, my parents, my two sisters and I moved from Bradbury Street in Saint Joseph's Parish to Freeman Street in Saint André's Parish, or from the west side, the Irish section of town to the east side the totally French Canadian or Franco-American side of town where everyone there spoke French, only. I recall that we moved on the day and at the time that the Révérend Père Zénon Décary, saintly, older brother of Monseigneur Arthur Décary was being buried, for our moving van was headed down Bacon Street and had been stopped in front of Borduas Shoe Store on Bacon Street by a Biddeford policeman on patrol duty for the funeral to allow the cortège to proceed from the church to the Reverend's intermediary resting place at Saint Francis College on the Pool Road which is now New England University.

The Décary brothers had to have been from a wealthy Québec family. They were very generous to the parish and, beyond, to the community they served. From the big, white, three-story parish house with its big veranda and enclosed widow's walk, figuratively, one could look East, from the top of the hill beyond the Westbrook Skating rink in its heyday and practically at the rest of the length of the Pool Road which ends at the spit of land and water which was better known to outsider's in my growing-up years, and even before, as Biddeford Pool or "The Pool" where the wealthy, out-of-state, upper crust vacationed in their summer cottages on a point by the sea, coming up in their black-chauffeur driven limousines to their already opened homes overlooking Saco Bay and beyond to the Atlantic Ocean.

Saint Andre's church faced Bacon Street, at the corner of Bacon and High Street, at the top of which was Pool Street. I would guess, that one could not very well see the top of High Street from the opened bell tower where the big bells hung and where, bells were rung by hand by the "bedeau." They rang whenever he was called upon to ring them. The tolling of the bells in a Catholic parish was the frequent reminder that life is a passing event They rang as a call for parishioners to attend mass and they

rang the angelus, and they rang the passing of parishioners. When a bell rang during the day, we knew, wherever we were and heard the bell that one of our parishioners had passed.

The church bells always rang at noon, and for Sunday masses, and during the week for those who had passed away. There was a distinction made in the number, of times the "Bedeau" rang a bell, as in one for a man and two for a woman. But I do not recall which it was or what the ringing was about, except



Monseigneur Arthur Décary

that my mother used to stop what she was doing to pay attention to the number of times the church bell rang. Frequently there was a clue when a daily mass announcement might have included a request to pray for someone mortally ill and not just the announcement for whom a mass was celebrated. In a way, our lives were measured by the tolling of church bells.

I remember that Mother, after pausing, and noting the number of times the sexton rang the bell, she would say, Madame or Monsieur so and so had passed. And that habit set off a pattern in our lives, which involved a visit to the funeral home and attendance at a funeral service. As an altar boy, I served at so many funerals that it became a routine for me to observe a crowd or lack of one, penitents all. I found it very educational, admittedly, from a young man's point of view. I had a knowledge of the world

far beyond my understanding in a way that I found, at the time, somewhat special, for I had become aware, at a young age, at the merit or importance of a man or woman by the number of mourners in attendance, their family size along with the number of friends or those additional mourners who were always known to me as being in attendance.

Father Décary, the younger, had invited Franciscans to staff what would become Saint Francis College on land purchased and donated by the brother priests for the purpose of having an operative Franco-American college in town. Saint Francis College operated by Franciscans, priests and brothers; also, there was a school for young girls founded on the land they had purchased. That school was adjacent to the college. Pere Zénon was buried in his own patch or "quartier," land dedicated to God in memory of the priest to whom many prayed after his death, hoping for a miracle. Many others worked and prayed for his beatification, wishing that he become a Saint.

Monseigneur Décary also saw to the construction on land, again along the Saco River, for the purpose of establishing an orphanage and private school for day students and residential students. Later, a hospital was built, partly, and it soon became defunct for some reason or other; also built was a residence for retired nuns, and a nursing home which still operates to this day. I recall that on our way home from a stay at the beach, we had stopped to see an old friend who was on his death bed the day we arrived, whereupon, we learned, when we got home in Connecticut that he had died.

I do recall attending the Scout camp that was also on land purchased by the priests one summer. On my first day in the camp sleeping quarters, I witnessed a scout among us who fell to the floor in what I later learned was a "fit." That's what we called it; for it wasn't until later that I learned it was a malady. I was doubly startled by the prompt action of the adult who stuck a swigger stick sideways between the boy's teeth. I learned something that day. I transferred to the Sea Scouts. Don't ask me why.

Important to my mother, Clara Coutu Coulombe, was that I was an altar boy or server, having served mass at Saint Joseph's, I was an altar boy at Saint André's. I frequently served 6:00 a.m. mass because I easily lived within a short walking distance of the church; if I ran, I could be there and dressed in all of five minutes.

(Continued on page 5)

(Monseigneur Arthur Décary continued from page 4)

The priest, Father Décary was an early riser. I did not need any church lights to get around once inside and up the stairs to the nave and a few more steps to the sanctuary and from there, a short distance to the left or right where our lockers were. I hopped into my cassock and pulled the surplice over my head, passed a hand over my hair to set it, and I was ready for the service. Lights on, strike a match to a wick and walk up to the altar to light the candles. As we faced the altar with our backs to the congregation, we looked up to the tabernacle where the Lord was locked up but present in the communion hosts. High above was the ever-burning gold chandelier hanging by a chain to the ceiling. Its red glow symbolized His ever presence.

Rarely did the man or woman who resided at and played the organ in the balcony and who started the mass with a sound from the organ, immediately upon seeing the priest and I step into the sanctuary miss a beat. Whoever she or he was, the organist was always present in those days. We walked to the foot of the altar where we turned left to face the altar, as we had done before, time and time again, together, and he had done just that, so many more times in his lifetime, more than I ever did in my youth or later, although I did offer to serve when I was in the service and attended services where I was stationed. I wonder, now, at eighty-eight, if that time, alone, will help expiate, some, for all of my sins.

Already, as I knelt, a boy of eight or nine by now, I knew from the smell of garlic that father had had his fill of it the night before, as we were, in those days, to abstain from food before communion. But Father Décary reeked of garlic to the point of making me nauseous when I was cued to recite the Confiteor.

As the nausea crept up, my recitation went faster. As I went faster, father started shuffling his size seventeen, extra wide, well broken in, black Brogans. I learned that signal warning as a necessary retreat from my fast-paced recitation of the Confiteor. He made me start all over again, and over again if he did not think I was giving the Confiteor the respect that it deserved; it was then in that moment of tension between the two of us that I knew that I had to slow down, and, if I did not, he had me start all over again as many times as was necessary for me to get it right. I never knew what those in attendance,

in their pews, knew of what was going on between us two, or, of those who might have been alert enough to notice, what in hell was going on, altogether. But, I was certain that those in the front pews, winters, shrinking in their clothing to warm up, already knew the trouble that I was in, and they were willing to watch until the end of Mass.

With those feet and limbs, Father Décary could walk at a steady pace with a long stride. I once or, maybe, twice accompanied him on his morning jaunts to the college. These were frequent, week after week walks. Not a word was spoken. He would pause infrequently, and it was only to see where



Father Zénon Décary

I was along the way. Did he need to adjust his stride or speed? NO! I had to run when I lagged too far behind just to catch up. He did not own a car. He always walked as far as I knew. I suppose that if he needed an automobile for transportation there was always someone ready to lend assistance.

Altar boys had a schedule. It was good to have a schedule. I liked the weddings and funerals. The funerals kept me out of class mornings. The wedding meant that I worked the altar on a Saturday and learned some things important about grooms and brides. All in all, as couples, they were terribly distracted. I thought then that photographers were intrusive, but father was attentive and insistent that proper decorum be maintained. He was not afraid to stop in mid ceremony to correct some indiscretion.

Other than that, communion required attention to the person accepting the host on the tongue. No hands permitted. No picking up if it fell. It was my job to catch the host when it slipped off the tongue in cases of dry

mouth and went into its free fall. Although I was intent on picking up the host, father was so quick in his reaction that he was bumping into me to retrieve the Body of Christ. I don't know what might have happened to me in those days, had I touched it. But some Saints have and, as I was to learn at the time, that, often, it was the reason why they were Saints.

One had to be alert to this happening as a catcher on a trapeze. For my part, I was afraid that if I reacted in a mistimed fashion, I might chip a tooth or peel back the skin covering the lower lip. Father wasn't all that limber. He was big and strong on his feet, but he couldn't have been a lumberjack walking a log floating downriver.

While the pastor's older brother had the makings of a saint because even before his death, saintly acts were already being attributed to him. He was such a holy man in life that many old parishioners and some young ones expected him to perform miracles, and, according to many respondents to queries, once upon a time, Zénon Décary had performed a goodly number of miracles. Even my mother would vouch for that today were she still alive. As for Le Père Arthur Décary, he just trudged along, taking great strides as he was, somewhat stoop shouldered, his hair was always disheveled when he was driven, soulfully toward his goal as he walked self-assured and determined to reach his goal in good time. Stop and offer him a ride? No way! It was all constitutional.

The brother priests knew my father, and he knew them. My grandparents, whom I never knew, had been parishioners and one or the other priests or even both could have led them to eternal rest. When the parish decided to build a school for boys and girls, grades one through eight for boys, and one through twelve for girls, Father Décary, having paid for the school and having found an order of nuns as teachers was looking for an order of brothers to teach the boys. My father had a brother in the Order of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart. My father got in touch with his brother in Victoriaville, PQ. And the order agreed to take on the mission. Décary had both residences built, one for the brothers and one for the nuns. The latter was attached to the church, and I recall attending Monseigneur Décary there as he said mass for the nuns. For me, these visits to the nunnery chapels were very uplifting.

Being an altar boy was a job that I had started when I was attending Saint
(Continued on page 6)

(*Monseigneur Arthur Décary continued from page 5*)

Joseph's elementary and in first grade, and I always recalled the getting up at five a.m., getting dressed and walking unassisted, in the dark, up the gardened walkway to the front door of the convent, wondering about the "guibbeux" moon and then, saved by the Virgin Mary, and being afraid to ring the big doorbell, and having to wait for "la portiere" to open the front door. *

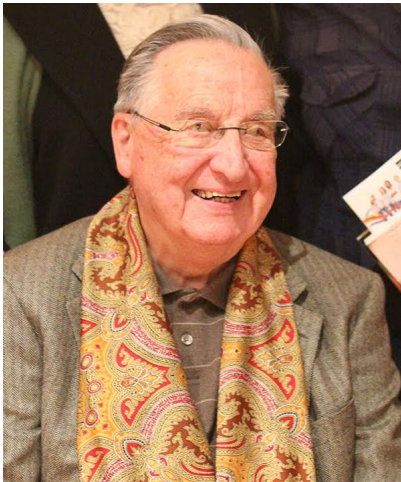
In retrospect, when we moved from Saint Joseph to Saint Andre, it could be that my father wanted to move back to the parish that he had worked in and had grown, somewhat, as a young man down from Canada. [Maybe, I'm giving my dad too much credit, but he had said it; he had taken the late train to Maine. Dad was also an actor.] I spent the fifth and sixth grades with the Brothers of the Sacred Heart whom I knew about because I had an uncle, my father's brother, who was one of them, assigned to

Le Collège de Victoriaville, P.Q.. These brothers, teachers, were as tough as they had to be. Lessons were mostly in French, even as the Second World War was progressing and even though the State of Maine then required instruction in English. Many boys in attendance were intent not on and education so much, as they were biding their time, even as they were being implored by their parents to take advantage of the education offered. Many just waited in ignorance, so to speak, for the opportunity to get a job in the textile mills. The older boys were starting to fall to the draft, too, leaving the door open for boys to lie about their birth date so they could ease their way from school where they were not learning to work where they could be earning, or until age and draft caught up with them. Maybe those were not the times to be young.

I was hoping that a priest would tap me to be sent to seminary. My father was thinking that the novitiate of the brothers

would suit me. My mother, I believe, wanted neither of my choices. But she would accept whatever choice I freely made. I entered the novitiate, after a lot of prayer, in the summer before seventh grade. Then, as we approached the end of the academic year, I came down with Leggs Perthes Disease, which, at the time, was treated by bed rest and immobilization. No getting out of bed. Our family doctor said to my mother when she asked him about it, that I had TB of the bones. My mother did not believe him. She prayed to Zénon Décary for a miraculous recovery, as did my aunts who were religious sister in Montreal who in turn prayed to their own candidate for sainthood. Mother gave "L:e Pere Zenon credit for the cure that took place a year later; by that time, I had skipped about two years of school. I entered my freshman year at Saint Louis in Biddeford and graduated in 1950.

2019 Biddeford Hall of Fame



Dr. Norman Beaupré **July 7, 1935 - present**

Norman Beaupré was born in Southern Maine and grew up speaking French in Biddeford, Maine. He did his undergraduate studies at St. Francis College in Biddeford Pool and then moved on to Brown University for graduate work and received his Ph.D. in French literature in 1974.

In 2000, he became Professor Emeritus after 30 years of teaching Francophone and World Literature at the University of New England. Traveling extensively, he spent two sabbaticals in Europe where he got the inspiration for several of his books.

Locally, Dr. Beaupré's contributions include serving as president of the La Kermesse Festival in its early years, coordinating Pastoral Care Services at Southern Maine Medical Center as well as serving as director of the Francophone Center, St. Francis College.

Beaupré writes in French and in English. His first book, *L'Enclume et le Couteau - the Life and Works of Adelard Coté*, was published in 1982 by the National Materials Development Center in Bedford, N.H. It is now being reprinted.

Dr. Beaupré has just published his 24th book entitled *Of Boa Constrictors, Elephants and Imaginary Whales: Cautionary Tales*, a set of cautionary tales of the creative imagination that remind the reader that sometimes one needs to be cautious about what one does or hears. He has also received numerous awards and recognition in France, Canada and the USA for his works.



(Continued on page 7)

(2019 Biddeford Hall of Fame continued from page 6)



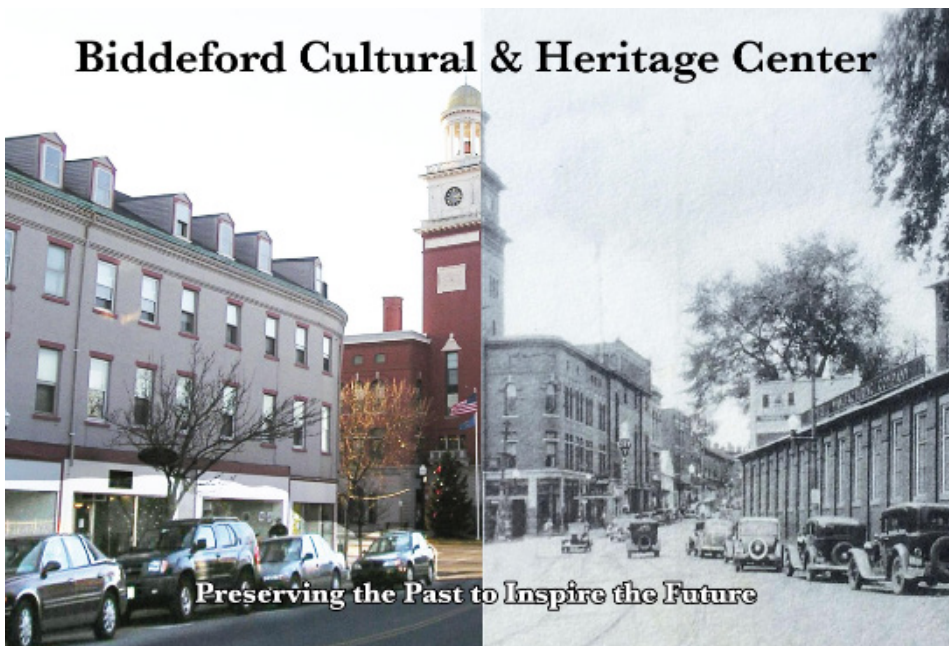
Dr. André Fortier 6/6/1920 – 10/16/2008

In 1949 Dr. Fortier opened his practice in Biddeford serving the community until 1995 retiring at the age of 75. His daughter, Marie LaBrecque reflects: “The one thing I would love to mention about my dad was how he perceived his work as a doctor...He always said that being a doctor was a vocation, not a business. He always took care of the poor, regardless of whether they could pay him or not. He did house calls for free. He never charged the religious sisters and clergy (of any denomination) that he treated. He delivered hundreds of babies for single unwed mothers at St. Andre’s Home for free. And when he closed his office, he closed his books, never looking at them. He didn’t want to have to be chasing people for money and he didn’t want to be upset by any outstanding bills. He felt that he, in taking care of the poor, was none the poorer for it. He took care of God’s people and God in turn took care of him. I so admire his care for the poor. I thought I would share that with you.”



<https://biddefordculturalandheritagecenter.org/2019-biddeford-hall-of-fame/>

Biddeford Cultural & Heritage Center



Our Mission

Celebrate, preserve, share and teach the culture, heritage, diversity and history of Biddeford, its people and surrounding communities.

Instill pride in the city of Biddeford and its people by preserving, sharing and teaching its stories, culture, history and artifacts.

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Publié par Marie-Anne Gauvin dans *Le Fanal (Le Club Français)*. Soumis par Jacqueline Blesso

LA PIE BAVARDE

À tous et à chacun:

Pourriez-vous vivre là où les saisons sont toutes semblables? Moi, non. J'aime beaucoup vivre où les saisons changent notre environnement d'allure. Aujourd'hui, je vais parler du printemps. Chaque saison a des qualités spéciales que les autres n'ont pas. Ça va sans dire que la température y joue un très grand rôle.

Chez nous, l'hiver est la saison la plus silencieuse des quatre, emmitouffé dans ses épaisses couvertures de neige. Vers la fin de l'hiver, nous avons une période d'introduction au printemps qui n'est pas très attrayante mais nécessaire afin d'effectuer un échange entre les deux saisons. La neige fondante perd sa propreté. Les bancs de neige sont salis par les sables déposés sur les routes en hiver. Ces routes sont pleines de bosses et de cahots causés par le dégel. Malheur à ceux qui s'aventurent sur les chemins de terre. Ils reviennent avec la voiture ou les pieds tout crottés de boue. Cette période pourrait représenter l'espérance car il y a du beau et du chaud qui s'en vient.

Une fois la température devenue plus chaude vous voulez vous balader dehors un peu. En vous baladant, soyez aux écoutes. La neige est maintenant EAU qui se promène elle aussi. Elle se tient dans les

fossés ou bien elle crée de petits ruisseaux. Arrêtez-vous un moment. Écoutez! Vous entendrez EAU chanter doucement, murmurant sa joie d'être libéré du gel. EAU s'amuse à faire des chutes ou à serpenter sa route en changeant sa musique tout comme si elle se demandait comment se rendre au rendez-vous avec la rivière. Écoutez la chanson de l'EAU dans le fossé. Elle vous calmera et elle vous rendra de bonne humeur.

Ah! Il y a un autre son. Un chant. C'est un oiseau cette fois. Un merle d'Amérique tout heureux d'être revenu dans son pays natal. Il chante afin d'attirer une compagne et peut revendiquer son territoire car il en aura besoin d'un pour élever une nouvelle famille. C'est lui qui nous réveille au petit jour en turlutant de toute ses forces. Chose certaine, son chant est beaucoup plus mélodieux que celui du coq! Plus le printemps se réchauffe plus on entend toutes sortes d'oiseaux. La mésange à tête noire par exemple est reconnue par son "Chickadee dee dee". J'ai cédé à la tentation d'inclure une page française "Courageuse mésange: puisque la mésange est la préférée de tout le monde en plus d'être l'oiseau du Maine et elle est chez nous douze mois par année.

Les beautés du printemps sont les

oiseaux, les plantes, les feuilles revenues vêtir certains arbres et les fleurs cultivées et sauvages qui, tous, égayent notre environnement. Si vous n'avez jamais vu *les sabots de la vierge*, fleur sauvage, allez marchez dans un boisé ombrageux et avec un peu de chance vous la trouverez tout près du sentier. Elles sont incroyablement belles en rose, blanc ou en jaune. Vous retournerez à la maison émerveillé de votre trouvaille. Mais ne cueillez jamais ces fleurs sauvages rares, car elles sont très délicates.

N'êtes-vous pas d'accord que notre planète TERRE est une fort belle boule? Il faut la préserver, n'est-ce pas?

Votre pie bavarde,

Marie-Anne



Today in Maine's Franco History: Jan 8 January 8, 2020 Education, Home, Lewiston-Auburn, Maine, Religion

By James Myall

Today in Maine's Franco History is a look back at important dates in the history of Maine's Franco-American communities. It will run throughout 2020, the bicentennial year of Maine's statehood. Your suggestions for additional events, people, and institutions to celebrate are most welcome.

January 8, 1883: Opening of the Dominican Block (Bloc Dominicain) in Lewiston. The Dominican Block, at the corner of Lincoln and Chestnut Streets, sits at the heart of Lewiston's Little Canada neighborhood. The building was built by the Dominican Fathers of Lewiston, who arrived in the city in 1881 to take charge of the French-Canadian parish of Saints Peter and Paul.

The Dominican Block was sometimes referred to as the "French Canadian City Hall." It included meeting space, a school, and retail stores at street level. In its more than a century of existence, the Dominican Block has hosted numerous Franco-American groups and societies.

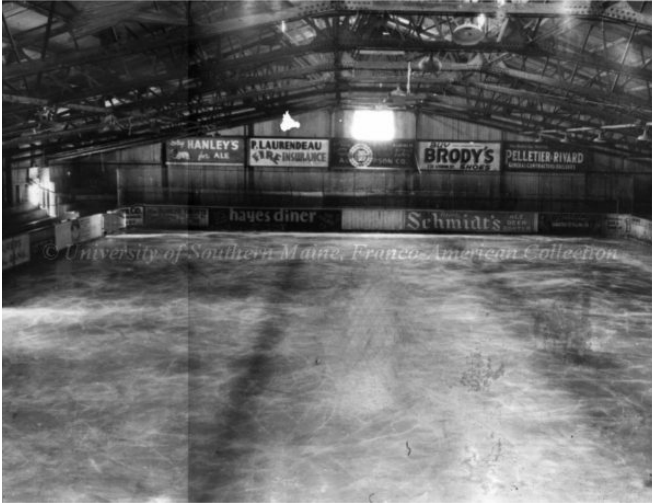
(Continued from page 9)



Opening of the Dominican Block, Lewiston, January 8, 1883. Image: Maine Memory Network / Franco-American Collection at the University of Southern Maine.

(Today in Maine's Franco History
continued from page 8)

January 10, 1951: The first game of hockey played on artificial ice in Maine takes place at the St Dominic's Arena in Lewiston. The arena, built in 1949, was owned by the Dominican Fathers who ran the parish of Sts Peter and Paul in Lewiston. The original arena burned in a fire in 1956, but was rebuilt and is today re-branded as the Colisée. In addition to numerous hockey matches, the arena also hosted the Muhammad Ali – Sonny Liston heavyweight championship fight in 1965.



Interior of St Dominic's Arena, ca 1950. Image: University of Southern Maine, Franco-American Collection.

January 13, 1964 – Louis-Philippe Gagné of Lewiston died, aged 63. Gagné was a leader in Lewiston-Auburn's Franco-American community and active as a journalist, sportsman, and politician. Born in Québec City in 1900, he worked for Le Soleil, that city's newspaper from 1917, and moved to Lewiston in 1922, where he became editor of Le Messager.

In addition to his work as a print and radio journalist (he hosted a long-running program on WCOU, Lewiston's French-language station), Gagné was active in local politics, rising to become mayor from 1947-1949. He also founded Lewiston's first permanent snowshoe club, Le Montagnard, in 1924. Just a few months later, he organized the first international snowshoe convention, held in Lewiston in 1925. More than anyone else, Gagné was responsible for popularizing the sport of snowshoeing in Maine and New England.



Louis-Philippe Gagné, ca 1947.
Image: Maine Memory Network/
USM Franco-American Collection

(Continued from page 10)

Information

1755

By Jim Belanger Sr.

The expulsion of the Acadians began in the summer of 1755. Troops marched into the villages and the people were called to be told of their fate. They were asked to assemble in the churches and other places of assembly on the ruse that they were to receive special instruction. No weapons were allowed in the churches and in the assembly halls so they were left outside. Once inside, the villagers were unarmed and defenseless. Ships had been prepared and hundreds were forced onto them without warning. Families were destroyed and no attention was paid to whether one was loyal or not. The Acadians were scattered from Salem Massachusetts to Savannah Georgia and to France and England. There were about 7,000 Acadians deported by the order of Colonel Charles Lawrence and between 1755 and 1762 several thousand more were deported each year. It is odd to find that such good records of the numbers deported were kept.

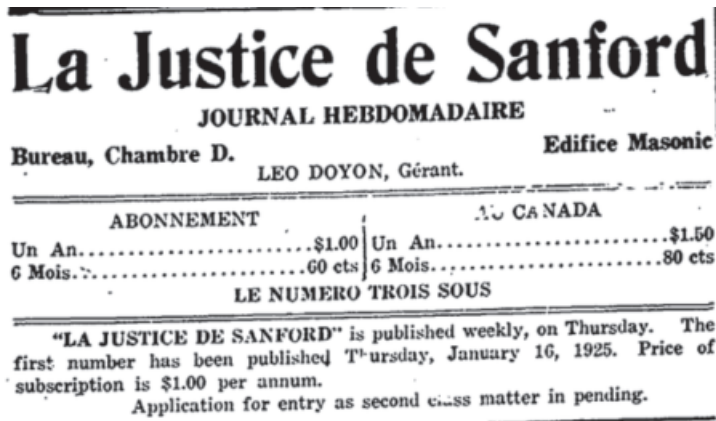
1. 1500 were deported to Virginia
2. 450 were deported to Pennsylvania
3. 2000 sent to Massachusetts
4. 1027 bound for South Carolina but some departed in Boston
5. 900 to Connecticut
6. 250 to Maryland
7. 450 to Georgia

No Acadians were deported from Acadia directly to Louisiana. The old story of Evangeline which relates an exile to New Orleans is fictional but based on facts of the deportation. Any Acadians who ended up in Louisiana got there after having been deported to the French Indies, France or England and then found their way to New Orleans.



(Today in Maine's Franco History continued from page 9)

January 16, 1925: First edition of La Justice de Sanford published. It was one of many smaller French-language papers published in Maine. Publishers and managers associated with La Justice de Sanford included Leo Doyon, Florence Maheau, Lionel LaFrance and Moses Baribeau. The paper ceased publishing in 1945.



Publisher's information from the February 25, 1925 edition of La Justice de Sanford.

January 18, 1955: Birth of Michael "Mike" Herman Michaud in Millinocket. Michaud worked at the Great Northern Paper Company in East Millinocket for thirty years, including while he served as a legislator in the Maine House (1973-1994) and Senate (1994-2003).

In 2002, he became the first Franco-American from Maine to be elected to a federal office, when he became the representative for Maine's second Congressional District. He served until 2015.

In 2014, Michaud ran unsuccessfully for governor against incumbent Paul LePage, marking the first election in which both major party candidates were Franco-American. He publicly came out as gay at the start of his gubernatorial run, making him the first openly gay man to run for governor in Maine.

Michaud currently serves as a selectman in East Millinocket.



About James Myall

While I currently work for an Augusta-based non-profit, I spent four years as the Coordinator of the Franco-American Collection at the University of Southern Maine. In 2015, I co-authored "The Franco-Americans of Lewiston-Auburn," a general history of that population from 1850 to the present. I was also a consultant for the State Legislative Task Force on Franco-Americans in 2012. I live in Topsham with my wife and two young daughters.



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January 17, 1828: The Maine State Legislature passes a resolve to complete a road through the Kennebec Valley to Canada. This would become known as the Old Canada Road, and provide the first direct route for French Canadians to travel from Québec to central Maine. Many early Franco-American immigrants traveled the Old Canada Road to Skowhegan, Waterville, and Augusta.

The Old Canada Road follows the route taken by Benedict Arnold on his invasion of Canada, and an early traveler was Father Moise Fortier.

Today the road is known as part of US Route 201. In 2001, the Old Canada Road was designated part of a scenic byway known as the Kennebec-Chaudiere corridor.



Photograph in an exhibition with a dark history lesson

January 31, 2020 Franco-American News and Culture Ku Klux Klan, Penobscot Marine Museum

By Juliana L'Heureux

AUGUSTA- A historic photographic exhibit on display on the first floor of the Maine Capitol in Augusta, includes one black and white image with a somber history lesson.

I was unprepared for the information attached to the very serene picture taken in 1913, Kennebunkport, donated to the exhibit by the Penobscot Marine Museum.

In the photo, a group of ladies are lounging on what locals call “Mother’s Beach”. In fact, the photograph’s label does not describe the scene in the picture. Although I was initially amused by the pictured group of women who were completely covered with hats, and beach dresses sitting on the sand, with a distant image of Walker’s Point in the landscape, I soon experienced an eye opening history lesson when I took time to read the accompanying label.

Indeed, Maine has a dark history of harboring overt discrimination towards “Hebrews” and “Franco’s” but to read this information on a picture taken in 1913, on Kennebunkport’s Mother’s Beach, was startling to me. I happen to have other photographic evidence to document this history as well. About 10 years ago, I purchased a local history book at a library sale where I unexpectedly read about how the Ku Klux Klan was active in Maine’s midcoast Bailey Island. I’ve transcribed the label on the Kennebunkport Beach photograph and included my photograph.

Also, in this blog, I’ve included my pictures taken from the local history about Bailey’s Island.

Although Maine has moved beyond the history of the days when organized efforts targeted Jews and Franco’s caused by religious bigotry, these pictures remind us to be diligent in our efforts to prevent the past from becoming the present.

Kennebunkport Beach – known by locals as “Mother’s Beach”

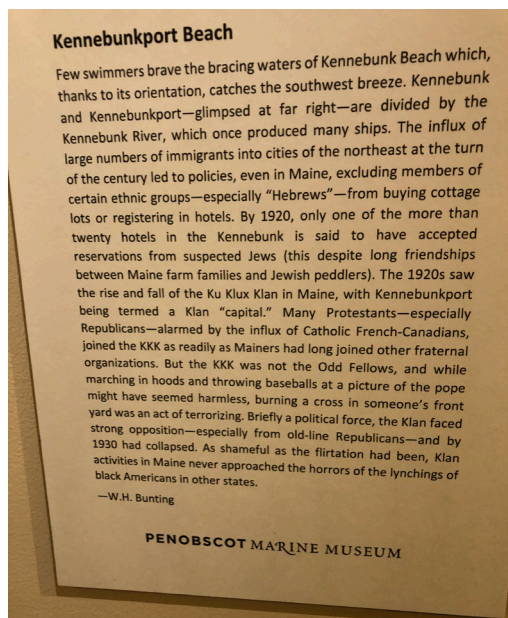
Penobscot Marine Museum- transcribed label:

Few swimmers brave the bracing waters of Kennebunk Beach which, thanks to its orientation, catches the southwest breeze. Kennebunk and Kennebunkport – glimpsed at the far right in the 1913 black and white photograph, are divided by the Kennebec River, which once produced many ships. The influx of large numbers of immigrants into cities in the northeast at the turn of the 20th century led to policies, even in Maine, excluding members of certain ethnic groups – especially “Hebrews”, from buying cottage lots or registering in the beach hotels. By 1920, only one of the more than twenty hotels in Kennebunk is said to have accepted reservations from suspected Jews (this despite long friendships between Maine farm families and Jewish peddlers). The 1920’s also saw the rise and fall of the Ku Klux Klan in Maine, with Kennebunkport being termed a Klan “capital”. Many Protestants, especially those who were Republicans, alarmed by the influx of the French-Canadian Roman Catholics, joined the KKK as

(Continued on page 12)



Kennebunkport Beach in the historic Maine Capitol historic photographs exhibit. This beach is known by locals as “Mother’s Beach”.



Historic 1913 photograph label transcribed in this blog article.

(Photograph in an exhibition with a dark history lesson *continued from page 11*)

readily as Mainers had long joined other fraternal organizations. But, the KKK was not the Odd Fellows, and while marching in hoods and throwing baseballs at a picture of the Catholic Pope might have seemed harmless, burning a cross in someone's front yard was an act of terrorizing. Briefly, a political force, the Klan faced strong opposition, especially from old line tolerant Republicans and by 1930, had collapsed. As shameful as the flirtation had been, Klan activities in Maine never approached the horrors of the lynchings of black Africans seen in other state. W. H. Bunting.

In the local history about Bailey Island, this photograph is included in the book:



An image printed in a local history about Maine's Bailey Island further documents the presence of the Ku Klux Klan in Maine.



Picture snippet printed in a Bailey Island local history book.

Sadly, these photographs are evidence to document how Maine's beautiful coastal communities became enablers of racism against Franco-Americans and Jews, a century ago.

The historic exhibit of old Maine photographs includes dozens of vintage scenes from throughout the state. They are accessible to the public on display on the first floor of the State House, in the foyer just beyond the Capitol security's screening station.



About Juliana

Juliana L'Heureux is a free lance writer who publishes news, blogs and articles about Franco-Americans and the French culture. She has written about the culture in weekly and bi-weekly articles, for the past 27 years.

<https://francoamerican.bangordailynews.com/author/jlheureux/>

“All Work and No Play” child labor exhibit at Museum L-A

February 7, 2020 Franco-American News and Culture Francis Perkins, Maine Department of Labor

By Juliana L'Heureux

LEWISTON, Me- Child labor is a consistent topic of conversation when educational tours visit the Museum L-A, in Lewiston. A new museum exhibit looks at the hard truth about child labor, including excellent visuals and photographs. I enjoyed my visit to view this exhibit, and will soon be returning with my husband and friends!

There was a time in Maine when child labor was evident in the state's manufacturing mills, where cities with large Franco-Americans and immigrant residents

were often expected to help support the labor needs. Indeed, my mother in law worked in a Biddeford shoe factory when she was only in the fifth grade. She left this job after suffering a major finger injury caused by an industrial sewing machine and was subsequently educated in a local convent. Moreover, my husband recalls how his middle school class in Sanford was taken on a student field trip to tour the town's Goodall Mills, because it was expected that after leaving the 8th grade, many of the youths would work in the textile factory, rather than

go on to high school.

Maine's child labor history is the focus of “All Work and No Play” exhibit at Museum L-A, located in the Bates Mill Complex. The exhibit is focused on Lewiston and Auburn, Maine, but reflects the national policy issues about child labor. It includes compelling black and white photographs taken with child laborers, by the American sociologist and photographer Lewis Hine. Among the featured photographs are loans from the Franco-American Collection, at the University of Southern Maine Lewiston Auburn College (USM LAC FAC). Photographs and collections from six historical organizations with locations throughout Maine are featured in the exhibit. One particularly moving visual image is a large black and white group portrait taken with child laborers and some adult mill workers who were working in a factory without
(Continued on page 13)

("All Work and No Play" child labor exhibit at Museum L-A continued from page 12)



Audrey Thomson, executive director of Museum L-A in the Bates Mill Complex. (L'Heureux photograph)



"All Work And No Play", at Museum L-A in Lewiston, Maine exhibit is on display through mid June 2020. (Jacynthe Jacques photograph)

wearing shoes. Museum executive director Audrey Thomson said the exhibit was able to acquire many historic items including a piece of the Maine Labor Mural that caused a controversy in 2011, when Maine's Governor Paul LePage ordered it to be removed from the Department of Labor. Eventually, it was moved to the Maine State Museum.

An opening public reception on January 30, attracted a large audience. "Our opening reception was extremely well attended," said Thomson. "Many who attended shared stories about a family member who worked in one of the Maine industries as a child. The history of child labor and the Lewis Hine photos that played a major role in documenting the abuses, continue to draw adult visitors and students to Museum L-A."

Employing children to work in manufacturing mills became illegal when the social reformer Francis Perkins became involved in passing the Fair Labor Standards Act, to reduce workplace injuries and implement child labor laws. Perkins was the first woman to be appointed a Cabinet member and she served in the Franklin Delano Roosevelt administration. In fact, Perkins had roots in Maine and her family's history can be visited at the Francis Perkins Center in Damariscotta.

A grim timeline in the Museum L-A's exhibit marks the decades when child labor was legal. Included are examples about the

children who worked as laborers in industries such as textile mills, sardine canneries, and family farms throughout Maine. Also, the exhibit describes the history about how labor laws were passed to stop the exploitation of children. Exhibit items and photographs showcase the experiences about children whose stories have been under-represented in the industrial mills workforce. In fact, the exhibit is impressive and fills the Museum L-A's gallery.

Emma Sieh is Museum L-A's collections and exhibits coordinator. She explains how one of the issues confronted in the exhibit responds to whether or not Lewiston's Bates Mill employed child labor? She says teachers that visit the museum want to create awareness about the roles of children in the textile mill operations as a way educate today's generation about how to protect the laws currently in place to prevent this practice.

"All Work and No Play" will be on display through the middle of June 2020, but prior to closing, a capstone event will be hosted at the museum as a place to discuss, and understand how child labor still affects social policy and, sadly, is still employed worldwide.

Museum L-A is located in the Bates Mill Complex, at 35 Canal Street in Lewiston, ME. Check the website for more information.


FRANCES PERKINS (1880-1965)

She was born Fannie Coralie Perkins in Boston in 1880, but her family roots were in Maine. She was raised with a deep appreciation of history and pride in her New England heritage.

"From the time I was in college, I was horrified at the work that many women and children had to do in factories," said Frances Perkins. With no laws regulating the hours they were permitted to work or guarding their health or safety, she was motivated to work toward reforming these abuses.

Throughout her career, she continued to explore ways to increase the minimum wage, combat unemployment, and abolish child labor. In 1933, President-elect Franklin D. Roosevelt asked Frances to serve as Secretary of Labor. **"I came to Washington to work for God, FDR, and the millions of forgotten, plain common workingmen."** She continued to serve in this capacity until 1945.

In 1938, Congress enacted the Fair Labor Standards Act, with the support of Perkins, instituting a minimum wage and maximum work hours and banning child labor. She was also largely responsible for the US adoption of the social security system and unemployment insurance.



To learn more about Frances Perkins, visit the Francis Perkins Center in Damariscotta, Maine!

Francis Perkins was the first woman to serve in a presidential cabinet and she led the passage of the Fair Labor Standards Act. (L'Heureux photograph)



Part III: What do you believe in?

by *Daniel Moreau*

I must confess to the reader. Usually, I write my Finding The Franco series pieces in advance, but this one is an exception as it is difficult for me to write about. Even though I am a Franco-American, I wasn't always Catholic. I was raised Catholic, however. I was baptized in a Catholic church, and for years my family and I would dress up and go to Catholic Mass. Suddenly, we moved. And things change when you move. I changed schools so I had to leave all my friends behind and create new ones. I changed from a house, to the second floor of a downtown apartment. The biggest change from that move, though, was that we stopped going to mass. Over the years I "lost" my faith. Eventually, in high school, I didn't identify as Catholic and at most I was agnostic. I still believed in God, but as I became more and more politically progressive, I slowly stopped identifying with Christianity because the types of Christians I saw on the news turned to hate against their fellow man

(case and point, anti-LGBT, and anti-immigrant sentiments). At my most desperate times, I did pray to god.

During my sophomore year of high school, things started to change. On Palm Sunday, I took a trip to the local Catholic church. For twenty minutes, I sat in my car. Trying to build up the courage of going back to something that I haven't done in fourteen years. Sitting alone, in the back, I mumbled the hymns to myself until it was done. I don't know what it was, but nothing about that felt right. The next Sunday, I decided to attend an Episcopal service that I was recommended to. At this, I felt something far different than what I felt at the Catholic mass the week prior. I felt that God was with me, and felt that the teachings were more in line with Christ's teachings. For the next eight months, I attended Episcopal service almost every Sunday. I lead the Prayers of the People, some readings, and even acted as an acolyte for a brief time. I nearly formally

converted to the Episcopal church, but the timing never worked. However, not long ago, I stopped going to Episcopal service. And instead started attending Catholic mass, but not anxiously. My theory is that God put me in the Episcopal church to strengthen my faith, and teach me Christ's teachings of loving thy neighbor.

If I stayed in the Episcopal church, would that make me less Franco-American? After all, isn't one of the largest pillars of Franco-American culture Catholicism? If the reader believes that to be Franco-American, one must be Catholic, I implore them to ask themselves: What about the other Franco-Americans? Those who are athiest, muslim, jewish, or protestant? Are those Franco-Americans to be denied their culture just because of this? If the reader believes this, then I ask who they think they are. Therefore, to define what a "Modern Franco-American" would be, religion is not to be brought into this topic. Some may argue that Catholicism has been the greatest pier of our culture. However, that time has past, and now we must embrace our fellow Franco of different faith. And I welcome that change.

(N.D.L.R. this article was first reproduced by F.A.R.O.G., UMO 9/10/73)

ST. JOHN VALLEY TIMES Madawaska Historical Society

By *A. J. Michaud*

The past three weeks these writings were entitled either by "When the price of 'peltrie' was low" or "Darkened by Shadows of Earth".

The ordinary farmby who would go into the woods went for the definite purpose of earning enough money to help his folks to pay the farm mortgage or if he was thinking of getting married, he wanted to earn a certain amount to put down the first payment for a woodlot which would be cleared by the help of his father's machinery which generally consisted of a team of oxen and a stump-puller.

Hardwoods were generally just cut in windrows and burnt. These would add potash to the soil. Sheep would be pastured for a few years to nibble new growth and then the job of stump-pulling would start.

In the meantime youth, love, and ambition would not look or would see any hardship, and the young man would get

married, some buildings would be put up for the incipient family which would soon begin. Love, marriage, and children were one parcel and the land would provide.

Time was found for relaxation such as an occasional dance for another young fellow's marriage. Fishing and hunting were the natural occupation of a man on a Sunday afternoon or of a fall work-slack period. The wife could take care of the cattle while the man could tend his nets on the lake or hunt for fresh meat for the winter months.

For ready cash the drive and lumbering were the main sources of this most important item and so when pelts were low, one would have to get on the river and meet with all kinds of characters of types of men who were foreign to his way of life and lumbering might bring tragedy to some poor fellow. So clouds would form for some unfortunate person's family. Tears would fall. There were songs which made you cry and there were some which made you laugh.

1

Dans l'année 1907 une complainte
j'ai composée.

Le 26 du mois d'Decembre

Une accident est arrivé.

Un homme a la fleur de l'âge

Peut-être que vous le connaissez

le garçon d'Abraham Gagnon

Dans le bois il s'est fait tué.

2

Il travaillait dessus une yard.

C'était pour des billots roulés.

Il en a un qu'il échappe

Et qui s'en vient le tuer.

Sa mort a été si prompte

N'a pas pu être assisté,

N'a pas pu avoir le prêtre

Pour se préparer à l'éternité.

3

Vous jeunes gens qui vivez sur la terre.

Dans les plaisirs et la liberté

Pensez à votre fin dernière

Vous savez pas quand vous mourrez.

Moi qui était si jeune encore

Je croyais pas de mourir.

La mort est venu me surprendre

Comme un loup près d'une brebis.

(Continued on page 15)

(ST. JOHN VALLEY TIMES)

Madawaska Historical Society continued from page 14)

4

Chers parents ne prenez pas de peine.
Ne prenez pas de chagrin.
Je meurs à l'âge la plus belle.
Je ne laisse ni femme ni enfant.
Le chose est pas mal regrettable
Pour vous tous mes bons parents
Cars dans l'espace de trois mois
Deux enfant meurent par accident.

5

L'un des deux est père de famille.
Laisse une femme et trois enfants
A gemir dessus sa tombe
Et avoir bien du chagrin
Une épouse inconsolable
Qui ne peut se consoler.
Dans les entrailles les plus profonds
Son cœur est souvent brise.

6

J'avais une jolie compagne
Que je croyais d'épouser.
Je l'aimais plus que moi-même
Dieu changea ma volonté.
Je vous prie, chere compagne,
Ne prenez pas de chagrin.
Pensez à moi dans vos prières
Puisque j'ai été votre amant.

7

Chers parents, je le repete,
Ne prenez pas de chagrin
Ne prenez pas de peine
Sur la mort de vos enfants.
Dieu qui est la bonte meme
Pourrait-il me refuser
De me faire misericorde
De toutes mes fautes passées.

Complainte

Te souviens-tu du jour, que nous somme maries?
Dans nos cœurs l'amour, nos âmes à jamais liés?

C'était le printemps. Nous étions contents.

Dans les erables la seve, Nous rappelait le rêve.

De notre vie ensemble, Ou tout ressemble
Au paradis, De notre vie.

Je te vois ce soir, Quand ton corps moribond
Repose sans espoir, De vie au fond.

De ces grands bois, Que ta vie expire.
Pourquoi, mon Dieu, Dans un tel lieu.

Faire mourir, Ce cœur que tu m'avais donné?
Etait-ce pour une journée? Pour un sourire?

Mon cœur se brise, A l'approche de l'hiver
Ce n'est plus d'hier, Le printemps la brise.

Que nos rêves de jeunesse, portait le matin.
Dans le lointain, Après nuits d'ivresse.



This ballad was composed on the death of a young man who was killed in Township Seventeen, Range three in 1913.

(BACK IN EARLY 1930's, St. John Valley Times)

Van Buren Area Man Claimed to be

“World’s Strongest Man”

VAN BUREN - Maine men are traditionally thought to be unusually strong because of the continuing fights against land and water. But John B. Gagnon was certainly the strongest of all.

For five years back in the early 1930's, Gagnon claimed the world title for weight-lifting and was considered the “strongest man in the world”. He was born and raised just north of Caribou, and has several relatives in the Van Buren area. For example, Eddie Levasseur on the Hamlin Road, is Gagnon's grand nephew. In fact, Levasseur was distantly related to Gagnon on his maternal parent's side also.

Among the feats that John Gagnon accomplished were the following:

- Finger lift, 3 seconds 794 pounds.
- 1 hand lift, 3 seconds 1111 pounds.

- 2 hand lift, 3 seconds 1575 pounds.
- 2 hands and knees, 3 seconds 2195 pounds.
- Neck lift, 3 seconds 1317 pounds.
- Harness lift, 3 seconds 2689 pounds.
- Teeth lift 3 seconds 627 pounds.
- 1 arm lift, 3 seconds 924 pounds.
- 2 arm lift, 3 seconds 1248 pounds.
- Back lift, 3 seconds 4170 pounds.

Gagnon competed the performance in 25 minutes and lifted a total of 16,650 pounds.

His measurements were height, 5 feet 10 inches; weight 230 pounds; neck, 18 inches; chest normal, 49 inches; waist 40 inches; biceps, 17 inches; forearm, 13.5 inches; wrist, 7.2 inches; thigh, 26 inches; calf, 16 inches.

Gagnon was married and had two

children and lived in Augusta, Maine at the time of his feats. He died at the age of 52.

Another well-known weight-lifter of the day was Louis Cyr of Montreal, who was the strongest man in Canada.



JOHN B. GAGNON
(Reproduced from damaged poster)

Franco-American artist

Mercedes Gastonguay

January 24, 2020 *Franco-American News and Culture* Driftwood at Popham, Joy of Art 2020, ME, Topsham Public Library

By Juliana L'Heureux

TOPSHAM and LEWISTON— A pleasant and surprise encounter with Franco-American artist Mercedes Gastonguay occurred when I happened to attend the Topsham Public Library’s “Joy of Art 2020”, exhibit on January 18, at the opening reception. She submitted two scenic entries to the art exhibit: “High Tide at Monhegan Island, ME”, is a pastel and “Driftwood at Popham, ME” is a watercolor. Both are lovely Maine scenes.



“High Tide at Monhegan Island ME” was awarded a Blue Ribbon at the Joy of Art exhibit at the Topsham Public Library. (L'Heureux photograph)

Certainly, I encourage the public to view her entries and the other submissions in the exhibit, open until February 22 to the public. I agreed with the judges Blue Ribbon award presented to her “High Tide at Monhegan Island”, because she captures the energy in the ocean waves as they spray like splashing crystal across the Monhegan Island’s rocky coast.

Mercedes is known in Lewiston’s Franco-American community as a teacher, an artist, and an advocate for the culture’s language, religion and history. Her historical 46”x54” tableau entitled, “À la mémoire de nos ancêtres” (In Memory of our Ancestors)

has been on exhibit in various galleries, at the Augusta State House and currently is displayed on loan at the Franco-American Collection at the University of Southern Maine Lewiston Auburn College (USM LAC FAC).



“Driftwood at Popham, ME”, watercolor by Mercedes Gastonguay. (L'Heureux photograph)

In an email message, she wrote, “It was very nice to see you at the ‘Joy of Art’ at the Topsham Public Library. I really appreciate your support and enthusiasm regarding my paintings as well as my tableau, ‘A la mémoire de nos ancêtres’. ...my husband, Jean Gastonguay was chair of the Language Department and a French teacher in Lewiston-Auburn for 36 years. Merci, Mercedes.”



In Memory of Our Ancestors by Mercedes Gastonguay. (L'Heureux photograph)

Tableau by Mercedes Gastonguay on loan to the Franco-American Collection at USM LAC, in Lewiston.

Meeting Mercedes during our short

visit, I was reminded about her essay published in *Voyages: A Franco-American Reader*, (pp 197-199), where she described her motivation for creating “À la mémoire de nos ancêtres”. “The oil painting is a tribute to our Franco-American ancestors who labored to make the Lewiston-Auburn area what it is today,” she wrote. “Depicted on the canvas are scenes describing their arrival from Canada and their life in Lewiston and Auburn. I set the scene on an old parchment map with the Androscoggin River surging throughout the painting”.

Her essay continues by describing each of the scenes in the tableau. Scenes include the various manufacturing mills where the French-Canadian immigrants provided much of the labor, and it was their reason for coming to Lewiston and Auburn. The mills where they worked were located along the Androscoggin River, which is prominent throughout the parchment colored canvas.

In the tableau’s panoramic view, she provides a serene view of Le Petit Canada, where traditional family life in a typical apartment is portrayed. A viewer can’t help but notice how the tableau portrays the culture’s pride in arranging a well organized and clean environment for family living.

Another tableau image is the Dominican Block, described as having been founded in 1881, in Lewiston. This was the first school serving the French-Canadian children.

A strong connection to the Lewiston-Auburn Roman Catholic churches includes the unmistakable towers of the Saints Peter and Paul Basilica, pictured with religious Dominican priests and nuns. This particular tableau scene clearly recognizing the religious leaders in the parish communities.

Mercedes says her tableau holds a special place in her heart because painting the scenes allowed her to travel back to her childhood years on Oxford Street, where her mother’s family began their new life as immigrants to the United States. “I want all who see this tableau to celebrate our individual ancestors who bravely left their families to begin new lives in the Lewiston-Auburn cities.”

Visitors can view the “Joy of Art 2020” exhibit at the Topsham Public Library through February 22, 2020. “À la mémoire de nos ancêtres”, is on loan and exhibited at the Franco-American Collection at the University of Southern Maine LAC.

LE FRUIT DÉFENDU – FORBIDDEN FRUIT

by/par Jacqueline Chamberland Blesso

Une Conversation avec Ronald Chamberland (1938-2016)

A Conversation with Ronald Chamberland



- Allo, Ronald. Qu'est-ce que tu nous a fait pour dîner?

Hi Ronald. What did you make for our dinner?

- Bonjour, Jacqueline. J'ai pensé que tu aimerais de la morue salée, des patates avec du beurre aux oignons, et des petits pois verts.

Hello Jacqueline. I thought that you might like some salt cod, potatoes with butter and onions, and baby green peas.

- Bien sûr. C'est un repas de chez nous que je ne mange pas souvent. Ça me fait plaisir. Bon, tu as dit que tu me parlerais des tours que tu as joué dans ta jeunesse.

Of course, it's a meal from here that I don't often get to eat. It makes me happy. Now, you said that you would tell me about the tricks you used to play on people when you were young.

- Oui, tu sais, dans ce temps là, on sortait à la brunante, entre huit et neuf heures, pour voler des pommes dans le verger du couvent. J'aimais les rouges, mais les blanches étaient les meilleures avec un gout un peu sur.

Yes, you know, at that time, we would go out at dusk, between eight and nine o'clock, to steal apples from the convent orchard. I liked the red ones, but the white ones were the best, having a slightly sour taste.

- Qui étaient tes compagnons dans ce grand crime-là?

Who were your partners in crime?

- Ben, je me souviens pas exactement. On y est allé plusieurs fois. Mes "chums" étaient Bébé à Belone (Abel Chamberland), Bébé à Den (Bertrand Ouellette) et Bébé à Raoul (Gilman Chamberland).

Well, I don't quite remember. We went many times. My friends were Bébé à Belone (Abel Chamberland), Bébé à Den (Bertrand Ouellette) and Bébé à Raoul (Gilman Chamberland).

- Et, toi on t'appelait Bébé à Gérard. Moi, on m'appelait Quiquine (mes petites soeurs ne pouvait pas prononcer Jacqueline). Ces noms là nous ont resté longtemps. Bien sûr, vous n'étiez plus des bébés.

And, you were named Bébé à Gérard. For my part, I had the name Quiquine (my little sisters could not pronounce Jacqueline). Those names stayed with us a long time. Of course, you were no longer babies.

- Non, on avait à peu près 13 ou 14 ans. Des "Bébés" grimpaient dans le pommier; ils secouaient l'arbre; et les autres ramassaient les pommes. De temps en temps, les Soeurs battaient des mains, on dégringolait de l'arbre pour tomber à quatre pattes et on décampaient.

No, we were about 13 or 14 years old. Some "Bébés" would climb up into the apple tree; they would shake the tree; and the others would collect the apples. From time to time, the Nuns would clap their hands, we would tumble from the tree to fall on all fours and we would scam.

- Comme tu sais, moi aussi j'en ai volé avec mes amies. C'était pas un grand secret. Presque tous les jeunes y allaient. C'était le fruit défendu, au sens propre et au sens figuré, parce que c'était au couvent, donc très attirant. Moi, j'y suis allée avec notre cousine, 'ti Pat Chamberland, et mes amies, Patricia et Rachel Michaud. J'espère que ça ne va pas les fâcher que je raconte notre espièglerie. Je me souviens d'un incident où on s'était trainé à plat ventre comme des serpents dans le jardin pour ne pas se faire voir. Le chien avait jappé, et on s'était sauvé vite. Le lendemain, une voisine est arrivée chez nous pour raconter à M'man qu'elle avait entendue des jeunes malfaiteurs qui étaient venus se servir dans le verger; j'écoutais et j'avais de la difficulté à étouffer mes rires. Il y avait toujours un chien qui jappait quand on approchait le jardin.

As you know, I also stole some with my friends. It was not a big secret. Almost all the kids did it. It was the forbidden fruit, in

the literal as well as the metaphorical sense, because it was at the convent, therefore very enticing. I went with my cousin, 'ti Pat Chamberland, and my friends, Patricia and Rachel Michaud. I hope it won't upset them that I am telling about our mischievousness. I remember an incident where we dragged ourselves on our stomachs like serpents in the garden so we would not be seen. The dog barked and we quickly ran away. The next day, a neighbor came to our house to tell Mom that she had heard some young thieves who had come to help themselves in the orchard; I was listening and I had difficulty in suppressing my laughter. There was always a dog barking whenever we would approach the garden.

- Quand on y allait, il n'y avait pas de chien. Plus tard, je me souviens d'un saint-bernard très doux qui jappait, mais qui n'aurait jamais fait mal à personne.

When we went, there was no dog. Later, I remember a very sweet St Bernard who barked, but would never have hurt anyone.

- On était toujours attiré par le couvent et ses habitants.

We were always attracted to the convent and its inhabitants.

- Surtout par les jeunes filles du pensionnat! Il y en avait des belles. Elles venaient de tout le canton – Presque Isle, Caribou, Van Buren, Madawaska et Fort Kent. L'hiver, quand elles se détendaient sur la patinoire le soir, on allait les voir et on leur apportait des tablettes de chocolat. Ensuite, on essayait de les faire sortir de la patinoire pour aller se promener entre les bancs de neige dans la petite route devant chez Léonide Ouellette. Elles essayaient de désertir pour quelques minutes parce qu'elles avaient envie de voir des gars et elles voulaient bien venir marcher avec nous. Mais, il y avait toujours une bonne Soeur qui
(Continued/suite page 18)

(LE FRUIT DÉFENDU –
FORBIDDEN FRUIT continued from/de
page 17)

les guettaient. Alors, c'était difficile de réussir. Il faut comprendre qu'elles n'allaient chez elles qu'une fois par mois. Alors, du chocolat ou d'autres bonbons étaient toujours appréciés. Et nous voulions toujours leur faire plaisir. On allait souvent leur rendre visite dans le tunnel qui joignait les deux anciens bâtiments du couvent. Mais, aussitôt arrivé, une soeur entra pour nous surveiller.

Especially by the young girls in the boarding school. There were some pretty ones. They came from all over the place – Presque Isle, Caribou, Van Buren, Madawaska and Fort Kent. In winter, when they would relax at the skating rink at night, we would go see them and bring them chocolate bars. Then, we would try to get them to leave the rink to go walking between the snowbanks in that little lane in front of Leonide Ouellette's. They would try to get away for a few minutes because they wanted to see some boys and wanted to go for a walk with us. But, there was always a good Sister watching them. So, it was difficult to succeed. You have to understand that they went home only once a month. So, chocolate or other candies were always appreciated. And we always wanted to please them. We would often visit them in the tunnel joining the two old convent buildings. But, as soon as we arrived, a Sister would enter to keep a close eye on us.

- En été, Tasi (Anastasia) était toujours assise sur la galerie d'en haut et elle pouvait voir le préau et tout ce qui se passait dans les alentours. Je la vois encore avec sa longue robe noire. Je me demande si elle nous reconnaissait sous les pommiers.

In summer, Tasi (Anastasia) always sat on the upper porch and she could see the yard and everything that went on round about. I can still see her in her long black dress. I wondered if she knew who we were under the apple trees.

- Oui, Tasi et Maggie étaient deux vieilles femmes qui avaient travaillées au couvent et qui y étaient restées puisque c'était devenu leur demeure. Elles n'avaient pas d'autres domiciles et elles s'y sentaient chez-elles. Pour gagner leur pain, elles épluchaient des patates dans la cuisine ou elles faisaient le repassage à la buanderie. Les jeunes pensionnaires aimaient taquiner Tasi qui avait toujours été célibataire. Elles apportaient un catalogue de Sears & Roe-

buck pour lui montrer les hommes qui modélaient les vêtements et pour lui demander lequel elle aimerait avoir comme mari!

Yes, Tasi and Maggie were two old ladies who had worked at the convent and who had stayed on since it had become their home. They did not have any other domicile and they felt at home. To earn their living, they peeled potatoes in the kitchen or they ironed in the laundry. The young boarders liked to tease Tasi who had never married. They would bring Sears & Roebuck catalogs to show her the males modeling clothes to ask her which one she would like to have for a husband!

- Le couvent avait toujours été autosuffisant. Deux ou trois hommes étaient de service pour mener la ferme. Sous la direction de la Québécoise Soeur Josepha, ils élevaient des bétails, récoltaient des produits agricoles et faisaient le tout pour nourrir les religieuses, les pensionnaires et les engagés.

The convent had always been self-sufficient. Two or three men worked to operate the farm. Under the direction of the Québécoise Sister Josepha, they raised animals, harvested agricultural products and did everything else to feed the Nuns, the boarders and the workers.

- Ils entretenaient une soue avec 300 cochons et ils semaient des patates et de l'avoine. Soeur Marie-Claire, une autre Québécoise avec un grand visage rouge, surveillait les garçons du pensionnat. Physiquement carrée, elle pesait à peu près 200 livres.

They maintained a sty with 300 pigs; and they sowed potatoes and oats. Sister Marie-Claire, another Québécoise with a large red face, would supervise the boys who boarded. Physically thick, she weighed approximately 200 pounds.

- Soeur Alfred enseignait la "classe des bébés". Quand elle nous a raconté "La Dernière Classe" d'Alphonse Daudet, ça m'avait beaucoup impressionné. Même aujourd'hui quand je la lis avec mes étudiants, ça me fait penser à ce temps là. Si on était sage et bon élève, on nous récompensait avec du "pain des anges", qui était les découpures de pain sans levain qui restaient après la fabrication des hosties. J'ai été demi-pensionnaire jusqu'à ce que Ste-Agathe rassemble les petites écoles rouge pour constituer l'école Montfort en école publique.

Sister Alfred taught the "baby class." When she recounted Alphonse Daudet's "La Dernière Classe," it made a great impression on me. Even today when I read it with my students, it reminds me of that time. If we were well-behaved and good students, we were rewarded with "pain des anges" or angel bread, which were the leftover cuttings of unleavened bread remaining after the fabrication of communion wafers. I attended school there as a demi-pensionnaire (day student) until Ste-Agathe assembled the little red school houses to create Montfort School into a public school.

- Moi, ma demi-pension au couvent a duré jusqu'à la quatrième classe. J'ai commencé à l'école Montfort dans la cinquième classe et Irène Michaud était ma maîtresse.

For me, my demi-pension lasted through the fourth grade. I went to fifth grade at Montfort and Irene Michaud was my teacher.

- J'ai commencé dans la deuxième sous la tutelle de Soeur Delorèse. Ensuite, c'était Marie Michaud qui enseignait la troisième et Elsie Chassé la quatrième.

I started in second grade under the tutelage of Sister Deloresse. Afterwards, Marie Michaud taught me in third grade and Elsie Chassé in fourth.

- Maude Marin a quitté pour assister le Père Doiron. Soeur Alphonse entraînait les garçons dans le basketball. Soeur Berthe et Soeur Mary Francis sont arrivées de New York, et celle-ci est devenue la Principale.

Maude Marin left to assist Father Doiron. Sister Alphonse taught the boys basketball. Sister Berthe and Sister Mary Francis arrived from New York, with Sister Mary Francis becoming the Principal.

- Mon mari, la première fois qu'il est venu à Ste-Agathe, a remarqué qu'il y avait un très gros et grand "barbecuing" devant le Couvent. Bien sûr il parlait de la grotte! Il n'avait jamais vu ça. Je me souviens qu'on faisait couler de l'eau dans la grotte en imitant Lourdes.

The first time that my husband came to Ste-Agathe, he remarked about the large "barbecue pit" in front of the Convent. Of course, he was talking about the grotto. He had never seen this. I remember that water sometimes flowed down the grotto in imitation of Lourdes.

(Continued/suite page 19)



Ste-Agathe Historical Society

(N.D.L.R. This article is used with permission from Terry Ouellette and first appeared in the Ste-Agathe Historical Society Annual Newsletter, 2019)

Thoughts of Spring

by Pat Gervais Flynn

There was still snow on the ground and the landscape was bleak, the lake still covered with thick ice but on some milder days you could tell its color was subtly changing to gray and more watery. Changes were on the way, spring was finally in the air. The human spirit was ready for its promise of renewal. A time to plan.

Mom had already pored through her Burpee Seed Catalog from cover to cover and ordered for her vegetable seeds for the garden. "I ordered those "long green" cucumbers that we planted last year, we harvested a ton of them and I have enough pickles for 3 years. The boston leaf lettuce grew well and remember those green beans that we picked through at least five times? I had trouble with cabbage worms last year and need to find a more effective remedy for that. See how well my tomatoes are growing on the windowsill? Memere Hebert told me always to plant them on Good Friday," said my mother.

My memory hears the conversation:

L'automne passé on a étendu du fumier dans le jardins. Ca faisait une secouse q'on l'avait pas faite pi c'était le temp. Maique la neige fonde toute, pi ca seche un peu a la fin de Mai, on va faire laboure ca par Mr. Gilbert pi on aura de la bonne engrais pour 2 - 3 ans. Benoit, il va falloir relever la clouture, les bans de neige a pas mal ecrase ca sur be bout vers le chemin. On va mettre nos tomates dans ce bout la cette annee, c'est moins mouilleux. Dans le milieu, tu me fera 4 carres pour mes carottes, ma salades, pi mes raves, mes bettes

pi mes greens. Oublie pas mes beaux gros onions, sont assez bons. Apres ca fait moi sept ou huit rangs d'un bord a l'autre pour mes faives. On va mettre notre couche de concombres dans le bas, c'est plus mouilleux dans ce coin la. Essayons ca. J'avais envie de m'planter du ble d'inde c't'annee mais ca prend tros de place, il faudrait rallonger le jardin encore du bout d'en bas, never mind c'est bon ca, s'en fait moins a canne...

Tending the flock

After the seeds were ordered and the garden planned, it was time to order the chickens. There were several kinds available at Mr. Fred Soucy's in Fort Kent. Mom preferred the white Plymouth Rocks over the Rhode Island Reds or the Grey Leghorns. Mr. Soucy had like an Agway Store that sold animals, feed, and agricultural items.

In Early May, they were delivered by the mailman, TiVin Sinclair. There were 50 peeping chicks in a large square box with holes around it for air. We couldn't wait to see those tiny, yellow fluff-balls, constantly peeping and pooping. The "brooder", an off ground rectangular wooden box, similar to a rabbit hutch, was placed in the downstairs bedroom. The chicks had to be kept warm inside for at least 3 weeks before they would survive in an outside "coop". For warmth, a 60 watt light bulb on an extension cord was plugged into the socket of the ceiling light and dangled from the top trap door. From a 50 lb bag of starter feed, some feed was poured daily into the feeding troughs which lined the outside of the brooder. An inverted gallon glass jar was placed and constantly refilled to provide drinking water.

The chicks seemed happy as clams in there and we loved to watch them or poke our fingers inside to be pecked. Without TV, it was entertainment and education at the same time.

If you're wondering how we "cleaned" them every day, mom had a meth-

(Continued on page 20)

(LE FRUIT DÉFENDU – FORBIDDEN FRUIT continued from/de page 17)

- Oui, et on l'a transportée au cimetière d'en haut. Le vieux couvent n'existe plus. De tous ces grandes bâtisses, il reste seulement ce qu'on appelle maintenant Montfort Heights. Notre Papa, en 1967, a construit le nouveau couvent que les soeurs occupent ac't'heure. P'pa profitait aussi d'un autre fruit des arbres des Soeurs. Au printemps, elles lui donnaient toujours un pot de fleurs de tilleul pour faire des infusions pour bien dormir.

Yes, and it was transported to the upper cemetery. The old convent no longer exists. Of all those large buildings, the only one left is what is now known as Montfort Heights. Our Dad, in 1967, constructed a new convent that the Sisters now occupy. Dad also profited from another fruit of the Nun's trees. In the spring, they would give him a jar of linden flowers to make infusions as sleeping aids.

- Alors, qu'est-ce que tu nous a façonné comme dessert?

So, what did you make for our dessert?

- Une tarte aux pommes!
Apple pie!



[Déjà publié en Français dans *Les Belles Histoires du Couvent de Ste-Agathe*, de Marc Chassé, Avril, 2004 et dans la Ste-Agathe Historical Society Newsletter de 2019]

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(Thoughts of Spring continued from page 19)

od for that too. Before she initially placed them in their new home she had lined it with a few layers of newspaper. Each day, or whenever it obviously needed it, we would open the trap door on the top and the chicks would run to the far end. We'd roll up the dirty, soggy paper and replace it, we'd go to the far end and do the same...voila...clean quarters....

We always lost a few in those early weeks. Anytime one got sluggish or sickly, we'd find it dead in a corner, pecked to death by its coop mates. Chickens have an inborn instinct to destroy the weak. I guess that's what is meant by the term "pecking order".

They grew quite fast and would almost double their weight weekly. They molted and their feathers started to grow. In the meantime, the outside chicken house and pen were prepared for the move. It had to be secure and fox-proofed. One year, the neighbor's dog broke in during the night and killed several of our chickens. The owner put him down because once a dog gets the taste of chicken blood, he can never be trusted not to return for more. Mom was always so happy to finally get them out of the house. By then it was the end of May, no more frosts were expected, but of course there was also a light set up in the coop for warmth, just in case. The brooder was cleaned and stored away for one more year. No more cleaning, no more smell and....someone got their bedroom back....

In August, the chickens were grown enough to start eating. By then we would open the door during the day and let them "free range" and gather them in each night and bar the door securely. As soon as they were big enough, mom started making fried chicken for picnics on Sundays. They were so tender and delicious. When they got full grown (5-6 lbs) we had roasted stuffed chicken with mashed potatoes and fresh vegetables once a week and on special occasions. It was delicious!! Whatever chickens were left by the end of September or October, would be canned for the winter.

In the early years, we would winter 6-8 hens, and one rooster, for laying. They walked around freely during the day and roosted high on the rafters of the boutique at night. We fed them and provided laying nests for them in the hayloft and picked up fresh, warm eggs every day. Sometimes, one of them hens with high hormones, was a "couveuse," and went around clicking all

day and was hoarding eggs in preparation for hatching her own chicks. We'd follow her and find a large "cache" of eggs, hidden in the tall grass. After their productive years, the hens would eventually face the same fate as the others did...and the roosters also. These roosters thought they were kings of the harem and would become too aggressive with us kids, jumping on us and pecking us in the backyard. My brother Joel was a repeated victim of one of them one year. They didn't like each other at all.

Wholesale Slaughter

Whatever chickens were left after our picnics and Sunday feasts, usually in September, would be canned for the winter for stews, fricasses, and other good dishes. Usually 8 - 10 chickens were processed in a day. Mom would handle that alone in earlier times but in the late 40's and 50's, I recall us kids pitching in to help. The process would go like this: This project was announced the previous day. We knew to get up early, get dressed, get the young ones changed and dressed and have breakfast. A quick clean up and we were assigned our duties: "les petites filles, I need you inside, Patsy watch the little ones and don't let them play in the back...Jeannine get 10 large mouth quart jars and wash them well in this soapy water, rinse them and lay them face down on the end of the sink...Bob and Joel, help me put this full boiler on the stove and then I'll fill up the large round aluminum cuve with cold water for soaking...go get an empty barrel for the feathers and discards then start picking out the 8 biggest chickens and chop off their heads (coupe le cou)...throw them as far as possible so we don't get splattered blood all over the person..." "Mom, Bob chopped last time, it's my turn to chop today,"...."No, you catch them and Bob will chop...o.k." "Pat, go get me the large knife (le couteau de boucherie) from the top shelf in the laiterie, very carefully, and also grab a box of large mouth rubber seals.... Simone, tire moi une couple de tabliers pi des linges a vaiselles dans l'armoire d'en haut, veux tu?" We had our marching orders, no complaints or fooling around, we were depended upon to do a job and ready for execution....Mr. Perdue, eat your heart out!

Soon we hear the clucking and ruckus outside as the chickens are being chased, cornered, and caught and then... chop...chop...chop. We watch intently from the screen door at the headless chickens,

one by one, jumping, jumping, jumping, until they finally settle down and bleed their last...."Man, how many? Huite, mon garçon, huite"... "Joel va poigner le gros la qui cours derriere la cabanne...Oui, Oui, c'est lui qui ma picoche hier..."

Next the feathers must go. Mom picks the limp bodies up by the legs and dips them in boiling water to loosen the feathers. The plucking has to be done right away before it cools. We smell the steamy, chicken feather smell as she very quickly pulls out the feathers. They go inside for the first wash and Jeannine and I have our aprons on and our small knives ready for the time consuming job of removing the dreaded pin feathers, (les repoussons). Once, smooth and clean, they are placed in the cuve to await the evisceration process.

The Inside Job

What happened next was as close to a biology dissection class as we ever got. Mom made a cut in the posterior and a neat v-shaped cut to carve out the "trouffion" then reach in and discarded the intestines. Next above the breast, another cut and the round, dark gizzard came out. What a fascinating organ! A slice down the center would open to a cavity full of pebbles, the lining was peeled off and discarded with the pebbles. What a great stew that would make. Our noses were close as we wanted to see the innards but we did not care for the smell too much. Also fascinating for us was the little heart, and the liver, those would go in the stew also. We questioned the name and function of all of these organs and Mom would elaborate in both French and English as best she knew.

We ate every part of those chickens, even the neck and the legs. My grandmother's favorite part was the legs, they had to be completely peeled and I recall her simmering a pot full of legs with a lot of onions, salt and pepper and sucking at every delicious joint...natural, organic, glucosamine. Papa's favorite part was the wings and the part that goes under the fence last.

The disjointing and cutting up process was next after a good inside and outside body wash using course salt as a scouring agent. The parts were squeezed into the jars as many as it could hold. Water and a spoonful of salt were added as a preservative, then the rubbers and tops were expertly secured and the jars were put into the copper boiler for a 3 hour boiling time. That's all there was to it. All in a day's work.

Two Days in March: Historical Anniversaries

2020-02-27 PL *American Revolution, British Canada, Canada-U.S. Relations, Franco-Americans, French Canada, Immigration, Nativism, Quebec Act, Revolutionary War Soldiers*

This blog takes a slightly different tack to recognize landmark anniversaries that had bearing on the history of French Canadians.

On March 5, 1770, a scuffle in the snow led British regulars billeted in Boston to open fire on civilians. Within minutes, three colonists lay dead; others would die shortly after. No, none of them were Canadian. But we might argue that this event, enlarged by the American radical press, contributed as much as any other to the sense of siege that inhabited New England on the eve of the Revolution. The “massacre” fed into a narrative about the threat of standing armies and the oppressive designs of authorities in London. It also contributed to paranoia—and without that paranoia, there is really no understanding the Patriot invasion of Quebec in 1775.

The connection may seem tenuous, but the apparent willingness to use force of arms against civilians was still fresh in colonists’ minds in the spring and summer of 1775. The fates of New England and the Province of Quebec were further enmeshed with the “Intolerable Acts” of 1774, which closed the port of Boston as well as showering the Canadiens with goodies. Quebec might prove to be the springboard for the ut-

ter subjugation of the Thirteen Colonies. The psychological climate developed through the Boston Massacre justified, ultimately, the Continentals’ willingness to go on the offensive.

The failed occupation of Quebec would create the separate national paths that



BOSTON MASSACRE.

Illustration by Philip James de Loutherbourg, 1770.

Later depiction of the massacre by Alonzo Chappel (Wikimedia Commons)

are still with us today—paths nevertheless blurred by the “invasion” of the U.S. by French Canadians particularly after 1840.

The other anniversary is Maine’s

Query the Past

Patrick Lacroix, Historian

bicentennial. On March 15, 1820, Maine officially split from Massachusetts and joined the Union. Canadians had nothing to do with the making of this new state, but in time immigrants from Quebec would come to experience its effects first-hand. Had Massachusetts kept its northern bastion, immigrants in Maine would have been connected to a larger pool of potential allies with whom they might have effected decisive change at the state level. The Bay State, after all, came to hold 40 to 50 percent of Franco-Americans in New England as well as having other large Catholic and non-Yankee populations. The French-Canadian group in Maine, by contrast, was something of a political orphan and would feel the full force of restrictive legislation starting in the 1890s.

Evidently there is no disentangling the history of French Canada and that of the United States—which intersect in often surprising ways.

For more information on the first anniversary, please consult my series on anti-Catholicism during the Revolution and my work on the Quebec invasion and its consequences. I am also happy to provide more extensive pieces that have appeared in academic journals. I have written about the “Massachusetts divorce” in the Lewiston Sun Journal.

Women’s History Month: The Franco-American Press

2020-03-05 PL *Franco-American Women, Franco-Americans, French-Canadian Customs, Industrial New England* <http://querythepast.com/>

Accessing the historical experience of Franco-American women is not an instantly easy task, at least if we rely on written records. Many types of documents were, at their inception, purposefully gendered. The cult of domesticity, limited access to education, and entrenched barriers in the shaping of social narratives combined to conceal women’s lives.

In addition, a blog that devotes as much attention to politics (in one form or another) as mine will often fail to make explicit the extensive domestic labor—and

many suppressed ambitions—that made men’s political involvement possible. A year ago, in the spirit of addressing this imbalance, I shared some of the fruitful research on Franco-American women and gender that has emerged in the last two decades.

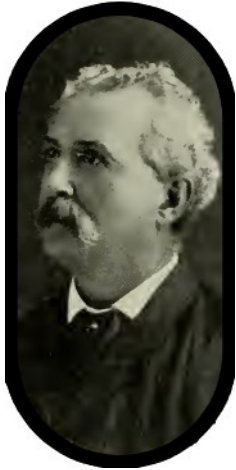
When it comes to Franco women’s own writing, we also have access to valuable leads. In an overview of the Franco-American press and its history published in 1911, Alexandre Belisle devoted a full chapter to female journalists. Granted, this chapter is a rather short part of the book, but the

acknowledgment of women’s contribution to U.S. journalism in this era is in itself noteworthy. Belisle’s work highlights the tension that existed between the pursuit of a literary career, family responsibilities, and in some cases the need to seek remuneration elsewhere.

I offer below a lengthy excerpt of that chapter, which I believe to be translated for the first time. I have followed the quirky French phrasing while also eliminating redundancies.

Among French-Canadian publications in the United States there was one unlike any other. This was a paper dedicated specifically to women; it was published and edited by Ms. Virginie Authier in Cohoes, N.Y., and was titled *Journal des Dames*. Ms. Authier came from a family of journalists (*Continued on page 22*)

(Women's History Month: The Franco-American Press continued from page 21) and printers. She had three brothers who worked in newspapers, of which the oldest, Misaël, later published *La Patrie Nouvelle* in Cohoes and *L'Espérance* in Central Falls, R.I. Afterwards he entered the U.S. consular service . . . [1]



J. Misaël Authier (Belisle, 1911)

Ms. Authier was born in Saint-Hilaire on August 31, 1849 to Louis-G. Authier and H. Guertin. She studied at the Holy Names Convent in Saint-Hilaire, where she shined by her talent, her love of study, and her interest in literature.

In 1872, Ms. Authier followed her family to the United States. She first resided in Worcester, Massachusetts, where she took part in nascent parish activities. The Authier family was always at the forefront when it came to theatrical, musical, and other events benefitting the first Canadian parish of Worcester, which Father Primeau had just founded.

In October 1874, the Authier family left Worcester and settled in Cohoes. It was in this city that Ms. Authier began to plan the publication of a newspaper devoted specifically to women's interests. The *Journal des Dames*, a weekly, appeared in September 1875 and survived a little under six months. Lack of support undoubtedly forced Ms. Authier to abandon her generous endeavor. In 1880, she married the attorney Eugène Desrosiers in Cohoes. She died there in 1899.

Ms. Yvonne Lemaître is a woman of letters who has written in both French and English. Recently, she has written in English only while working for a Lowell newspaper. Still, as she started in journalism with *L'Etoile* and then wrote a great deal in

another French newspaper in Lowell, the now-defunct *Franco-Américain*, she must have a place in this biographical gallery.

Ms. Lemaître was born in Pierreville, Quebec. Residing in the United States since the age of ten, she has only been educated in public schools. Her initial education was exclusively in English. Ms. Lemaître claims to be a mediocre writer in the French language. But from reading her columns, we would never think that she has had no instruction in French. She has talent and the rare quality of bettering herself in our tongue. She has learned to write correctly and to master the challenges of our language by studying the best French-language authors.

She started at *L'Etoile* in 1902 with columns that were noticed and reproduced in other newspapers. In 1904, she joined the editorial team of Lowell's *Courier-Citizen*. The following year, 1905, she travelled to Europe, visiting Paris (where she stayed for a time) and then Germany and Holland. At the same time she was sending travel accounts to the *Courier-Citizen*. In 1908, she travelled to England and Scotland and sent again, to the same newspaper, her notes. Upon returning from this trip, she wrote French-language columns for the *Franco-Américain*, a paper then published in Lowell.

After seven years with the *Courier-Citizen*, Ms. Lemaître resigned in order to accept a place of honor and public confidence in the field of English letters. In May 1911, she went to Paris to become the correspondent of certain large American papers with literary vocations, including the *Boston Transcript*.

When she left Lowell for the City of Light, Ms. Lemaître received generous commendation on the part of the press . . . In the *Courier-Citizen*, the editor, Mr. Marden, wrote: "Readers of the *Courier-Citizen* no less than the staff will be sorry to see Ms. Yvonne Lemaître leave the writing team. Ms. Lemaître, who intends to settle in Paris, has been a regular contributor to these pages over the course of years, first taking charge of *Franco-American* news, and then providing numerous articles relating specifically to French literature and artistic subjects in a joyful and captivating tone. It is a pleasure to attest to the editors' appreciation for this admirable body of work—appreciation also fully felt, I am sure, by all *Courier-Citizen*

readers."

To close this short sketch, let us note that Ms. Lemaître is a first cousin of Charles Gill of Montreal, the famous Canadian poet. [2]



Prominent Franco-American women of the day (Belisle, 1911)

Mrs. Leroux of Providence, better known in the literary world under the pen name *Blanche-Yvonne*, is a woman of letters of great talent, as we see from the columns that she has been publishing in *L'Opinion Publique*. She was born in Saint-Urbain, in Châteauguay County, Quebec, in 1876, but she has spent the better part of her life in Saint-Lambert, which she left in 1898 to settle in Providence, R.I.

Her father was Dr. L.-A.-H. Héroux and he practiced in Louisiana and in the counties of Jacques-Cartier and Champlain in Canada. Her father's side of the family comes from Yamachiche . . . Her mother is from the county of Chambly; her name was Léda Bétournay. Her family is one of the oldest in this county . . .

Blanche-Yvonne's mother was her first instructor and to her she owes her taste for literature and history. At the age of twelve she became a boarder at the *Villa-Maria* Convent in Montreal. She left at age fourteen and a half.

Blanche-Yvonne's career as a columnist only began in 1905. This was a partic-
(Continued on page 23)

(Women's History Month: The Franco-American Press continued from page 22)
ularly painful year for her and a close friend recommended distracting herself from grief by putting pen to paper . . . This friend was well-justified in leading to the art of writing a young woman so gifted in the qualities that makes a good author: originality in thought, an abundant and alert style, and a knack for pleasing. She was first a collaborator at the Jean-Baptiste, where she developed her skills. Then she worked for the *Courrier de Montmagny*. She also wrote for the *Journal de*

Françoise, a woman's paper published in Montreal, well-known in its day but no longer extant. She also wrote for the *Réveil of Manchester, N.H.*, *L'Indépendant* of Fall River, the *Tourist* of Rivière-du-Loup, and so on. Nowadays she is a regular contributor to *L'Opinion publique*.

Blanche-Yvonne's reputation earned her admission to the Rhode Island Short Story Club, a female and feminist group to which are admitted only those who make a living of their pen. She is also a corresponding member of the Paris society of "Mussettistes," of which Mr. Magne, dean of the *Comédie Française*, is president.

Ms. Camille Lessard, an associate of the editorial team of *Le Messager*, in Lewiston, Maine, and a columnist who signs "Liane," was born in Sainte-Julie in Megantic County, Quebec, on August 1, 1883, the daughter of Pierre Lessard and Marie Fortier. She is the eldest of seven siblings. She was educated at the school of her village and at age sixteen she was certified for elementary education. She taught for three years. In the spring of 1904, she emigrated to the United States with her family and they settled in Lewiston. She worked for four years in textile mills.

Once, Ms. Lessard read in *Le Messager* a humorous article and decided to reply. The paper's owner, Mr. Joseph-B. Couture, having discovered the author of the response, asked her to keep using her spirit and skill as a writer for the benefit of his readers. She wrote two short tales for the paper. She was warmly congratulated.



Ms. Lessard's literary career was laborious and difficult. She had to face the necessities of life while committing herself to her love of writing. She explains it all

in a letter to the present author. Here is an excerpt:

"Encouragement given to my first piece emboldened me and I put myself to work; at night, on returning from the factory, I spent hours writing, striking out, and adding. The task was difficult and, when I re-read my work today, how many faults I find! No one to guide me, too poor to pursue my education or acquire books that might have helped me: I was at the mercy of my imagination and the inspiration in my little mind. Very often my tender wings closed and my poor pen broke against the table yet, in spite of it all, encouragement here and there stimulated me and I continued to write, without remuneration, simply for the pleasure of writing . . . Challenges? By God's grace, the struggles of life, often terrible, can leave an impression on the soul that never leaves."

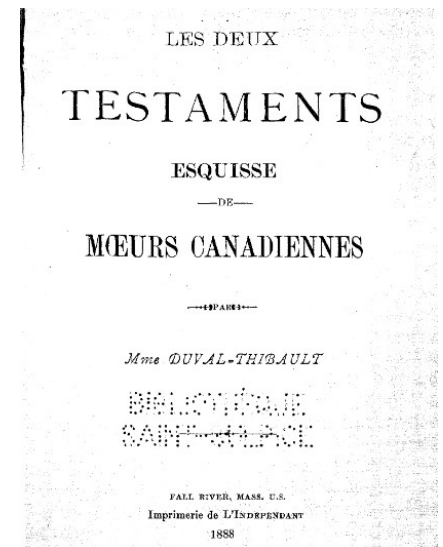
Ms. Lessard had been writing a weekly column in *Le Messager* for two years when Mr. Couture offered her an editorial position. For three years now she has served in that capacity . . . [S]he has her own column on Wednesdays, and it is partly thanks to her that *Le Messager* is the only French-Canadian newspaper in the U.S. that publishes—unlike the great dailies of Canada—a page entirely for women, titled "Chez Nous."

In January 1910, Ms. Lessard took part in a public discussion in support of women's suffrage. This is not to say that she was a "suffragette." But she was asked to develop this position as part of a literary debate and she came out of it with success . . . [3]

Mrs. Alexandre Belisle, of Worcester, is a woman whose cultured spirit and happy disposition are known to a close-knit group of friends. Mrs. Belisle has never sought fame; on the contrary, her tastes naturally incline her to domestic life, to the calm existence of the home . . . She was born in Saint-Pie, in the County of Bagot, in 1854, the daughter of Narcisse Boulay and Hedwidge Laviolette. She studied in Fraserville and with the Ursulines in Quebec City. In 1875, she was the organist at the church of Notre-Dame-des-Canadiens in Worcester. For several years, under the pen name "Marguerite," she wrote a weekly column and a musical review in *L'Opinion Publique*. She was part of a musical family,

the seven Boulay sisters, that was known from Montreal to the Lower St. Lawrence some forty years ago. She has been not only an accomplished woman in letters and arts,

but also a devoted wife, a mother worthy of that name who raised a large family and often had her heart broken by the loss of a child. A true Christian woman, she has always faced the challenges brought to her by God with courage, accepting the designs of Providence with the strong faith characteristic of French-Canadian mothers.



Mrs. Anna-M. Duval-Thibault, wife of Mr. Onésime Thibault, the general manager of *L'Indépendant* in Fall River, was born in Montreal on July 15, 1862. Her parents settled in Troy when she was only three. She attended parochial and public schools and then studied to be a teacher. From an early age she read with interest the great French classics and *L'Indépendant* printed many of her literary works, both poetry and prose. She married Mr. Onésime Thibault . . . on September 10, 1888. To this marriage were born eight children of which five survive. She is the author of *Les Deux Testaments*, which first appeared serially in *L'Indépendant* and then separately in 1889.[4] In 1892, she published *Les Fleurs du Printemps*, a collection of poems of 250 pages. Mrs. Duval-Thibault is a distinguished writer with an elegant style and a lively imagination.

[1] Misaël Authier was a committed Republican who rivaled Benjamin Lenthier for influence in the Franco-American press in the 1890s.

[2] For more on *Le Maître*, see Michel Lacroix and Nadia Zurek's article in *Recherches féministes*. Zurek has authored a thesis on *Le Maître's* body of work.

[3] Rhea Côté Robbins has written about Camille Lessard Bissonnette in anticipation of the women's national suffrage bicentennial. Janet Shideler has penned a longer work on Lessard's life and writing.

[4] Like Lessard's *Canuck*, *Les Deux Testaments* was reissued by the National Materials Development Center at the turn of the 1980s. Duval-Thibault saw her novel as a reflection of French-Canadian customs when sophisticated literature was often imported from France and had little relation to the way of life in French America. Her work, of course, would feature the right mores as well as a higher moral standard.

D'OÙ JE VIENS

**By: Wilfred H. Bergeron
Concord, NH**

After the article on my Bergeron grandparents appeared in last spring's issue of Le F.O.R.U.M., I intended to write a piece on my father, Wilfred Sr. Unfortunately, health and other issues intervened, and I am just now getting to put pen to paper.

I am indebted to Lisa Desjardins Michaud, for seeing enough in my scribbles to count them worthy to be published. I am also indebted to my halfbrother Wayne, who sent me some corrections. Sometimes memory fails you when that's all you have to recall family legends. So be it. I enclose those corrections in the following paragraph, then intend to launch out on the family history of my father, Wilfred "Ted" Bergeron Sr., up to the time I was born. Please remember this is an oral history.

"I hesitate to dispute the Bergeron family historian" Wayne wrote, "but some of your memories are wrong. The Joseph Bergerons had three girls (I recalled two) and a boy. There was Albertine, Alice and Grace plus our dad Wilfred. Albertine lived in (Millbury) Massachusetts with her husband Fitz and her two boys Dexter and I think Russell. Alice was the one who lived in Newark, NJ with her husband, Harold Blanchard and her son Bobby. He (Harold) was a CPA for Kroydon Plastics and later became part owner. At one time they made the Kroydon Golf Clubs. I know this for a fact because in the early 1940s my mother and father and I spent a Thanksgiving with them in New Jersey. I remember going to Radio City and Rockefeller Center and also going to a high school football game. I was on a tour of Radio City when I was one of three people chosen to demonstrate a new thing called Television. It was only from one room to another but it was a prototype. The third daughter was named Grace and she and her husband Ivan lived on top of the home on Oak St. (Gonic NH). The parents lived downstairs and Grace and Ivan lived in an upstairs apartment. Grace owned a camp on a pond in Maine. I know this because Dad and Mom and I spent a week there one summer. Grace died real young from what they then called a goiter. Although we lived on Church St., and now Oak St. was less than 3 miles away, we did not see them very much.

Like I said, I hate to correct you but I know the story because I was there."

Author's Note: I remember Albertine's sons names as Dennis and John.

Wilfred Henri Bergeron Sr. was born in May, 1906, to Joseph and Ora (Plourde) Bergeron of Gonic NH. This is a recollection of his younger years to my birth in 1948, as well as I can remember it, mostly from stories my father and grandmother used to tell.

Dad was named, I was told, after Canadian Prime Minister Sir Wilfred Laurier. I was named after Dad. When I was a teenager I told him there would never be a Wilfred III, regardless of how many sons I might have. I hated the name, and I kept the promise. I was a fool.

Rochester had the reputation of being a hotbed of KU KLUX KLAN activity in New Hampshire, and some kind of regional headquarters was located in a mansion on South Main St. near the public library

Dad grew up in a big house on Oak St. in Gonic, NH, a few miles south of Rochester. His father was a millwright in the Gonic woolen mill, where he met my grandmother, who was a weaver until the children started coming along.

Dad was a good looking young man, small for his age. I can remember looking at his eighth grade graduation picture and wondering where the good looks had gone between he and I. Dad went to Rochester High School, took commercial courses, and graduated in 1923. He told me he went out for football all his four years but because of his size never played in a varsity game. When I was born I became his hope for athletic glory. Unfortunately that never happened either.

One family story is that during his high school years he became quite the dancer, and won several dance contests partnered

up with one or another of his sisters. I wish I had photos, but no one took them.

At that time Rochester had the reputation of being a hotbed of KU KLUX KLAN activity in New Hampshire, and some kind of regional headquarters was located in a mansion on South Main St. near the public library. Dad had a high school job as a Western Union telegraph delivery boy and he was directed to deliver a telegram to that address. The man who answered the door looked at Dad's name tag and asked him if he was Catholic. When dad answered in the affirmative the man told him to never again deliver a telegram to this address and slammed the door in his face.

Instead of settling down locally after high school graduation, Dad moved to New Jersey and got a position as secretary to one of the executives working for Thomas Edison. Dad said something about back then the Edison Co. did not hire women for secretarial positions. That would have to be fact checked, but seems consistent with the policies of many corporations in those days, especially on the executive level.

I don't know much about Dad's personal life during those years. He let it slip one time that he'd been married in New Jersey, but had little to say about it except that it had been short-lived and unhappy. I wouldn't know how to begin researching this. At some point during this period he picked up the nickname "Ted", which he kept as long as he lived.

Late in the 1920's Dad started working for Chase Manhattan Bank as a teller. Unfortunately the stock market crashed in 1929, and that ended Dad's banking career. He returned to Gonic where his father got him work as the night shift millwright. Bergeron family legend says that job ended when he was found sleeping on the job. Don't know if it's true, but there it is.

At some point in the early 1930's he met and married Frieda Rogers, and in 1934 that union produced my halfbrother Wayne, who is retired and living in Sarasota, FL. That marriage lasted until just before I was born. I have the impression that it wasn't a particularly happy marriage, but that could be imperfect hindsight based on conversations I overheard as a child.

During that time Dad apparently went to night school to study accounting, among other things. As a boy I remember a Spanish textbook from one of the courses he took. I thought it fascinating. He ended up, *(Continued on page 25)*

(D'OÙ JE VIENS continued from page 24)

I'm told, working for the Internal Revenue Service and selling office furniture/business supplies, among other work.

Dad, being born in 1906, was too young to serve in World War I. In 1941 he was 35 and considered "too old" for World War II. I'm assuming some kind of reserve duty, because he spoke of sailing around the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in a converted yacht on the lookout for U-boats. He never said if he found any!

What I do know is late in the war and for a few years after, he became Safety Engineer in a Sylvania plant in Dover NH that manufactured proximity fuses, at the time a top secret anti-aircraft weapon. Screwed to the top of an anti-aircraft shell, it was a kind of electric eye that would cause the shell to explode when the shadow of an airplane passed by.

I am also sure that around that time he met one Mary Jane Plante, a Somersworth girl who was "lead girl" on one of the assembly lines. I intend to discuss my mother more thoroughly in a later article, but a little

backstory at this point might be helpful.

My mother was born in 1923, seventeen years younger than Dad. In the early 1940's Mom married a marine cook who moved her to Paris Island, NC. Family legend says he abused her physically and emotionally, leading her to divorce him, something totally beyond the pale in the Plante family. With four siblings/aunts being Holy Cross nuns and an uncle a Holy Cross brother, the Plantes were considered "more Catholic than the Pope". In those days, in that kind of family, divorce was unthinkable.

Shortly after returning to Somersworth, my mother fell ill to an ovarian cyst. After surgery, she was one of the first civilians in southern New Hampshire, I was told, to be treated with that new wonder drug penicillin. The doctors further told her that she was unlikely after this to be able to bear children, which her mother pronounced to be God's judgement on her for divorce. The doctor's diagnosis is particularly interesting given that I am here, her son, writing this these many years later.

So Mom and Dad met at Sylvania's, and a courtship or an affair developed, de-

pending on your point of view. By this time Dad's marriage to Frieda Rogers was, from all accounts, pretty much on the rocks.

I was born on August 16, 1948. Counting backward that would mean I was conceived sometime in December, 1947. Merry Christmas! I don't know if my mother's perceived infertility was a contributing factor to their carelessness. They were pretty tight lipped about it around me.

All I know is that sometime in early 1948 my mother found out I was coming. I overheard an argument later that there was talk of an abortion, which my mother refused. She insisted that Dad divorce Frieda and settle down with her. In April, 1948, Dad and Mom were married by a justice of the peace in Alfred, ME. An anniversary they refused to celebrate ever after. I came along in August, supposedly an "early" baby. Uh huh.

With that, we'll leave the Bergeron saga for now. No family is ever perfect, and memories are bittersweet, even in the best of families. People do the best they can under the circumstances, and all one can do is leave the results to God.



2020 NH PoutineFest Event Date

The largest poutine event south of Canada returns to New Hampshire on June 13, 2020!

About this Event

TICKETS ON SALE 3/21/20 @ 10 AM - We expect to sell out very quickly!

We are proud to bring our 5th annual festival to the grounds of Anheuser-Busch in Merrimack, NH on June 13, 2020! Merrimack is located less than an hour from Boston and is fifteen minutes from Manchester-Boston Regional Airport.

Première and General Admission ticket holders have the opportunity to sample poutine (a healthy portion) from our participating restaurants! Our restaurants will also be competing against each other for the "Best Poutine Of The Fest," and only one will get to raise the Ceinture de Championnat/Championship Belt.

We will have bands, great beer, games, children's activities and some phenomenal poutine. We'll do our best to keep your kiddos busy with activities. Maybe they'll

pick up some French?

We have also invited several food trucks to supplement your poutine intake.

If you want to save time and beat the bus, grab yourself a VIP parking space during checkout to start right at the doors. This gives you in and out access to the lot and the most time possible inside the fest. Spaces are limited, so act fast!

Are you a vendor or food truck interested in participating in the largest poutine bash in the United States? Give us a shout poutinefest@facnh.com!

This event is hosted by the the Franco-American Centre of New Hampshire, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit based in Manchester, NH. All proceeds help support the Centre's mission of preserving French language, culture, and heritage in New Hampshire and beyond.

NH PoutineFest 2020 will take place

rain or shine. Much of the event will be covered on the chance it rains. There will be no refunds or exchanges of tickets.

www.nhpoutinefest.com



REFLECTIONS FROM GRANITEVILLE

by *Xavier de la Prade*
Petaluma, CA

Someone once reflected that a healthy society is one that can laugh at itself. We see that here in the U. S. with comedians like Larry, the Cable Guy and Jeff Foxworthy. So it is with the Francos. Growing up, my dad and also my uncle would buy “le père Gedèon’s” latest 78 record when they visited aunts and uncles in Quebec. We would all sit, listen and laugh as “le père Gedèon” would tell us all that “il fallait s’déBeaucé” and tell us about Ted Williams who made \$50,000 a year just shaking his butt and swinging a bat. A few years ago, I went online to no avail, looking to find if the old 78s had been transferred to CDs. Instead I found old 33 LPs selling for thirty and forty dollars. “Le père Gedèon” actually was the stage name of Doris Lussier. With a name like Doris one can understand why he became a comedian. It is a little like Johnny Cash’s character in the song “A Boy Named Sue”. I am sure Doris must have had a nickname. Doris Lussier was a former professor at Laval University before becoming an actor on the show “Les Plouffes”. As a little boy in the ‘50s we would go over to Uncle Guy’s to watch the show on a snowy screen. That and “la Lutte” (wrestling) were a weekly must since we did not have a TV.

My hometown of Graniteville was a village of 900 located about 15 miles south-east of Montpelier. Like the name implies, the town was built around one of the largest granite quarries in the world. Today the granite quarries in the area are operated by the Rock of Ages Granite Corp. We lived so close to the quarries that we could hear the whistles when derricks (large cranes) were ready to take out blocks of stone from below. We could hear the huge company compressor beating like the heartbeat of the village all day long. Everyone could set their watches by the 4 o’clock whistle when the day was done.

St. Sylvester’s was the name of our parish. Our elementary school was staffed by the Sisters of the Holy Ghost (today, Spirit). These were wonderful, dedicated women who had been ostracized from France when

all church property was seized and France became a secular society in the early 1900’s. Their loss was our gain. Today the school no longer exists; the sisters are gone and the parish is closed.

When I was a student, our pastor, Father Joseph Dussault would come by our classrooms on Friday. That was his day to teach us religion. If we were good, and we always were, he would read us a letter from “Batiste”. Father Dussault loved humor. It was his way to get attention. Even on Sundays, jokes were a big part of his sermons. “Batiste” happened to be a column published in a Burlington, Vermont weekly. It was probably written by a Franco. Father Dussault had collected them over the years and would enjoy reading them to us. I am sure, today these would not be politically correct. Below is an example. If anyone has more information about who the author or newspaper was, I would appreciate it.

A FRENCH MOTHER WRITING TO HER SON

Cher Batiste,

Jus a few lin to let you know dat hi ham alive. Hi ham writing dis letter slowly because I know dat you cannot read fast. You won’t know the house when you come home---we move!

Dere was a waching machine in de new house when we move in but hit ain’t workin to good. Las week hi put 6 shirt hinto hit, pulled de chain, an hi hasn’t seen one since.

About your Papa---he has a nice new job. He has 624 men hunder him. He is cutting de grass in de cemetery.

Your sister Pauline has a baby dis mornin. We havn’t found out wedder hit’s a boy or girl, so hi don’t know wedder you be a haunt hor a hunkle.

Your hunkle Pierre drowne las week in a vat of whiskee, in Tree River Quebec. Some of his wordmate dive in to save him

but he fight dem off bravely. We cremate his body and hit take tree day to put hout the fire.

Your Papa did not have much to drink hat Christmas. Hi put a bottle hof castor hoil in his mug of beer. Hit kept him going til New Year days. Hi went to de doctor on Thursday and your Papa come wit me. De doctor put a small tube in my mouth an tol me not to hopen hit for 10 minute. You Papa offer to buy it from him.

It only rain twice dis week. First for tree days and den for four days. Monday hit was so windy that one of hour chicken lay de same egg four time. We go a letter from the hundertaker. He said if de lass payment was not paid hon your gandmamma within seven day, hop she come.

Your lovin Maman,

PS: Hi was going to sen you ten dollar but hi had already seal de envelope.

Stereotyping the “dumb Canuk” was acceptable enough back then to let a column like “Batiste” be published in the first half on the twentieth century. However, these poor immigrants had not been educated in American schools and their English was bad. I worked my way through college working in the quarries. There was one old crotchety Quebec native that I worked with who would use the “F” word as a verb, an adjective and a noun. However, he was not dumb. He was very resourceful. He had a beautiful home and family and all of his children went on to do well. “C’était comme ça dans le bon vieux temps.” That is the way it was in the good old days. How life has changed!!!!



Batiste — batisse — the T at the end of the name is nearly silent when Lawrence Earle pronounces it in the old-timey Vermont accent that bears traces of Canadian French so common in the north of the Green Mountain State.

You’re bound to crack a smile while Earle is reading one of his tales of Batiste. A chuckle or two will likely escape as he spins a tale of yet another adventure — or misadventure — of the famed, fictional Vermonter with French Canadian heritage.

https://www.vtcng.com/news_and_citizen/news/local_news/stories-of-batiste/article_e9691078-61f0-11e9-b411-7be68a-8b9aed.html

Lowell's Franco Veterans March On

by Suzanne Beebe

Since 1971, when Lowell's Franco Festival Week began, the Franco veterans of the World War II, Korean, and Viet Nam War eras have proudly participated as color bearers for the week's kick-off Masses and flag-raising at Lowell City Hall. It's always a moving moment when they march in carrying the flags of Québec, Canada, France, and the United States in tribute to the nations of their heritage, culture, and citizenship. The moment is even more poignant now as the remaining few veterans experience difficulty walking, carrying, and raising the flags they have borne so faithfully for 50 years and more.

How long will we have these Franco elders who served so willingly? Each year we seem to lose one or two more while younger Franco veterans fail to replace them — either from lack of time, lack of connection with veterans' organizations, or lack of identity with Franco-American community and history. Assimilation continues to take its toll. But at least for a few more years, we will have our older veterans to remind us how the descendants of French Canada played their part in America's great wars of the 20th century. *Bien fait, soldats, marins, et aviateurs très aimés!*



Photo by Allen Beebe

Les Vieux Soldats

Les vieux soldats, ils marchent, ils marchent.
 Plus lentement, encore ils marchent,
 Ces enfants de la guerre mondiale
 Ou peut-être la guerre de Corée.
 Ils portent encore leurs beaux drapeaux,
 Aussi difficile que cela puisse être.

Si peu nombreux maintenant, ils marchent,
 Moins un ou deux par l'année qui passe.
 Fidèles, fiers, patriotiques,
 Même s'ils s'affaiblissent, encore ils marchent
 En souvenir de ceux qui sont
 Déjà partis — et les appellent.

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Photo by Allen Beebe



Photo by Allen Beebe

(N.D.L.R. This article appeared in the February 22, 2020 edition of the Lowell Sun daily newspaper and is reprinted with their permission.)

Two sets of twins, four friends for life

Greater Lowell pairs born on same day — in same hospital — grow up together

By Meg McIntyre
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DRACUT — One of the booths at Bobola's Restaurant on Lakeview Avenue seemed to be in especially bright spirits Friday morning, with frequent laughter emanating from the table.

And it's no wonder — the women seated there were celebrating four birthdays simultaneously.

On Feb. 21, 1942, two sets of identical twins were born at St. Joseph's Hospital in Lowell. A few years later, when they were five or six, they met in elementary school and became fast friends. And on Friday, Terry (Laferriere) Levasseur, Dolly (Laferriere) Fisette, Aline (Doyon) Chasse and Alice (Doyon) Chicoine feted their 78th birthdays together with a late morning breakfast in Dracut.

It's not necessarily an annual tradition, though the women have celebrated their birthdays together on and off throughout their lives, they said. They've talked about having a big party for their 80th, but said this year they wanted to make sure they met for breakfast for their 78th.

"We're getting older, and we might not be here," Levasseur said.



From left, Terry (Laferriere) Levasseur, Aline (Doyon) Chasse, Dolly (Laferriere) Fisette and Alice (Doyon) Chicoine enjoy breakfast at Bobola's for their 78th birthdays. Terry and Dolly and Aline and Alice are identical twins born on the same day at Lowell's former French hospital, St. Joseph's.

The four friends, who all still live in the Greater Lowell area, have never lost touch through all these years, and still see each other frequently to play cards or take a dip in Chicoine's pool. They've been through most of life's milestones together, from birth to marriage, with all of them getting married the same year at age 17. Their children were even born around the same period, the women said.

When people hear about the origins of their friendship, "they can't believe it," Fisette said.

They talked and joked as they ate their breakfast Friday, reminiscing about days gone by over orange juice and Keno. Chasse and Levasseur — the "older" twins by about an hour and just two minutes, respectively — sat on one side of the table across from Fisette and Chicoine, at times talking over each other and laughing as they amicably disagreed over the details of some of their shared memories.

Growing up in Lowell's Little Canada neighborhood — the area around Aiken Street near where LeLacheur Park now sits — the four of them got into plenty of

trouble, they said, like the time as teenagers when Chicoine convinced them all to go for an unauthorized swim in one of Lowell's many canals.

Asked which of them was the biggest troublemaker, Chicoine swiftly raised her hand, prompting laughter from the whole table — and she had no shortage of stories to back up the claim. Chasse said her sister was always getting the two of them into hot water with their parents.



Dolly and Terry Laferriere in their Holy Communion dresses. (Courtesy photograph)



Alice and Aline Doyon in their Holy Communion dresses. (Courtesy photograph)

(Continued on page 29)



KEELBOAT

BY

**JEFFREY D.
PRATTE**

Always in early spring the Missouri swells with wet anger and chokes and unchokes its own passing with trees swept from corrupted, muddied banks proven unequal to the task of shaping the course of God's water. It is willful and knotting and tumultuous and it carries floes of ice and three bloated buffalo carcasses bobbing woeful and unfixed amid the brown turbid swirls, a word that some of nature is observant and some is not.

The force of the morning's cold rain strikes the shallows so hard beside the diminishing shoreline that splashes spike straight and tall like the nearby new rank grasses climbing up and afar the wet bank's low approach. The prairie bent ahead and gave up the sky to a vulgar dark bluff at river's edge. Atop, a somber Oto scout who sat his whisky-colored pony there studied the fur trader's laden keelboat beneath.

Eight voyageurs of the craft poled it warily from the shifting sandy shoal and landed in the rock's narrow lee to await the storm's end. Soon enough after the Indian tumbled the sheer face of the bluff with Henry de la Tour's hatchet planted deep inside his cleaved skull the wide-eyed young women astern in the boat wondered most anxiously about turning points in men's lives -- in Jesuit's lives.

The too-trusting abbé in New Orleans was made to believe that Hendry de la Tour was returning to the north to the mission's fort on the Kaskaskia. He hastily entrusted the young Ursulines to this wiley Jesuit pretender for their safe delivery to serve the hospital there. "...easy."

They were five in number and were callow, born without names of mention and initiated into the whole armor of God at a convent on the Normandy coast. Now they huddled in bent nerves inside the tiny cabin at the back of this boat and gained the slow dread sense of grimmer outcomes, of recast futures away from the light of their once-known Gallic, Old World angels.

Henry de la Tour well knew the getting was often harder: mostly prostitutes, sometimes bought right off the boats at port.

He wasn't much above raiding isolated, encroaching American settlements in Kentucky and carrying them off like so much chicken-stealing either. After killing their men, he said, the Indians would be suspected anyhow. He professed it was a rough trade and didn't allow for weak constitutions.

No longer an agent for the company Henry de la Tour traded rogue now and commanded his own boat and its journeys. Most of the western chiefs still welcomed him with their calumet pipes burning in celebration of the chaffy trinkets and beads he carried their people and the colorful blankets and shirts and iron kettles that he traded for prized beaver pelts. Moreover they sought guns and brandy. And his singular scandalous traffic in the other...

*Henry de la Tour
though came from the
south, New Orleans, but
by way of the islands it was
said, and that he had been
an ocean sailor, perhaps
once a pirate.*

Never could he have license from the crown -- never under heaven -- to trade white women to the Indians. Henry de la Tour nonetheless saw it was his bread and butter and so a null dispute by his indifferent reckoning -- it would adjust. He'd return south with a bottom line swollen just like the great river, which is all his hard-bitten peers cared to understand anyway. "What goes on upriver ...stays upriver."

Myself and my older brother Etienne, and our cousin Jean-Baptiste were among his crew. We hired on five summers ago from the small creole village of Ste. Genevieve, on the west bank of the Mississippi across from the Illinois country. Henry de la Tour though came from the south, New Orleans, but by way of the islands it was said, and that he had been an ocean sailor, perhaps once a pirate. He was different from us.

The color of his skin was unresolved, telling something of exotic bloods boiling in his veins and he carried a nasty bullwhip that he said was gotten in Africa from the terrible hides of the rhinoceros. We had no knowledge of such a beast but were assured of its fearsome attack. Henry de la Tour liked to demonstrate among the warriors, who were not a little impressed when he would pop an

eye of a wandering mongrel from its socket or etch a bloody "X" full across an offender's naked back in two lashes only. His violence was known, and superior. Henry de la Tour was no joke.

Etienne was first mate and feared him awfully and respected him and was much caught up with admiration for his unswerving dark character. Me? I watched him with creeping reserve. Still, no one dared ever challenge Henry de la Tour and he payed us all handsomely for our service to him. No matter where you weighed in on the rightness or wrongness of his practice he was grown wealthy for trading stolen women to the savages. These were now bound for the Blackfoot chiefs of the distant plains, far beyond the white man's discovery in those days. And, he sure as hell didn't care about how anybody might feel.

"See what they're panicking about, Auguste, will you?" Etienne said to me annoyed, and pointed with the clay pipe he often smoked to the boat's cabin where the nuns were locked inside.

I returned and said, "They're frightened. They saw Henry de la Tour kill the Indian. Already they were becoming suspicious, and now this. He can no longer convince them that he's a Jesuit, or any kind (Continued on page 30)

**(Two sets of twins, four friends for life
continued from page 28)**

"My mother says to me, 'Go make the beds.' I go in -- I did my side. I didn't do hers," Chicoine said with a laugh, pointing to her sister. She remembers telling her parents, "Well, I don't sleep on that side."

Both sets of twins noted people had a hard time telling one sister apart from another when they were children, even their parents. They would sometimes wear different colored ribbons or name badges to help people keep them straight, they said. Levasseur noted that she and Fisette wore matching clothes up until they both married.

The women's faces were bright and animated as they revisited their old memories Friday. The friends said they hope to continue meeting on their birthday for years to come, perhaps making the breakfast an annual outing.

"We're happy that we're together," Chasse said.



(KEELBOAT continued from page 29)

of religious.”

Jean-Baptiste quickly covered our tracks beside the rock and handed me a musket. “It fell with the Indian. Give it to Henry de la Tour.”

I hid it in the bow of the boat.

When he returned Henry de la Tour said that from the bluff’s crest he sighted a small band of Otoes riding west of us, tracing the river south. “They’ll be missing this one soon,” he warned, “but we’ll be far upstream should he float up.”

We sank the Indian with haste, tied with stones in the channel’s depth. I dressed out the pony’s flank and sank it too -- we couldn’t risk the noise of shooting game with those Otoes still in the neighborhood.

“That will give us time to reach some wooded hills by nightfall,” said Etienne, nodding to the distance. “We can make the high ground if needed, for tonight anyhow.”

When we rowed into the channel away from the bluff our small sail drew a lingering breeze from the dying storm and helped carry us toward the terrestrial silhouettes poised over the waters far ahead of us.

“Tell us. Please tell us. Why haven’t we neared the mission yet? We’ve been on the water too long,” asked the oldest one, barely a woman. “Where can we be going? Can’t we know?” She was named Emilie and she began crying -- they all had been.

“We changed route for the Ohio river, to avoid some late troubles with the Fox tribes. A bit longer but in a safer country.” I lied, and she pointed as much: “I know we’re young and inexperienced in this land,” she said, “but the sun, I am certain, sets in the west here, just as in France.” Her icy penetrating stare expelled me from the cabin and back onto the deck. I locked the door and she pounded it -- “And why do you lock us in here?” She slumped away in a willowy sobbing and cried out at last, “There isn’t any priest here! -- no priest!”

From the bow Henry de la Tour watched me silently, weighing my nature. He’d overheard my hushed conversation with Etienne and Jean-Baptiste earlier, the night we camped above the mouth of the river. We three stood watch. I confided to them about leaving the keelboat, giving up on this life and returning to our village.

“And do what, fool? Smelt ore in their lead mines? Toil in long rows of grain, inside those fields’ pickets all your life? Isn’t that a prison too? That’s even if you could mend your way back amongst them, the good ha-

bitants. You know perfectly that the priest paddles over from Prairie Du Rocher for the sacraments -- what’ll you confess? That you were just finding yourself? On pilgrimage?” Jean-Baptiste made his point and walked off to sight the horizon in the full moon’s light.

“I don’t know,” I told Etienne. “It just feels different this time, they’re nuns. Where do we draw the line?”

“There is a line alright and you’d best not cross it. You’re talking stupid, Auguste. And dangerous.” He paused a moment and said, “Look, don’t you think that I too wish things would have turned out different for us after the pox took Father and Mother? -- but here we are, okay. We can cash out in a couple more years and go buy our own land in the south, in the islands where we aren’t

*in a world now graying
and fogging for me, both
concealing and unlocking
dubious aims, causing my
fetid convictions to fray
like the feathery edges of
dreams?*

known. We’ll plant sugar. We can forget and be forgotten. But until then I’m warning you -- because he won’t.”

When Etienne and I were orphaned my uncle sent me across the Mississippi river to Kaskaskia to the priest. There Père Moreau schooled me -- such as it was on the frontier in those days -- and planned for my vocation in the Church. I never lived up to his efforts. Or anyone else’s either after so much drinking and too frequent visits with the willing Sauk squaws camped near our village. I fell easily defeated by backwoods liberties. But it was I alone among Henry de la Tour’s crew that had any education proper.

Before reaching the wilds of the Missouri the keelboat was careful to pass the settlements only at night, never landing, lest they find out what we were about. And now so far upriver no one besides the rarest rapper to consider. Should we meet them Henry de la Tour handled them with tact and with dispatch, guarding against discovery of our secret economies hidden in the boat.

He was never not prepared to make any prying visitors carry the secret of what they found to their eternal beyond, which came swift and matter-of-factly from Henry de la Tour’s mischievous knife. Always in their back. An immoderate number of times,

I thought. On this journey we met only one much-too-interested Frenchman. It added further unease to the nuns when this luckless trapper crossed Henry de la Tour’s unannounced line and the captives understood then how wrongly heartened they were.

Etienne and Jean-Baptiste and I emptied the dead man’s pirogue of his furs and supplies and stowed them aboard our boat. I hid the rifle in the bow while the others tied the pirogue behind our own that trailed there in our wake.

Henry de la Tour was convinced that all the Church, the clergy and the faithful, were practitioners of a thousand arts. For this reason I, whom he thought best suited to deflect the nuns’ foreseeable connivances, was charged at the start with their confinement and care -- no small task as it was understood they must be delivered intact to be profitable, to make our great risks pay.

When they came to suspect our great evil at hand they of course inclined to prayer and fasting. Not eating was problematic. No chiefs had interest in withered, skeletal wives, European or not. The bucket of hot, stewed buffalo tongues, however much of a delicacy to the crew on the keelboat was a tough sell to these beleaguered, trafficked martyrs.

“You must eat something,” I pleaded.

“We suffer naught to take but the bread of eternal life,” replied Emilie, defiant in her face but at terror in her heart for she had not yet in truth -- and we were very much nearing that place, the unpretty truth -- transcended the flesh that we intended to peddle. Secretly difficult for me were the times I observed beneath that whole armor of God a little girl desperate in doubt, trying to reckon herself devoured by the world she’d taken every step to hide away from.

And wasn’t I -- long ago trained in a religion of form that vainly searched these outlands for a god of form -- in uncertainty also, in a world now graying and fogging for me, both concealing and unlocking dubious aims, causing my fetid convictions to fray like the feathery edges of dreams? I sensed the ice of my villainous judgement was melting beneath me, that I should fall. Melting, from the heat of what? -- a conscious? Mmmh ...this did not make my profligate life and dirty work aboard Henry de la Tour’s keelboat one bit easier.

The crew couldn’t have known modesty. But because of the need to deliver the women in health the nuns were given prom-

(Continued on page 31)

(KEELBOAT *continued from page 30*)

ise to bathe in privacy in dense rush brakes hidden from the grimy eyes of the voyageurs when the shore and the time allowed. This grant stopped when one day's hunting party was returning with game and came upon one of the women a half mile distant already from the boat. To where could she have been running in such an unforgiving land? The desperation was palpable. Under far more careful watch the pious troop returned onboard in their course brown robes. (Much earlier their clean, fine white hospitalier garments were confiscated against soiling, for added-value at delivery -- that was the mind of Henry de la Tour.)

"We'll never be seen again, will we?" asked Emilie, while the other nuns were at dire prayer in the back of the tiny cabin.

"I must return to the deck, to help row the boat," I replied as I turned away with another refused dinner. It was true the sun was hot that day, but I instead pulled the broad rim of my felt hat low not to betray the struggle warming behind my eyes, my so-called soul's windows.

Jeanette died, one of the nuns. Fevered and pocked. She was Emilie's younger sister, I learned, and both had been orphaned (... like Etienne and I?), and what the hell was I now supposed to do with this knowledge? Mourn? Empathize? Share the sorrow with my own morally decaying brother? I had no answers, really. Only mystification.

In truth I had not envisioned getting so angry about the matter, which became the case.

"...in the river." said Henry de la Tour.

"It is only on that bank," I argued. "There, by the tree. She doesn't ask for more."

"What did I just tell you, Auguste? We don't have time and cannot stop here. This open bottomland is too compromised, it is the hunting ground of the Dakota. You know that." he said and nodded to the copious herds of buffalo grazing against the near low slope of the surrounding prairie. "And we won't make safety before it's too dark to steer the boat."

"Then we could bury her there, when we land."

"I'm not drawing wolves into the camp, they'll smell the body. And no one's going to stray that far from the camp -- from my boat -- for this foolishness. I'm through talking to you about it." He watched me for a moment and when nothing happened he pushed me aside and burst into the grieving

cabin and shook the colorful blanket away from the splotchy waxen body, mumbling curses against damaged goods. He returned in a measured fury, posted himself before me with deliberate glaring eyes and cast the body of Jeanette into the swinging silted current that tumbled aft of his keelboat, which that day gave up melancholy wailing and pathetic protests, lost without ceremony to the western ether.

There was a fierce and wrong welcome in Henry de la Tour's eyes. "...in the river, I said. Don't ever cross me boy."

I couldn't make the anger go away and I couldn't stand up to Henry de la Tour so I hid the anger, like a craven wretch. I hid my anger ...But I hid it with a cunning eye

*Words like "no," and
"it is not possible," gave
out under the gnashing of
their scurvied teeth and
gums.*

toward retrieving it later.

Another week followed and another dead nun. Into the river. None would eat and they grew lousy in health. The unscrupulous trader watched with bile. He was impotent -- his hoped-for profit margin dwindled before his eyes.

"I can't," I told Etienne. "I've tried."

"You had better try harder, damn you! Sick and dying they are no value to Henry de la Tour -- to us -- they only take up needed space. He'll throw them all in the river -- he promises -- tomorrow and cut his losses. We could have already unloaded the other goods on the tribes and be running in the home currents by now. Make them eat, Auguste, however you must."

I knew that my brother and cousin were sick with black devotion to our captain and to the same heinous greed that floated his keelboat along these paths. Another ugly truth to be dealt with ahead.

"Where should we go anyhow -- to what purpose -- if we eat of his corrupt food? No one has yet said to where we are bound. No one." Emilie's remarks were well reasoned to be couched in such solid empty light. She seemed to recognize this of her reply, and then sublimely she confounded her real world's hope. "The glory land. Yes -- that is the place ...where Jeanette and Maria are now taken up and waiting for us.

We shall go there." Those were the pitiful lost words of Emilie that night, who stared away at nothing, and I could bare no more and I laid it all out for her.

The oars could be heard dipping and pulling the vessel forward with what seemed a malevolent ease, nearing what was to come, what opposed all good outcomes for the three remaining nuns as I revealed the only options left for them. For certain there weren't others.

"Eat. Actively seek your strength's recovery and keep it. Your betrothed red chiefs or their war-whooping braves will demand your vigor and naked strong medicine in their buffalo blankets on cold prairie nights before the teepee's fire and the collection of grubby half-breed imps -- yours -- playing in its hellish light at taking the white scalps of your forebears.

"And your prayers will search blindly in a foreign sky for their savage Great Spirit because your God abandoned you to these, and that myth won't answer you either and take you in your sleep in the icy night, and so you will rise before the sun's bitterest truth and break camp with a papoose and heavy travois both hitched to your spent back you will march in the trail of the stupid flesh of the buffalo that keeps you alive to continue this, your perpetual wandering towards nothing more."

Heads were wringing meaningless horror-struck denials among the three heart-sick prisoners. Words like "no," and "it is not possible," gave out under the gnashing of their scurvied teeth and gums. And the oars' dipping and pulling the keelboat forward meant something still darker for this lot because I revealed that Henry de la Tour expected we would rendezvous with the Blackfoot within the week.

"Of course," I offered, "to save yourselves from profaned union with barbarous cutthroats" -- (noble savages my ass) -- "you have only to maintain your proud piety and higher rebellion and await the bread of eternal life, as you say. In fact, Henry de la Tour has plans for that too, to help you obtain it. I've got to be honest here though. I rather believe he intends for you only the infernal oven where such bread leavens.

"If you continue fasting, starving yourselves, he has promised tomorrow you will all go into the river. He delivers what he promises. You will go under the water watching the others gag and claw at their own adieu's froth and retrace the error of
(Continued on page 32)

(KEELBOAT continued from page 31)

your decision in your fretting panicked minds to the dark bottom until you swell with the carnal testimony of your small meaning ...unless, -- can some swim? Any? ...I didn't think so. No matter though ...swim to where? -- to what, the grizzly on the shore that awaits your tender white flesh greater than the red heathen does?

--Oh and let me also disabuse you of the oh-so-wrong idea that you will come in front of the Almighty in modest sanctity either. Some martyred ablutions poured out in their purity into this mucky torrent? Not a chance. When it happens that you are no longer protected property for Henry de la Tour's well-paying clients then all bets are off. And these men have been on this boat without women for a mighty long time. That's just the way it is. Ugly, I know.

"That brings us to your third and final option..."

Whereupon I fit them for just how they might live to see France again and I made a hard and convincing oath. Surely the deepest reflecting visited the nuns there. And then I locked the cabin against them and reported directly to Henry de la Tour.

Emilie announced the nuns would break their fast on the condition that their good captain were gracious enough to provide fresh meat agreeable with their now feeble stomachs, not the half-rancid venison or the harsh roots stowed abaft for making speed towards our rendezvous.

No one could blackmail Henry de la Tour, to be clear, or pretend to call the shots aboard his keelboat. But he gave great weight over to the material advantage of delivering three live bodies to the tribe versus three dead to the river currents. His trade in women fetched such a premium that it made greater sense in pelts for the trader and his hardest of edges seemed to soften this day for their account. Henry de la Tour agreed to send hunters out the following morning and kill fresh meat for the nuns.

As the oars pulled, a red-tailed hawk glided with a hungry eye above the sedge that fanned out above the mouth of the creek ahead. Henry de la Tour likes a wooded island midstream in the river's meeting with the creek and watched it with his spyglass, steering his vessel there for a defensible night's sleep.

Before the sun's appearance a hunting party of five voyageurs led by Jean-Baptiste paddled away from the island in our pirogue aiming five miles up the creek that fed the

river. They made for a rise of hills above the creek's bottom that was thickly gathered with cottonwoods and poplars and thorny, berried shrubs. In yesterday's late scouting Etienne had sighted bighorn sheep climbing about there in stony crags in the escaping sunlight. So it was that Henry de la Tour came to send five of his men with ten of his muskets a full five miles distant from his keelboat that portentous morning.

I of course remained aboard the keelboat guarding the nuns. The season was late

I closed the long barrel to his head and fired the ball and the new wide space in back of Henry de la Tour's head utterly convinced the rest of him to fall dead on the deck.

and the mornings were now bitter with chill. Etienne and Henry de la Tour came aboard from the campsite at water's edge to fetch a map and a bottle of rum to warm them -- the smoke from day fires were too risky in hostile territory. Remy, a Canadian from the Huron country who long ago lost his entire family to the Iroquois was an ancient man, but he was our skilled carpenter and he was fearless and he stood lookout on the far side of the tiny island.

Neither Henry de la Tour or my brother were known for cheer but the two seemed to let slip their great pleasure with me now that Henry de la Tour's articles of commerce were somewhat more secured. Maybe it was the other bottle of rum they already drank for breakfast.

"So much risk. And all of our effort -- nearly washed away, literally." Etienne was tickled with his wordplay as he lit his clay pipe. Then he asked, "How did you get them to break their fast, Auguste?"

"I talked about God and providence, and forbearing, about faith without works, you know -- the normal church stuff." They would have treasured the blasphemy all the more had I laughed with the telling. Both seemed to weigh my squandered faith with too much value. They admired my learning's misuse far too much.

Henry de la Tour was not a smiler, but in his eyes the smallest stoic twinkle held that he was secretly reclaiming my allegiance. "I knew you were the right man for

the task, Auguste." he said, more confident in his wise appointment than he ever should have been.

When the pair had followed the plank once again to the shore I called back down with urgency to Henry de la Tour, that he must return. There was a problem with the nuns ...they weren't in their cabin, I blurted. He wheeled around to me with fire in his eyes then yelled behind to Etienne: "Quick! -- is one pirogue still tied behind the boat? -- Check!" and he pounded up again to the deck where I gave his wrath wide space and shrank into the bow away from the cabin that he raged toward. He was screaming all the while to Etienne who discovered the pirogue still there and set off running down the shoreline for traces of escape. He wouldn't get far.

When Henry de la Tour frantically swung open the unlocked door he was at genuine loss to understand why all three nuns were before him now in the cabin reclined just feet away on the small bed. A large buffalo-skin robe draped them.

"What is the meaning Auguste?!" he shouted to the bow where I was fetching one of the two dead men's rifles I kept hidden in its hold. It was then I called forth the anger I also once hid -- i could use it now, it was time.

They dropped the large buffalo-skin robe from their tight huddle and Henry de la Tour froze instantly at the sight of the musket no longer concealed by the robe or by the crowding of three nuns' trembling arms.

He wasn't frozen any longer when the rifle I had snuck them in the night let loose its flash and boomed and its lead ball animated him with a spreading red hole in his chest and it spun him around bodily to face me in an aggrieved staggering huff. It was just as well I thought that he should see me. Though his hand was gripping the very last thing he knew was real, his bullwhip, I closed the long barrel to his head and fired the ball and the new wide space in back of Henry de la Tour's head utterly convinced the rest of him to fall dead on the deck.

Etienne, after hearing the two shots flew in a fever back toward the the keelboat but the gangplank met with nothing anymore and he saw the three nuns struggle at poling the unmoored vessel already in the mercy of the water's drift toward the channel, and me at the boat's mounted swivel gun trained on its former first mate.

"You can't swim it, Etienne." I shout-
(Continued on page 33)

(KEELBOAT *continued from page 32*)

ed warnings at him. "I'll shred you with shot, I swear, so there'll be nothing even for the fishes to eat. You won't get halfway here. He had to die, know that. You don't. But be careful in your ways always."

From knee-deep in the water he leveled his musket at me and fired -- my own brother. He should have been a better shot for this kind of life he chose -- it hit nothing on the boat. The rum was of no help either. He had no other shots as I assumed the tiller and bid the craft take us back downstream.

Remy needed much explaining when he made it to the campsite, winded, his old legs running to the rifle sounds.

"I'm telling you man, Auguste just lost his mind and murdered Henry de la Tour and left us here. He and the nuns took the boat."

The accounting was weak for the old man who'd seen too much in his years and he scratched his head. "Nuns .took the boat?" He launched further complaints, "The others couldn't have heard anything from afar and won't be back 'til near dark."

"At least he left us a cask of dry powder and some lead." Etienne tried to remain

hopeful in the light of my surprise charity. He struggled to think clearly.

Both voyageurs knew it was cold comfort when faced with what lay ahead.

"Maybe the others will return early and a couple can catch the boat with the pirogue, maybe they'll near us enough to hear and speed back to us -- let's start firing, we have no choice."

Remy had been around too long and didn't like the risk of exposure. But he resigned himself to their best r only hope hope and loaded and fired in the air as Etienne did. And both reloaded and fired in the air again. Hey kept at it, four times to every hour.

I knew my former crew and my kin might not make it -- but yet again they might. They had guns and they had hatchets and they had not only their big pirogue, but they had the boat's carpenter too for goodness sake -- they could quickly build another. That pesky conscience that brought me to this turnabout also gave leave for my own capture if I should relent.

Very soon across the river from the small island, out on the nearby plains a company of braves, Assiniboines painted for war

and for raiding horses were from the north and stopped their southern trail and turned their mounts to the sound of the rifles not a mile distant and now went toward it with taut bows and full quivers and unbending heart.

I laid it all out, anew, for the nuns.

"The currents are lower, slower now, but make for cleaner running -- less hidden shoals, fewer trees and snags, and banks to collapse on us. We'll try God-awful hard anyhow to ride her as far as we can -- if we run hard aground on a shoal we'll never get her to channel again and gotta burn her so keep your eyes out. If we make it to somewhere we'll make it anywhere. Better return to your prayers while watching the river."

"So had you." Emilie said with a long-forgotten, faintest of smiles. She was a quick study at the tiller -- she had to be. They all did.

They all kept their eyes out and I kept mine out too.

I silently mouthed the remembered prayers too as I rid the deck of Henry de la Tour's body ...into the water.

The Girard's of Chippewa Falls!

By Pierre Girard

In the 1870's, Thomas DeCheyne and his wife Saphronia DesRosiers left the town of Louiseville, Quebec and moved to Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin. By 1880 Saphronia had convinced her sister Marguerite DesRosiers and her husband Samuel Girard to join them in Chippewa Falls. Samuel and Marguerite lived in Chippewa for two years and then made plans to move to the Brainerd, Minnesota area where they bought land and began farming.

That same year the DesRosiers sisters welcomed to Chippewa a third sister, Adeline DesRosiers and her husband Solomon Girard. Eighteen years earlier, in January of 1864, sisters Adeline and Marguerite DesRosiers had married brothers Samuel and Solomon Girard in a double wedding ceremony at St Antoine Padue in Louiseville, Quebec.

Following the emigration movement of the Girard/DesRosiers families, the DesRosiers sister's brother, Theotiste DesRosiers and his wife Philomene Doyon moved from Louiseville, Quebec to the

Crookston, Minnesota area, bought land and began farming. Of these four families, the only one who remained in Chippewa Falls was the Solomon Girard family.

Solomon and Adeline had 9 children when they moved to Chippewa Falls. When they left Ste Ursule, Quebec for the U.S. they boarded the train in Montreal. The two oldest boys carried a large pot of pea soup, six of the other children carried a loaf of bread under their arm and Adeline the mother, carried the baby, Proxedus. When they arrived in Chicago, Illinois, they ate the pea soup and bread in the waiting room of the Chicago railroad depot. They then boarded another train for the journey to Chippewa Falls.

Solomon Girard built a white wooden frame house on Culver Street in Chippewa Falls. It was the first house east of State St in the city. He also built and ran a sawmill and had a small farm on the Little Drywood Creek in the township of Anson in Chippewa County. Solomon's father, Isaac, had run a sawmill in St Edouard, Quebec so this activity in the logging region of Wisconsin was in his blood.

The family's nine children grew to adulthood with some remaining in Chippewa Falls and others moving to Brooks and Belle Prairie, Minnesota. Solomon and Adeline built a large brick home next to their white

wooden home on Culver Street just prior to celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary in 1914. Solomon died in 1921 and his wife Adeline died in 1925. Their daughter, Proxedus, who had been caring for them then moved to La Crosse, Wisconsin and entered the

Dominican Monastery and became cloistered Sister Mary Bertrand. Her siblings who had remained in Chippewa continued raising their families in the community.

Solomon and Adeline's son Joseph was my grandfather. In 1891, at the age of 25, he built a large brick home at 15 South Culver Street as a wedding gift for his future wife, Virginia LaMothe whom he married in 1892 at Notre Dame Church in Chippewa Falls. Eight children were born to this union in this home. Six of those children grew to adulthood. Four of those children remained in Chippewa and raised families there. My father, Clarence Girard bought the home upon the death of his parents and this is the home that I was raised in.

My father, grandfather and great-grandfather practiced the trades of plasterer and bricklayer. Their obituaries stated that the brick buildings downtown Chippewa Falls stand as testaments to their skill and integrity in the building trades.



Robert Sylvain



Robert Sylvain plays the music of the Acadians, the first French settlers of Maine, along with music from the various cultures which touched and influenced their music on their epic journey from France to Acadia, to Louisiana and back again. Drawing from notebooks of Acadian ballads left to him by his Mémère Thibodeau, Sylvain folds in Breton, Quebecois and maritime elements, as well as echoes of their southern cousins the Cajuns, with Creole and zydeco influences. All these traditions are honored through the lens of a modern roots music sensibility, with “top-notch musicality and singing” and authentic Acadian joie de vivre.

Well known as lead singer for the roots music groups Boréal Tordu and Sylvain’s Acadian Aces, Robert Sylvain has toured internationally as an emissary of Acadian music in Maine, notably at the 2004 Congrès Mondial Acadien in Nova Scotia, the 2009 Fête des Acadiens in Vatan, France, the 2011 Fête de St. Jean in Québec, and the 2014 Congrès Mondial in New Brunswick, which was televised live on CBC. In addition to the cd releases *Démonstration* (2003), *La Bonne Vie* (2006), and *Les Chevaliers* (2009), Sylvain’s recorded music has been included on the cd compilation *Des voix s’élèvent* produced by Zachary Richard, on the short film *A Brief Case of Love* played at the Cannes Film Festival, and on the PBS series *NOW* with David Brancaccio.

Descended from the French-speaking first colonists of Maine, whose deportation from the land they called Acadie was chronicled in Longfellow’s epic poem *Evangeline*, Robert inherited the famous Acadian “joie de vivre” along with a penchant for singing loudly in crowds, from his father, Robert, Sr. who grew up in Waterville, Maine, where the rosary and off-color jokes were still always en français and tourtière pie was served every Christmas. The elder Robert’s mother, known of course only as Mémère, was a Thibodeau from the St. John’s River Valley of northern Maine, where many Acadians settled after the great upheaval of 1755. As a testament to her culture, Mémère left behind a notebook full of old Acadian French songs which she remembered and transcribed, from which the younger Robert draws material and inspiration.

Robert started singing professionally for young audiences in 1990 when he was awarded a grant by the Massachusetts Arts Council to develop children’s music programs for public libraries in Somerville, MA. During that time Robert met Steve Muise, a fellow Acadian and fiddler with whom Sylvain later formed Maine’s premier Acadian folk band, Boréal Tordu. In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, Robert met Louisiana’s prodigal son, fiddler Matthew Doucet and started the band Douce, which became the inspiration for Sylvain’s Acadian Aces, bringing Cajun-style dance music to old Acadie. In 2008 the Maine Arts Council awarded Robert a traditional arts apprenticeship grant to work with renowned Acadian guitarist David Surette, which allowed him the resources to study and develop the traditional songs found in his Mémère’s notebook. Since then Robert has scoured folk music archives around the globe to discover the original melodies and bring these nearly forgotten gems to light.



Mémère’s Notebook

Is a collection of old Acadian ballads from the St. John River Valley revived for a new generation.

Robert’s grandmother, Elisa Sylvain née Thibodeau, grew up in the St. John River Valley, in the heart of Maine’s Acadian region. As the matriarch of a family of forty grandchildren Elisa made the quilts, cooked the tourtière, and kept the songs of her heritage alive for her progeny. As the keeper of songs in his generation, Robert inherited his Mémère’s cherished notebook of old Acadian ballads, which he has painstakingly researched for their historical sources, found the original melodies, translated and arranged the songs to present to a new generation as proof that Acadian culture still lives in Maine.

Production has begun on this monumental heritage music project started over a decade ago. Be a part of the process of bringing these historic Acadian folksongs back to life by participating in our crowdfunding campaign. You can pre-order the recordings and sheet music, get a copy of the notebook, sign up for a house concert, become a project sponsor and much more. Thanks for your support!

<http://robertsylvain.com/>



Coin des jeunes...

One Chilly Morning

*Photos and story by
Martha Whitehouse*

One chilly September morning Freddie Tree Frog was sitting high up on a lovely pink stonecrop blossom, enjoying a few rays from the warm sun. Out of nowhere came a different looking little fellow and he landed right next to Freddie.

"Oh, good," Freddie thought. "He's the same size as me! Maybe he wants to make a new friend, too. I'll sit still and wait for him to speak to me first."

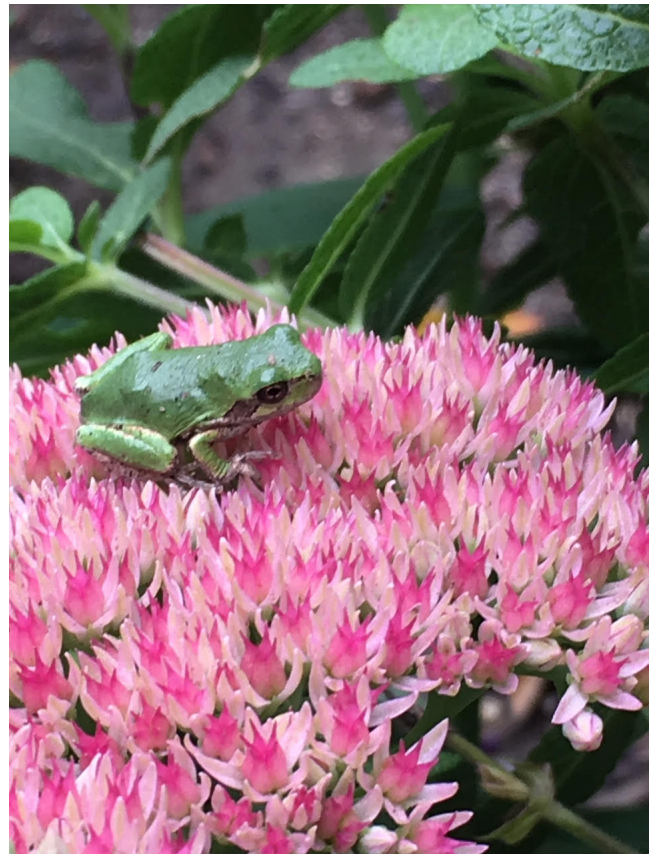
But the little fellow didn't say a word. He just put his head down on the pink blossom and fell asleep. Freddie watched him for a long time. "I'll be quiet while he sleeps. He must be very tired. I can still make a new friend when he wakes up," Freddie thought to himself. He kept watching the little fellow, and soon he fell asleep, too.

The sun must have warmed both of them up at the same time, because suddenly they were looking straight at each other. But the other fellow did not look happy and he did not speak first.

Freddie was concerned. "Doesn't he want to be my friend? Maybe he's unhappy that I'm still here. It's okay if I got here first. There's room for both of us on top of this flower. I know we can be friends even if we don't look the same and we don't move the same way. We can share our different adventures and tell each other lots of things."

Suddenly the other fellow disappeared into the big sky. Freddie was very surprised and he felt very sad. He stayed on the warm flower top for a long time, hoping that the other fellow would come back. But the other fellow did not come back.

"Next time," Freddie decided, "I'll speak to a new fellow first, tell him who I am, and then ask him if he would like to share adventures with me."





Enquête chez les Filles du roi

Diane Lacombe



Roman historique, roman épistolaire, roman à suspense... Enquête chez les Filles du roi est tout cela à la fois. On y suit la correspondance entre Renée Biret, ancêtre de l'auteure, et ses amies devenues Filles du roi dans les années 1660. La jeune femme établie à La Rochelle tente de retrouver son fiancé parti en Nouvelle-France. Sans nouvelles de lui, elle se morfond. Hélie avait pourtant promis de revenir la marier après la fin de son contrat de travail de trente-six mois là-bas. Impossible pour Renée de se résigner à oublier cet homme qui continue de faire palpiter son cœur. Aussi fait-elle appel,

par lettres, à ses amies dispersées un peu partout en Nouvelle-France. Auraient-elles aperçu son fiancé ici ou là? Le courrier par bateau voyage lentement. Le bel Hélie a le temps de changer d'endroit dix fois avant que l'ardente Renée parvienne à le localiser. Surtout qu'il semble cultiver l'art de se volatiliser. Parviendra-t-elle à entrer en communication avec lui? Se marieront-ils enfin? Cette correspondance parfois tendre, parfois drôle, s'avère captivante, pleine de rebondissements. Dans les lettres des fidèles amies de la jeune Rochelaise, on trouve aussi une mine de renseignements sur le mode de vie au quotidien des pionnières de la première heure dans le Nouveau Monde. C'est comme si on y était!

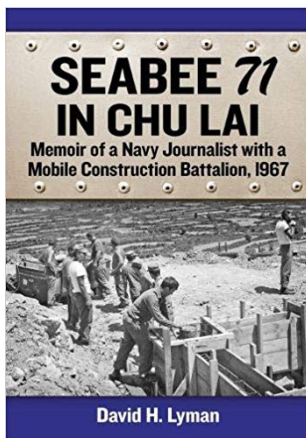
https://books.google.com/books/about/Enqu%C3%AAte_chez_les_Filles_du_roi.html?id=QdHTDwAAQBAJ

One Franco-American Vietnam War veteran's military history

March 6, 2020 Franco-American News and Culture David Lyman, Davisville, MCB 71, Rhode Island

By Juliana L'Heureux

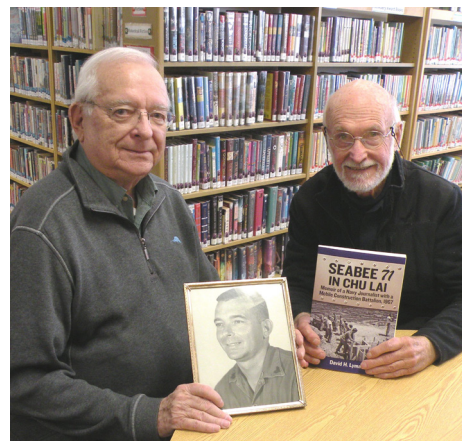
BREWER, Maine— My husband experienced a walk back in time during a memorable visit with author and photojournalist David Lyman! We were grateful for this encounter, where we met with Lyman, in Brewer, Maine!



WE met author David Lyman at the Brewer Public Library.

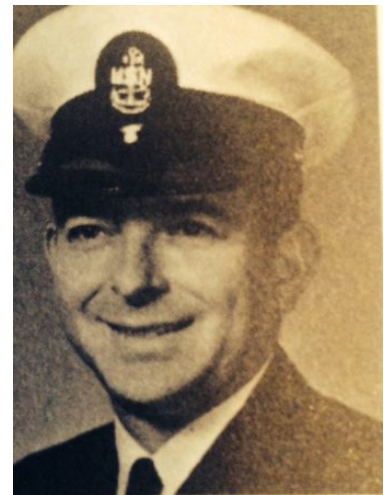
In the world of Mobile Construction Battalions, better known as the "Seabees", the numbers included in this highly trained engineering and technical group of military personal are not enormous. That's why, the

happenance of meeting the author who published a book about his personal experiences was an extraordinary occasion. Lyman wrote "Seabee 71 in Chu Lai: Memoir of a Navy Journalist With a Mobile Construction Battalion, 1967", was a special first person shared military history experience.



Richard L'Heureux, USN, MCPO, Retired (left) with veteran Navy journalist and author David Lyman, at the Brewer, Maine Public Library on February 29, 2020. Lyman took two portraits of my husband while he was with MCB71.

My husband Richard L'Heureux (a Maine Franco-American retired Master Chief Navy veteran) was attached to MCB 71, during the deployment that is vividly described by Lyman in his journal. He published the book in 2019, but the descriptions about the day to day, living dangerously in Chu Lai, were reported with extraordinary clarity, as though the events happened in real time.



Navy Chief Richard L'Heureux photographed by David Lyman 1967-68.

Richard was a U.S. Navy Personnelman attached to MCB71, in 1967, where he served with Journalist David Lyman. But, wait, there's more! To our joyful astonishment, we learned, after purchasing the book, that Lyman now lives in Camden Maine. Even more timely, he agreed to meet my
(Continued on page 37)

POETRY/POÉSIE...

But I Don't Know You...

There is a battle raging
 Within my head
 All my memories are being erased
 When I look at you
 I know I love you
 But I don't know you

My mind is no longer mine
 You have moved in
 And hardened my thoughts
 I am struggling
 When I look at you
 I know I love you
 But I don't know you

I no longer recognize you
 I am struggling
 The words do not flow
 There are dams and obstacles
 When I look at you
 I know I love you
 But I don't know you

I ask that you look into my eyes
 You will see
 I am still there
 But I am not the me you want me to be
 I am gone
 When I look at you

I know I love you
 But I don't know you

As I sit here
 Nothing makes sense
 I am trapped
 I see things that are not there
 You speak to me
 But I do not understand
 When I look at you
 I know I love you
 But I don't know you

I try to communicate
 But try as I may
 Something else comes out
 A mish mash of sounds, no longer words
 Thoughts and dignity no longer there
 When I look at you
 I know I love you
 But I don't know you

To you Alzheimers I say
 You have stolen my now
 You are a thief
 But there is something
 You cannot take
 My family still loves me
 I know I love them too
 But I don't know them

— *Lisa Desjardins
 Michaud*

Les mots sont sacrés.

Je me souviens comme si c'était hier.
 Maman avait un objet rouge dans sa main; elle venait du jardin; elle caressait un petit bijou.
 "C'est la première de l'année, si belle, si délicate.
 Tiens, mon Paul, tu veux la prendre? C'est une tomate.
 Fais attention, tu peux la caresser. Tu peux lui parler, tout doucement.
 Elle est si belle, la première tomate de l'été.
 Je prends le petit bijou rouge dans ma petite main.
 «Toomaate,» je souffle avec un air de découverte.
 «Oui, tomate,» Maman répond. «Un beau mot pour un beau légume.»
 J'avais cinq ans et c'était la première fois que je faisais le lien dans ma tête entre le mot et l'objet. La découverte me saisit.
 Maman ne parlait que le Français – même si elle vivait aux Etats-Unis depuis sa jeunesse. Sa famille, ses amis, les voisins – tout le monde parlait Français.
 Papa parlait le Français et l'Anglais. Il était fermier et vendait les produits de la ferme à Lewiston. Le premier mot en Anglais que j'ai entendu de sa bouche : «Jini», (plus tard, j'ai appris qu'il disait Ginny). C'était le nom de son cheval. «Whoa, Ginny,» il disait en bon cowboy.
 Pour maman, le mot préféré, c'était «tomate.» Quel beau mot! Il exprimait la richesse et le goût. Il portait un lien avec la terre and me rappelait les contes des Indiens et leurs «tomahawks.»
 Ma passion pour le son des mots ne fait que croître tous les jours de ma vie.

---*Paul Paré*

(One Franco-American Vietnam War veteran's military history continued from page 36)

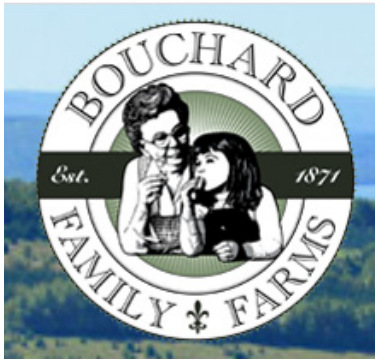
husband and me at the Brewer Public Library on February 29, while he was attending a small group writer's conference.

This circle of coincidences was an important milestone for my husband for several reasons. First of all, after he served with the MCB 71 Battalion, the "cruise book" he received about the deployment disappeared. It's the journal where the memories about each deployment were recorded. Thereafter, my husband had a difficult time recalling particulars about his tour in Chu Lai. For example, he had no recollection about where on the base mess hall was located and therefore had lost his memory about ever having eaten while he was in Vietnam. That is, until, we met David Lyman at the Brewer Public Library!

Almost instantly, a realization sparked between the two veterans, about how they shared in a rare military history experience during their Vietnam War. This is how Lyman described serving with the Seabees in Chu Lai, summarized on the book's summary page: "By summer 1967, Lyman was with a SeaBee unit on a beach in Chu Lai, Vietnam. A reporter in civilian life, Lyman was assigned to Military Construction Battalion 71 as a photojournalist. He documented the lives of the hard-working and hard-drinking SeaBees as they engineered roads, runways, heliports and base camps for the troops. Additionally, the Seabees also helped the local Vietnamese villagers with community building projects.

The author was shot at, almost blown up by a road mine, and spent nights in a mortar pit as rockets bombarded a nearby Marine runway. He rode on convoys through Viet Cong territory to photograph villages outside 'The Wire'. The stories and photo-

(Continued on page 39)



Ployes

In the early 1980's potato farming had endured some extremely hard times. It was during one of these tough years when Claire, the eldest of the 5 daughters, had returned from a trip to Louisiana with a French Acadian doughnut mix called beignets. As the family sat around enjoying the doughnuts one of them asked why no one has ever made a mix for ployes. The seed was planted and soon after the family started working on the perfect recipe for ployes. Before long the family business moved from their kitchen into the two car garage which was converted into a mixing and packaging facility. In 1997, a 10,000 square foot building was erected to house the entire operation. Alban Bouchard and his son Joe found the dismantled mill in Canada and took one year to piece it together, in order to mill the buckwheat on site.

Today the business has been credited to saving the family farm. Twenty years ago, in the Fort Kent area, there were approximately 40 potato farmers, today there are 5. Farming as an industry has not been easy. Though we have endured some stormy weather we believe that our creativity and determination have been instrumental in maintaining our way of life.



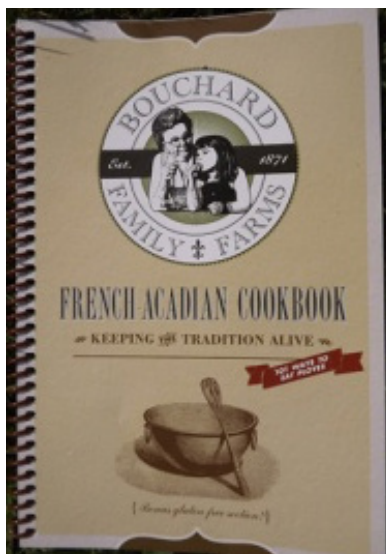
- For breakfast - topped with butter and maple syrup.
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(One Franco-American Vietnam War veteran's military history continued from page 37)

tographs Lyman published as editor of the battalion's newspaper, *The Transit*, form the basis of this memoir."

This summary is exactly how my husband recounted his Vietnam experiences when he wrote and sent me audio tapes during his deployment. Yes, spending nights in a mortar pit were part of the war experience, but in my husband's situation, he had developed a leg injury, so the painful positioning of his injured leg contributed to the feelings of vulnerability, at the time.

Details about their Seabee deployment began to emerge, as though they happened yesterday. Moreover, and to our relief, Lyman published a map depicting the Seabee's Camp Shields in the book and the location of the mess hall was located! Certainly, the two veterans seemed to easily walk through their shared military history in Vietnam. Yes, Lyman's journal sparked some of my husband's lost memories.

In the world of Seabee Battalions, most are small units and they only ramp up during times of war. In fact, MCB 71 experienced just a few deployments to Vietnam. So, what were the chances that one of those deployments was published by photojournalist Lyman, and it just happened to be

when Richard was attached to the Battalion? After leaving the Seabees, my husband was advanced in rate to Chief Petty Officer and then assigned to the USS *Intrepid*, where the aircraft carrier was deployed back to the Gulf of Tonkin, off the coast of Vietnam.

My husband and I are grateful to David Lyman for documenting the military history about MCB 71 in Chu Lai. Moreover, Lyman's book included a photograph he took of Richard with a group of Seabees, when they were preparing to depart Chu Lai. Certainly, we were amazed to find that particular picture featured on the last page of Lyman's journal.

Here is a short history about MCB71, snipped from excerpts published in the cruise book: During World War II, there was a sign on the Pacific Island of Bougainville. It was erected by the Marines of the Third Marine Division and it read:

So, when we reach the Isle of Japan, With our caps at a jaunty tilt, We'll enter the city of Tokyo, On the roads the Seabees built!

That was in 1944, at the Bougainville Airfield, the Naval Construction Battalion Seventy-One built while fighting off the Japanese.

The battalion was officially commissioned in May, 1943, in Davisville, Rhode Island, under the command of Captain Aus-

tin Brockenbrough, Jr., a Civil Engineering Corps (CEC) officer in the United States Navy Reserves. Immediately, the battalion moved to the west coast and departed in early September 1943, for the South Pacific and the war zone. The Battalion was decommissioned, right after World War II ended. But, twenty-one years later, the Battalion was recommissioned, on October 4, 1966, in Davisville, in response to the build-up needed for military bases and airstrips, in Vietnam. Commander Richard Coughlin was the commanding officer at the commissioning.

We were sad to learn from Lyman that the Commanding Officer, Commander Coughlin and the Executive Officer Commander G.H. Brown have since died. In fact, Commander Brown attended Richard's Navy Chief's initiation.

My husband and I were married in 1965 and our family experienced two Vietnam War deployments during the first three years of our marriage.

To our new friend David Lyman, we say "Merci beaucoup!" for signing your book for us. We extend our appreciation to you for writing an excellent military history about the Seabees in Vietnam. This accomplishment certainly helped to bring our family's Seabee chapter about that era to helpful closure.

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Amount Per Serving	
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<small>% Daily Value*</small>	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	0%
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 0mg	0%
Total Carbohydrate 8g	2%
Dietary Fiber 2g	7%
Total Sugars 0g	0%
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 0g	0%
Vitamin D 0mg	0%
Calcium 0mg	0%
Iron 0mg	0%
Potassium 200mg	4%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a diet of other people's secrets. ©2015 LaJoie Growers, LLC. All rights reserved.

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Circle B Farms

<https://www.circlebfarmsinc.com/>



Circle B Farms is owned and operated by Sam and Veteran Patty Blackstone in Caribou, Maine. The farm sits along a beautiful hillside along the Aroostook River and has incredible views of the surrounding countryside. Covering many acres of the farm is an apple orchard as well as highbush blueberries, which produce fruit for hand picking and commercial sale. Patty and her husband Sam are both committed to hiring Vets to work the farm in order to support the Veteran community.

HISTORY

Hello and Welcome to Circle B Farms. This is just a little history about us, and what we do at Circle B Farms. In 1986 & 1987 we planted the first 700 Highbush Blueberries on the farm in Caribou, Maine just as a hobby. In August of 1990 we opened the first, "You Pick" Highbush Blueberry orchard in Aroostook County.

Over the years we have enjoyed serving the people of Caribou and surrounding towns. It seems that people like it out here, or just like to pick and eat Highbush Blueberries. They keep coming back and they bring more friends with them every time they come, that is fine with us. The problem was that we were running out of Blueberries. What do I do?? Think and Think hard. IDEA!!

In summer of 2001 we hatched a plan. LET'S PLANT MORE BLUEBERRIES! So we did....

Now in 2016 we have just over 10,000 Highbush Blueberries planted on 10 acres. We service most local grocery stores from Houlton to Fort Kent, and many Hannaford stores in Southern Maine. Fresh when in season, and frozen for most of the winter.

YES, you can still pick your own blueberries at the farm if you like, not a problem.

We have grown the commercial side in order to keep up with demand this is true. But we have not forgotten where we started. The old You Pick berry shed will remain customers will be met with a smile. Please and thank you have not gone out of style. You are welcome to pick all the highbush blueberries you like. Patty has added you pick peas and string beans if you like.

In 2014 we built a new storage and packing facility with cooler and freezer. Now we offer our Highbush Blueberries frozen fresh. Here at the farm, or you can find them at many Hannaford stores, plus Natural food stores.



*Sam & Patty Blackstone and Family
Owners*

Tel: 207-498-8238

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***287 East Presque Isle Road
Caribou, ME 04736***



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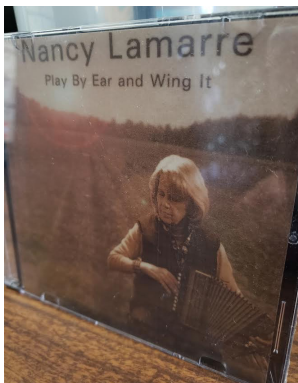


Nancy Lamarre is the owner of the Mon Ami hair salon in Bangor, and a local accordion player. Her enthusiastic passion for music as well as her Acadian background has inspired Nancy to share her gift with the community in an effort to spread positivity and keep the culture alive.



Nancy's love of Acadian French music and the accordion has reinvigorated her. She loves to entertain her audience, relishes seeing their feet tapping, and takes pride in knowing that she is keeping the tradition alive.

Regardless of the setting, Nancy has always loved to make people smile, always found a way to make others feel better about themselves and to forget their daily worries. Playing the accordion has been a natural extension of her personality allowing her to breathe a little love into the community she has called home for the last four decades.



To purchase an Accordion CD, "Nancy Lamarre, Play by Ear and Wing It" contact Nancy at the above phone number!





About Us:

A little bit of history

Owner Elaine Poulin making some great donuts! Born and raised in New Canada, a small town 7 miles out of Fort Kent, Maine on a potato farm. Cooking and baking were always a enjoyment as my parents fed 8 of us around the table. Wanting a career after graduation, I applied and worked 30 years in State gov't. During that time, I would always talk about fulfilling my dream someday. Elaine's Basket Café (basket in the name because I weave and sell baskets in the shop) was created and opened in January of 2007. We went from a full-service restaurant to now being a breakfast café and retail/wholesale bakery. We now deliver donuts and pastries to more than 25 locations. One of our future goals is to package and ship our donuts* and pastries around the world.

What we offer....

- Breakfasts: Served from 6 am to 11:30 am

Bakery

- Cakes and Cupcakes
- Our Donuts
- Catering

Hours:

Breakfast: 6 to 11:30am

Bakery: 6am to 5pm

7 days a week

38 Main St., Milo, Maine

207-943-2705



Today Elaine's Bakery & Cafe delivers donuts and pastries to more than 60 locations. Our goal is to package and ship our donuts and pastries around the world.

WHAT MAKES ELAINE'S SPECIAL?

We've been creating wholesome baked goods from scratch, way before it became trendy.

Our uniquely flavorful baked goods are made with pure-and-simple ingredients. Join the 60-plus local stores and establishments who are featuring our freshly baked products.

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THE HISTORY OF BOUCHARD

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Some pharmaceutical companies add “chocolate” to their probiotics. We infused probiotics into our already famous chocolate – so it’s great chocolate that’s also great for you.



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<https://www.amazon.com/Bouchard-Premium-Belgian-Chocolate-Chocolate/dp/B07FR3N87P>

Franco American Portal Project

Building an online discovery tool for Franco American Collections

francoamericanportal.org



Our Mission

The histories of French-Canadian and Acadian communities in the US Northeast are an important part of the American story. We aim to help preserve these histories and use new information technology to make them more accessible to the public.

Who We Are

Our team includes the Franco American Programs at UMaine, the Franco-American Collection at USM, the Acadian Archives at UMFK, the French Institute at Assumption College, and the Paradis Archives & Special Collections at St Anselm College. Our project is also supported by the Maine State Library.

What We Do

We search the US and Canada to locate photographs, letters, scrapbooks, diaries, business records, family archives, and other materials that concern French-Canadian and Acadian communities in the Northeastern US, and we bring these collections together into a digital space — a “portal” — for the public to search and discover.

What We Need

We need your support to digitize these historic materials, to maintain the portal that organizes them, and to pay for student interns to work on this portal with us.

For more information about the Franco American Portal Project, contact Jacob Albert, Program Manager, at jacob.albert@maine.edu or Susan Pinette, Director of Franco American Programs at spinette@maine.edu.

How the portal works:

1. *Historic records tell our stories.*
The problem: these records are difficult to preserve.
2. *Franco records are kept all over the US and Canada: in boxes, in digital form, or both.*
The problem: they are scattered, with no single source to help find them.
3. *Access to these records improve how we understand the past.*
Our solution: Franco American Portal Project will help preserve Franco materials from the US and Canada. We will make them discoverable in one place online in order to make them easier to access and use.



To find out more about making a gift to benefit this project, contact



umainefoundation@maine.edu | umainefoundation.org
umaine.edu/visionfortomorrow

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Orono, ME 04469-5792
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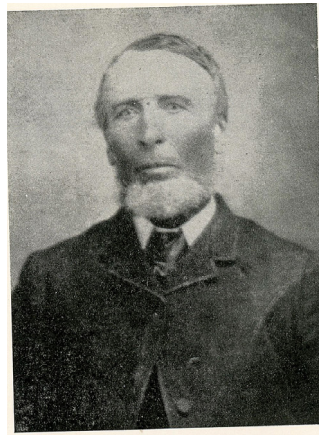
Learn more about UMaine
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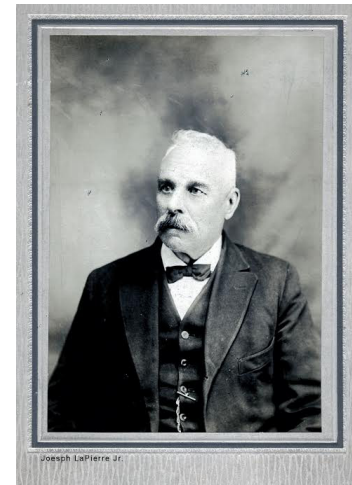
(N.D.L.R. submitted to Le Forum by Dan Lapierre)

1850 (Cyr Plantation)

by Sister
*Marie-Agnes
LaPierre S.C.I.M.*
(daughter of
Joseph Jr.)



Joseph LaPierre



Joseph LaPierre Jr.

LAPIERRE, JOSEPH, (5), my grandfather, son of Joseph (4) and Angelique Labrecque, of St. Laurent, I.O. Came to St. Charles, Bellechasse County, Province of Québec., Oct. 18, 1822. There were ten boys in a family of fourteen. He left with his cousin, the priest, Antoine Gosselin, at the age of sixteen, to become the first Lapierre, to immigrate to the United States. Antoine Gosselin had been named the first resident priest, of the parish at St. Bruno.

The young man rendered, great service, a servant at the mass, good singer, and a skillful worker. He was a primary volunteer in parish affairs. In the parish registers of this period, his name figures often as named Godfather. A witness often to marriages and burial. It is quoted of him, a person who treated all his neighbors that stretched around him as family.

After having served his good cousin, for number of years, without having never disavowed him, it was time to clear a homestead, for a home.

In 1815, the legislature accorded an allocation of the construction a road that extended from the Aroostook River to Grand Falls, today the road from Caribou, to Hamlin. It is along this route that he chose the number lot 20, three miles from Violet Brook (Van Buren). This location was incorporated on March 8, 1870, under the name Cyr Plantation.

To cut by the swing and blow of the ax was by itself a vigorous and indefatigable challenge. This pioneer had a faithful soul and almost a hero, as he worked square by square in this virgin forest domain. After three or four years of clearing land this young man who had been an apprentice on several structures, was able to build a house and barn, of this culture. This house was made of squared hand hewed logs, covered with clapboard, and had a roof a cedar shingles. This valiant young man was

full of spirit, but poor of the goods of this world, although rich in Gods rewards, valor and generosity.

This brave pioneer continued to open and till his land, by a team of oxen, pulling a trollop wooden plow. He cultivated and grew wheat, oats, buckwheat, flax and vegetables. He cut his hay, grain, and flax by



Fr. Antoine Gosselin

sickle. In winter he beat the grain with a flail, and made shingles by hand. In spring, he went down river to Grand Falls on a barge where he traded his products for provisions for the year. Oils, leather, the maple furnished him the sugar, and livestock his meat for the year. By a quotation, his woman would spin the wove the wool, and flax for garment that she had created by hand. The light of the candle was the only electricity. Their shoes were also made that house. Each had their own shoes and moccasins, and lived a content and happy life.

In the journal life of women, in the

colonies of our first homes, it demanded a strong character above the common one. The famine of all things did not pull out the least complaint of these brave pioneers, that were the hearts of our lines and of our race. In our days we complain that the times are difficult when the luxury, the modern comfort is the big craftsman, the principal factor of the crisis.

After eighteen years of exile on a alien earth this true Canadian could not holdout for any time longer for the nostalgia to visit his fatherland and its "well-like" parents. It was not a freeway or they did not have automobiles for that matter. He left by horse and wagon, with his wife and his first son. They followed the route to River du Loup, all the way to Montreal, where the wife consulted a specialist on the subject of her failing health. They visited Saint Laurent, I.O. and St. Charles, Bellechasse, his native parish. This was the only time that he ever met his relatives.

The following year my father became an orphan, at seven years old. His mother at the age of 26, left for the heavenly fatherland, on June 8, 1858. She is buried at St. Bruno, in the old cemetery.

His father, contracted a new alliance with Madeleine Parent, daughter of Jean Angelique Thibodeau, of Hamlin, Maine, born Feb. 24, 1842. This marriage was blessed by the priest, McKeaney, on Feb. 28, 1859. Madeleine died on May 13, 1864, at the age of 22 years old. She was the mother of four children, which three had died before her.

PAUL (6), born Jan. 28, 1860. Deceased.

SUZANNE (6), born Jan. 11, 1861, married on Nov. 24, 1879, with Florent Thibodeau, of Grand Isle, Me, died on July 28, 1942.

(Continued on page 46)

(N.D.L.R. submitted to *Le Forum* by Dan Lapierre)



Probably 1931, Gilbert LaJoie with his son, Emile. But across the road is Joe Jr, barn with the homestead.

(1850 *Cyr Plantation*) continued from page 46)

JEAN (6), born Jan. 31, 1863, deceased.

FLORENT (6), born April 19, 1864, deceased.

The loss of these dear ones in the space of six years, was a rough blow that nature provided to soak up courage. Nevertheless, this good Christian, looked forward to his faith of a better time. It was necessary to find a mother his two orphans, and a companion for himself. He needed a housewife and looked to remarry.

My grandfather was of average size, good in expression, bearded, rich in health, a hard worker, resourceful and took life cheerfully. A fervent, Christian, it imposed sometimes a rough sacrifice to go to Mass on Sunday, and return. One did not speak against the snow, because it was too deep. I remember that, after a large snow fall, one morning and being bounded by it, that my father and some neighbors, with horses pulling snow

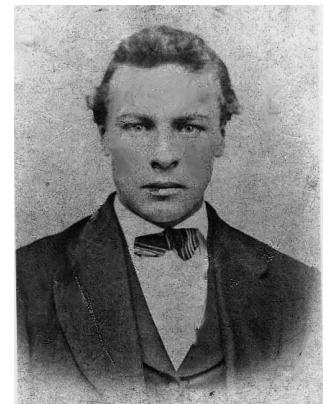
plows and hands shovels opened the way and arrived in enough time for the hour of the Mass. They returned about noon, very tired but cheerful and happy to have accomplished their Sunday obligations.

young descendants that went to the schoolhouse, walked in their own footsteps back and forth to school. They behave so as to not get stains on their clothing. The sky gave light of similar examples, to bring back to us a better faith and spirit. During Lent, it was a Christian life, that normally opened itself up in a Catholic beneficial and constant action of faith.

MR. AND MRS. JOSEPH LAPIERRE, SR.



At left, Mrs. Demerise Madore LaPierre, wife of Mr. Joseph LaPierre, Sr., at right. The picture above shows Mr. LaPierre's first wife. He had three wives, of whom two preceded him in death. By his first wife, Demerise (Madore) he had a son, Joseph. By his second wife, Madelein (Parent) he had four children but only one, Suzanne, survived. By his third wife, Marguerite (Cyr) he had 15 children. Among them were Demerise, Edith, Napoleon, Melvina, Lea and Laura. Some died young.



Joseph LaPierre Jr.,
18 years old
(circa. 1869)

On Ash Wednesday, he sacrificed his pipe and all the days of Lent. He reserved this holy time to toil heavenly in his grain shed to beat the grain with his flail. The



On the road to 1642

by *Don Levesque*

In May 2018 we visited France. Like everyone else, we visited Paris for a couple of days.

After that we visited Dieppe with a Boston-based researcher as a guide. She lives in Dieppe, France, and she is a Levesque, on top of all that.

But what I want to tell you is that we then visited the small village of Hautot-Saint Sulpice, not far from Rouen and all near Yvetot. This is where my ancestor, Robert Levesque, grew up. Friends of the Levesque Association, Inc., also served as our guide. They live in the region. Were able to see where Robert was baptized, for example.

I found it interesting, but not more than that at the time.

We slept in Honfleur that night.

It hit me very strongly the next morning when I woke up at five in the morning, thinking of my ancestor Robert. I couldn't sleep anymore because Robert was so present in my imagination.

Robert was born in 1642. At the age of 29, he was not married, and worked as a carpenter with Damien Berubé, a bricklayer. One day he meets a rich young man who invites him to go with him to New France. I imagined that Robert would have asked, "What are you going to do over there?"

"I'm going to start a village."

"A village? Why?"

"I had a seigneurie and I am going to establish a village."

"What's there?"

"Nothing. Well, tall grass and trees."

I imagined myself in place of Robert. If at the age of 29 I would have met a rich young man who would have said to me, "Come with me, I'm starting a village in Africa."

I think I would have said, "Tell me that there's a Tim Horton"

But Robert said yes. By saying "yes" he changed the world. If I understand correctly, around 85% of Levesques in North America descend from Robert Levesque and Jeanne Chevalier, a fille du roi.

The young lord, Deschamps, wanted to bring with him Robert and Damien Berube as well as a few other craftsmen he would need to build a village.

I was thinking of the courage of Robert who left his village. I am sure there was enough work there for him to earn a living. But he said yes to an adventure. A small group of men arrived on the shore of the St. Lawrence River and began to clear land and build "houses" to spend the winter. From this, the village of Rivière-Ouelle, QC, came into being. It was 1671.

At five o'clock in the morning in Honfleur, I admired the courage and the talent of Robert and his friends.

Robert married Jeanne Chevalier, a widow with three small children who had no descendants. Robert and Jeanne eventually had three boys of their own who each had large families.

I am the descendant of one of the sons, Pierre Joachim. Pierre had a big family, too. When Robert died, it was Pierre who took care of his mother until she married the lord, Pierre Joachim's godfather and Robert's best friend.

I then descend from one of Pierre's sons: Jean-Baptiste. Jean-Baptiste married three times and had about 20 children. I thought of Jean-Baptiste, three times widowed, each time with a bunch of young children on his arms. I also thought of the courage of the women who married Jean-Baptiste and who took all the children as their own.

Then I descend from the youngest son of Jean-Baptiste's third marriage: Jean-Charles. The family of Jean-Charles are settled in the fifth range of Saint-Arsène, between Rivière-du-Loup and Rimouski.

I had the pleasure of visiting the farm which has been in our family for around 200 years. I could see what many of my great-grandfathers saw when they got up in the morning and looked outside. When you are a farmer and you depend on the weather for the sun to shine at the right time and the rain to fall at the right time, the first thing you do in the morning is to look outside.

This visit was very special for me. Gerald Levesque, whom I met through the



Lorraine Levesque, Nelly Mare-Godet & Don Levesque

Levesque Association, was born and raised on this farm. He brought me there.

Two of Jean-Charles' boys came to Madawaska. Jean-Baptiste, 19, and Louis, 17. It started badly for them. The church register in Saint-Basile (NB) says only, "Jean-Baptiste Levesque drowned yesterday." We don't know how or where it happened.

But Louis stayed in the Madawaska Territory, as it was known. He married an Acadian and settled in Grand Isle, Maine.

One of his sons, Joseph, is my grandfather.

I thought of all this early in the morning in Honfleur, France.

It made me very proud. And I considered myself very fortunate to be here and to be part of such a large international Levesque family.

I encourage you to visit the land of your ancestors if you get a chance and the means.

I went in 2004 to Port Royal, Nova Scotia, where my Doucette ancestors lived for five generations before escaping Le Grand Dérangement in some way to go to Kamouraska. Some of the following generation came to northern Maine.

I visited the region where of my Ouelle ancestors lived in Rivière-Ouelle but I don't know exactly where they lived. But it's okay, I know they knew my Levesque ancestor and that's good enough for me.

It remains for me to visit the ancient land of my ancestor Beaupré ancestor. Perhaps someday ...

Sur la route pour 1642

par Don Levesque

En mai 2018, nous avons visité la France. Comme tout le monde, nous avons visité Paris pendant quelques jours.

Après cela, nous avons visité Dieppe avec une chercheuse basée à Boston comme guide. Elle vit à Dieppe, en France, et elle est une Lévesque, en plus de tout cela.

Mais ce que je veux vous dire, c'est que nous avons ensuite visité le petit village de Hautot-Saint Sulpice, non loin de Rouen et tout près d'Yvetot. C'est là que mon ancêtre, Robert Lévesque, a grandi. Les amis de la Association Lévesque, Inc. ont également servi de guide. Ils vivent dans la région. Ont pu voir où Robert a été baptisé, par exemple.

Je l'ai trouvé intéressant, mais pas plus que ça à l'époque.

Nous avons dormi à Honfleur cette nuit-là.

Cela m'a frappé très fort le lendemain quand je me suis réveillé à cinq heures du matin, en pensant à mon ancêtre Robert. Je ne pouvais plus dormir parce que Robert était tellement présent dans mon imagination.

Robert est né en 1642. A 29 ans, il n'est pas marié et travaille comme charpentier avec Damien Berubé, maçon. Un jour, Robert rencontre un jeune homme riche qui l'invite à l'accompagner en Nouvelle-France. J'imaginai que Robert aurait demandé: «Qu'est-ce que tu vas faire là-bas?»

«Je vais commencer un village.»

«Un village? Pourquoi?»

«J'ai une seigneurie et je vais fonder un village.»

«Qu'y a-t-il là?»

«Rien. Eh bien, les hautes herbes et les arbres.»

Je me suis imaginé à la place de Robert. Si à 29 ans j'aurais rencontré un jeune homme riche qui m'aurait dit: «Viens avec moi, je commence un village en Afrique». Je pense que j'aurais dit: «Dis-moi quand il y a un Tim Horton sur place.»

Mais Robert a dit oui. En disant «oui», il a changé le monde. Si je comprends bien, environ 85% des Lévesques d'Amérique du Nord descendent de Robert Levesque et Jeanne Chevalier, une fille du roi.

Le jeune seigneur, Deschamps, voulait emmener avec lui Robert et Damien Berube ainsi que quelques autres artisans dont il aurait besoin pour construire un village.

Je pensais au courage de Robert qui a quitté son village. Je suis sûr qu'il y avait suffisamment de travail pour qu'il puisse gagner sa vie. Mais il a dit oui à une aventure.

Un petit groupe d'hommes est arrivé sur la rive du fleuve Saint-Laurent et a commencé à défricher des terres et à construire des «maisons» pour passer l'hiver. De là, le village de Rivière-Ouelle, QC, a vu le jour. C'était en 1671.

A cinq heures du matin à Honfleur, j'ai admiré le courage et le talent de Robert et de ses amis.

Robert a épousé Jeanne Chevalier, une veuve avec trois petits enfants qui n'ont pas eu de descendants. Robert et Jeanne ont finalement eu trois garçons qui ont eu chacun une grande famille.

Je suis le descendant d'un des fils, Pierre Joachim. Pierre avait aussi une grande famille. À la mort de Robert, c'est Pierre qui a pris soin de sa mère jusqu'à ce qu'elle épouse le seigneur, le parrain de Pierre Joachim et le meilleur ami de Robert.

Je descends ensuite d'un des fils de Pierre: Jean-Baptiste. Jean-Baptiste s'est marié trois fois et a eu une vingtaine d'enfants. J'ai pensé à Jean-Baptiste, trois fois veuf, à chaque fois avec un groupe de jeunes enfants sur les bras. J'ai aussi pensé au courage des femmes qui ont épousé Jean-Baptiste et qui ont pris tous les enfants pour elles.

Je descends ensuite du plus jeune fils du troisième mariage de Jean-Baptiste: Jean-Charles. La famille de Jean-Charles est installée dans le cinquième rang de Saint-Arsène, entre Rivière-du-Loup et Rimouski.

J'ai eu le plaisir de visiter la ferme qui fait partie de notre famille depuis environ 200 ans. J'ai pu voir ce que beaucoup de mes arrière-grands-pères ont vu en se levant le matin et en regardant dehors. Lorsque vous êtes agriculteur et que vous dépendez de la météo pour que le soleil brille au bon moment et que la pluie tombe au bon moment, la première chose que vous faites le matin est de regarder à l'extérieur.

Cette visite a été très spéciale pour moi. Gerald Levesque, que j'ai rencontré par l'intermédiaire de l'Association Lévesque, est né et a grandi dans cette ferme. Il m'a amené là-bas.

Deux des garçons de Jean-Charles sont venus au Madawaska Territory. Jean-Baptiste, 19 ans, et Louis, 17 ans. Ça a mal commencé pour eux. Le registre de l'église de Saint-Basile (NB) dit seulement: «Jean-Baptiste Lévesque s'est noyé hier.» Nous ne savons pas comment ni où cela s'est produit.

Mais Louis est resté dans le Madawaska Territory, comme on l'appelait. Il a épousé une Acadienne et s'est installé à Grand Isle, dans le Maine.

L'un de ses fils, Joseph, est mon grand-père.

J'ai pensé à tout cela tôt le matin à Honfleur, en France.

Cela m'a rendu très fier. Et je me

HAUTOT - SAINT - SULPICE VILLAGE NATAL DE ROBERT LÉVESQUE



Robert Lévesque, fils de Pierre Lévesque et Marie Caumont, est baptisé le 3 septembre 1642 à Hautot-Saint-Sulpice (France) et est décédé le 11 septembre 1699 à Rivière-Ouelle (Québec, Canada). On ne sait pas où a habité Robert Lévesque dans le village.

Robert Lévesque, charpentier, embarque en 1671 avec le seigneur Jean-Baptiste-François Deschamps de la Boutellerie (du village de Cliponville) et son camarade et voisin Damien Bérubé (du village de Rocquefort) à bord du Saint Jean-Baptiste depuis le port de Dieppe pour chercher fortune au Québec.

Installé à Rivière-Ouelle avec Deschamps et Bérubé, Robert Lévesque se marie avec Jeanne Chevalier, *Fille du Roi* (nom du programme de Louis XIV pour peupler la Nouvelle France) et originaire de Coutances, le 22 avril 1679. Ils auront six enfants.

Parmi leur descendance, des personnalités québécoises comme le 23^e Premier Ministre René Lévesque, l'artiste Raymond Lévesque, l'animateur télé Denis Lévesque mais aussi l'écrivain américain Jack Kerouac.

Ce panneau a été inauguré le 16 septembre 2017 en présence de Monsieur Louis-Georges Simard, maire de Rivière-Ouelle, de Monsieur Vincent Lemettais, maire d'Hautot-Saint-Sulpice, de personnalités riveloises et de membres de l'Association Lévesque à l'occasion des 35 ans de jumelage entre Hautot-Saint-Sulpice et Rivière-Ouelle et pour le 375^e anniversaire de naissance de Robert Lévesque.



Statue à l'intérieur de l'église
Statue inside the church

HAUTOT-SAINTE-SULPICE: BIRTHPLACE OF ROBERT LÉVESQUE
Robert Lévesque, son of Pierre Lévesque and Marie Caumont on September 3, 1642 in Hautot-Saint-Sulpice (FRANCE) and died on September 11, 1699 in Rivière-Ouelle (Québec, CANADA). The exact location of the village is not known.

In 1671, along with Lord Jean-Baptiste-François Boutellerie (from the village of Cliponville) and his friend, Damien Bérubé (from the village of Rocquefort), Robert Lévesque left France from Dieppe aboard the ship, the Saint Jean-Baptiste for Quebec.

After settling in Rivière-Ouelle with Deschamps Lévesque married Jeanne Chevalier, a King's Daughter (colonizee New France) and native of Coutances, on April 22, 1679.

Their descendants include Quebec's 23rd Prime Minister Raymond Lévesque and talk show host Denis American writer Jack Kerouac.

Sign unveiled September 16, 2017 in the presence of Mayor of Rivière-Ouelle, Vincent Lemettais, Mayor residents of Rivière-Ouelle, and members of the Association of Lévesques on the occasion of the 35 years of twinning between Rivière-Ouelle and the 375th anniversary of the birth of Robert Lévesque.



Mairie / Town Hall :
Tél.: 02 35 96 45 89 / Mail : mairiehautots

Panneau rédigé par :
Sign designed by :

Associati
LES CO
Siège social :
English
descend

(suite page 51)

**Franco-American Families
of Maine
par Bob Chenard,
Waterville, Maine**

Les Familles LAFONTAINE

Welcome to my column. Over the years Le Forum has published numerous families. Copies of these may still be available by writing to the Franco-American Center. Listings such as this one are never complete. However, it does provide you with my most recent and complete file of marriages tied to the original French ancestor. How to use the family listings: The left-hand column lists the first name (and middle name or initial, if any) of the direct descendants of the ancestor identified as number 1 (or A, in some cases). The next column gives the date of marriage, then the spouse (maiden name if female) followed by the town in which the marriage took place. There are two columns of numbers. The one on the left side of the page, e.g., #2, is the child of #2 in the right column of numbers. His parents are thus #1 in the left column of numbers. Also, it should be noted that all the persons in the first column of names under the same number are siblings (brothers & sisters). There may be other siblings, but only those who had descendants that married in Maine are listed in order to keep this listing limited in size. The listing can be used up or down - to find parents or descendants. The best way to see if your ancestors are listed here is to look for your mother's or grandmother's maiden name. Once you are sure you have the right couple, take note of the number in the left column under which their names appear. Then, find the same number in the right-most column above. For example, if it's #57C, simply look for #57C on the right above. Repeat the process for each generation until you get back to the first family in the list. The numbers with alpha suffixes (e.g. 57C) are used mainly for couple who married in Maine. Marriages that took place in Canada normally have no suffixes with the rare exception of small letters, e.g., "13a." If there are gross errors or missing families, my sincere apologies. I have taken utmost care to be as accurate as possible. Please write to the FORUM staff with your corrections and/or additions with your supporting data. I provide this column freely with the purpose of encouraging Franco-Americans to research their personal genealogy and to take pride in their rich heritage.

**LAFONTAINE
FAMILY #1
DUBORD
*dit Lafontaine**

Guillien Dubord dit Lafontaine, born 1625 in France, died 1705 in Quebec, son of Louis Dubord and Catherine de la Bruguière from the town of Thiviers, department of Dordogne, ancient province of Périgord, married on 12 February 1670 (ref. contract by the notary Larue in Quebec) to Fille du Roi, Catherine Guérard, born 1649 in France, died 1727 in Quebec, daughter of Pierre Guérard and Marguerite Monendel from the parish of St.Etienne-du-Mont in Paris, France. Thiviers is located 19 miles north-northeast of the city of Périgueux.

A Louis	before 1625	Catherine De	Bruguière France 1
1 Guillien	12 Feb 1670	Catherine Guérard	cont. Larue 2 (Pierre Guérard & Marguerite Monendel)
2 François 1m.	1725	Marie Beaudoin	Champlain
" 2m.	23 Nov 1760	Josette Fournier	Lanoraie 5 (Pierre Fournier dit Belleval & Thérèse Venne)
5 Charles	02 Aug 1790	Judith Desorcy-Lincourt	Ile Dupas 12 (Jean-Bte. Lincourt & Thérèse Bérard)
12 Charles	15 Jan 1816	Esther Sylvestre	St.Cuthbert 25 (Jean-Bte. Sylvestre & Thérèse Grégoire)
25 Olivier	03 Feb 1845	Euphrosine Poirier	Plessisville, Még. 50 (Joseph Poirier & Euprosine Pratte)
Dieudonné*	15 Feb 1858	Alvine Paradis	Plessisville, Még.
50 Grégoire*	20 Jan 1874	Caroline Roberge	St.Paul-Chester, Arth.
Julien*	13 Apr 1874	M.-Anne Leblanc	St.Paul-Chester, Arth.
Charles*	19 Aug 1878	Jessée Roux	Plessisville, Még. 50A (Jean Roux & Esther Dubord)
Alfred* 1m.	16 Aug 1881	Exilia Leblanc	St.Paul-Chester, Arth.
" 2m.	26 Jun 1889	Annie Poisson	Ste.Clothilde, Artha.
Joseph* 1m.	26 Aug 1884	Malvina Frappier	St.Paul-Chester, Arth.
" 2m.	14 Oct 1920	Annie Poisson	Victoriaville, Artha.

The following are descendants of the above who married in Maine:

50A Alcide-Grégoire	20 Jun 1921	Rachel-Claudia Brodeur	Auburn(St.Louis) 50B (Joseph Brodeur & Delima Lafleur)
50B Bertrand	04 May 1946	Carmen Chenard	Lewiston(SPP) 50C (Henri Chenard & Irma Dutil)
Gerald	29 May 1948	Phyllis Cummings	Lewiston(SPP)
Fernand	15 Sep 1951	Dorothée Bissonnette	Lewiston(HF)
50C Pauline	10 Aug 1968	Robert Vallière	Lewiston(HC)
Normand-	B.28 Jun 1969	Anne-Emma Marquis	Auburn(St.Louis)
Lucien-Emile	03 Aug 1973	Nancy-Joan Caron	Lewiston(HF)
Denis-Gerald	20 Oct 1973	Linda-M. Pelletier	Lewiston(St.Jos.)

**LAFONTAINE
FAMILY #2
PENIN
*dit Lafontaine**

K1 Charles	16	Jeanne Massé/Macé	K2
K2 Michel* 1m.	04 Feb 1699	Marie Pothier	Montréal
" 2m.	22 Sep 1704	Marie Meunier	Montréal K3 (Julien Meunier dit Laframboise & Louise Fro)
*Penin dit Lafontaine		Angélique Guenet	St.Etienne-Beaum.K4 (Thomas Guenet & M.-Anne Maheu)
K3 Jean-Bte.*	27 Jul 1731	*Perrin dit Lafontaine	
K4 Jacques	09 Jan 1758	Jeanne Jourdain	St.Charles K5
François	20 Apr 1773	Madeleine Naud	St.Vallier K6
K5 Jacques	21 Jan 1799	Catherine Ayotte	St.Gervais K7
K6 Jean	28 Aug 1797	M.-Françoise Marceau	St.Etienne-Beaum. K8

(Continued on page 51)

(LAFONTAINE continued from page 51)

K7	Jacques* *Fontaine	08 Nov 1825	Ursule Breton	Ste.Marie, Beauce K9
K8	Jean	11 Jan 1831	M.-Marthe Picard	Ste.Claire, Dorch. K10
K9	Thomas	31 Aug 1847	M.-Anne Bédard	Ste.Marie, Beauce K11
K10	Célestin* *Fontaine	07 Oct 1872	Céculie Couture	Ste.Claire, Dorch. K12
K11	Joseph	23 Apr 1894	Marie Morin	Lewiston(SPP)
K12	Cléophas	03 Jun 1901	Léonie Malo	Lewiston(SPP)

----- SEE ALSO #V1 under FONTAINE

n1 Alexandre* 19 Aug 1871 M.-Caroline Rancourt Waterville(JOP) n2
 * La Fontaine (b. 1843 Can. - d.27-3-1886 Wtvl) (1 mar. 25-5-1856 Waterville to Olivier "Levi" Veilleux)
 n2 Rose-Déliina 01 Jan 1891 Amédée Bernier Waterville(SFS)
 Caroline* 02 Jan 1897 Peter Dam Waterville(SFS)

*Researched & compiled by
 Robert E. Chenard
 The French Connection
 Waterville, Maine*

(Coulombe continued Vol. 41 #4, pg. 52)

COULOMBE

(Colombe, Conlogue# Columbus* CoolongΔ)

Louis **Coulombe**, born 1641 in France, died 1720 in PQ, son of Jacques Colombe and Rolline Drieu from the village of le Neubourg, department of Eure, ancient province of Normandie, France, married on 30 September 1670 at Ste.Famille, Ile d'Orléans, PQ to "Fille-du-Roi" Jeanne Foucault (or **Boucault**), born 1651 in France, died in PQ, daughter of Nicolas Boucault and Marguerite Tibault from the suburb of St.Germain in Paris, France. Le Neubourg is located 14 miles northwest of the city of Evreux.

36H	Louise	30 Sep 1972	Léo-J. Collins	Lewiston(HC)
	Joanne	03 Aug 1974	Albert Murch	Lewiston(HC)
36J	Germaine-R.	26 Aug 1950	Raoul-R. Fecteau	Biddeford(St.And.)
	Roger	21 May 1966	Bernadette Dorais	Biddeford(St.And.)
	Adrien-Lionel	04 May 1968	Bernice Chassé	Biddeford(St.And.)

'The Dash'

by Linda Ellis

I read of a man who stood to speak
 at the funeral of a friend.
 He referred to the dates on her tomstone
 from beginning to the end.

He noted that first came the date of her birth
 and spoke of the following date with tears,
 but he said what mattered most of all
 was the dash between those years.

For that dash represents all the time
 that she spent alive on earth
 and now only those who loved her
 know what that little line is worth.

For it matters not, how much we own,
 the cars, the house, the cash,
 What matters is how we live and love
 and how we spend our dash.

So think about this long and hard;
 Are there things you would like to change?
 For you never know how much time
 is left that can still be rearranged.



If we could just slow down enough
 to consider what is true and real
 and always try to understand the way
 other people feel.
 And be less quick to anger and show
 appreciation more

and love the people in our lives like we
 have never loved before.
 If we treat each other with respect and
 more often wear a smile,
 Remembering that this special dash might
 only last a little while.
 So when your eulogy is being read with
 your life's actions to rehash...

Would you be proud of the things they say
 about how you spent your dash?

(Sur la route pour 1642 suite de page 49)

considérerais très chanceux d'être ici et de faire
 partie d'une si grande famille Lévesque inter-
 nationale. Je vous encourage à visiter la terre
 de vos ancêtres si vous en avez l'occasion et
 les moyens.

Je suis allé en 2004 à Port Royal, en
 Nouvelle-Écosse, où mes ancêtres Doucette
 ont vécu pendant cinq générations avant de
 s'échapper d'une certaine façon du Grand
 Dérangment pour aller à Kamouraska. Une
 partie de la génération suivante est venue dans
 le nord du Maine.

J'ai visité la région où mes ancêtres
 Ouellette vivaient à Rivière-Ouelle mais je
 ne sais pas exactement où ils vivaient. Mais
 ça va, je sais qu'ils connaissaient mon ancêtre
 Lévesque et c'est assez bien pour moi.

Il ne me reste plus qu'à visiter l'anci-
 enne terre de mon ancêtre Beaupré. Peut-être
 un jour...





Université du Maine
Le FORUM
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THE FRANCO AMERICAN CENTRE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MAINE

The University of Maine Office of Franco American Affairs was founded in 1972 by Franco American students and community volunteers. It subsequently became the Franco American Centre.

From the onset, its purpose has been to introduce and integrate the Maine and Regional Franco American Fact in post-secondary academe and in particular the University of Maine.

Given the quasi total absence of a base of knowledge within the University about this nearly one-half of the population of the State of Maine, this effort has sought to develop ways and means of making this population, its identity, its contributions and its history visible on and off campus through seminars, workshops, conferences and media efforts — print and electronic.

The results sought have been the redressing of historical neglect and ignorance by returning to Franco Americans their history, their language and access to full and healthy self realizations. Further, changes within the University's working, in its structure and curriculum are sought in order that those who follow may experience cultural equity, have access to a culturally authentic base of knowledge dealing with French American identity and the contribution of this ethnic group to this society.

MISSION

- To be an advocate of the Franco-American Fact at the University of Maine, in the State of Maine and in the region, and
- To provide vehicles for the effective and cognitive expression of a collective, authentic, diversified and effective voice for Franco-Americans, and
- To stimulate the development of academic and non-academic program offerings at the University of Maine and in the state relevant to the history and life experience of this ethnic group and
- To assist and support Franco-Americans in the actualization of their language and culture in the advancement of careers, personal growth and their creative contribution to society, and
- To assist and provide support in the creation and implementation of a concept of pluralism which values, validates and reflects affectively and cognitively the Multicultural Fact in Maine and elsewhere in North America, and
- To assist in the generation and dissemination of knowledge about a major Maine resource — the rich cultural and language diversity of its people.

LE CENTRE FRANCO AMÉRICAIN DE L'UNIVERSITÉ DU MAINE

Le Bureau des Affaires franco-américains de l'Université du Maine fut fondé en 1972 par des étudiants et des bénévoles de la communauté franco-américaine. Cela devint par conséquent le Centre Franco-Américain.

Dès le départ, son but fut d'introduire et d'intégrer le Fait Franco-Américain du Maine et de la Région dans la formation académique post-secondaire et en particulier à l'Université du Maine.

Étant donné l'absence presque totale d'une base de connaissance à l'intérieur même de l'Université, le Centre Franco-Américain s'efforce d'essayer de développer des moyens pour rendre cette population, son identité, ses contributions et son histoire visible sur et en-dehors du campus à travers des séminaires, des ateliers, des conférences et des efforts médiatiques — imprimé et électronique.

Le résultat espéré est le redressement de la négligence et de l'ignorance historique en retournant aux Franco-Américains leur histoire, leur langue et l'accès à un accomplissement personnel sain et complet. De plus, des changements à l'intérieur de l'académie, dans sa structure et son curriculum sont nécessaires afin que ceux qui nous suivent puisse vivre l'expérience d'une justice culturelle, avoir accès à une base de connaissances culturellement authentique qui miroite l'identité et la contribution de ce groupe ethnique à la société.

OBJECTIFS:

- 1 – D'être l'avocat du Fait Franco-Américain à l'Université du Maine, dans l'État du Maine et dans la région.
- 2 – D'offrir des véhicules d'expression affective et cognitive d'une voix franco-américaine effective, collective, authentique et diversifiée.
- 3 – De stimuler le développement des offres de programmes académiques et non-académiques à l'Université du Maine et dans l'État du Maine, relatant l'histoire et l'expérience de la vie de ce groupe ethnique.
- 4 – D'assister et de supporter les Franco-Américains dans l'actualisation de leur langue et de leur culture dans l'avancement de leurs carrières, de l'accomplissement de leur personne et de leur contribution créative à la société.
- 5 – D'assister et d'offrir du support dans la création et l'implémentation d'un concept de pluralisme qui value, valide et reflète effectivement et cognitivement le fait dans le Maine et ailleurs en Amérique du Nord.
- 6 – D'assister dans la création et la publication de la connaissance à propos d'une ressource importante du Maine — la riche diversité