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Lisa Desjardins Michaud, Rédactrice

Abby Paige

Rhea Côté Robbins

Gérard Coulombe

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Authors

Lisa Desjardins Michaud, Rédactrice; Abby Paige; Rhea Côté Robbins; Gérard Coulombe; Marie-Anne Gauvin; Dan Lapierre; Margaret Nagle; James Myall; James Myall; Juliana L'Heureux; Daniel Moreau; Melanie Brooks; Marcus Wolf; Diane Cyr; Patrick Lacroix; Mélody Desjardins; Jesse Martineau; Timothy Beaulieu; Suzanne Beebe; Rev. Steve Edington; Barry Scanlon; Xavier de la Prade; Caroline Castonguay; Claude Milot; Michael Guignard; Michael B. Melanson; Russell Larson; André Pronovost; Frank Ferrell; Meghan Murphy; Paul Marin; Ronald G. Héroux; Don Levesque; and Virginie Sand-Roy

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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>

Franco-Americans of Maine, Then and Now:

<https://francomainestories.net>





Le Centre Franco-Américain
 Université du Maine
 Orono, Maine 04469-5719
 LisaM@maine.edu
 Téléphone: 207-581-FROG (3764)

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Publishing Board

Don Levesque
 Paul Laflamme
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 Louella Rolfe
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Rédactrice/Editor

Lisa Desjardins Michaud

Mise en page/Layout

Lisa Desjardins Michaud

Composition/Typesetting

Lisa Desjardins Michaud

Aide Technique

Lisa Desjardins Michaud

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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,

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Beyond Whiteness: Imagining a Franco-American Future

By Abby Paige

History is not the past. It is the present. We carry our history with us. We are our history. If we pretend otherwise, we are literally criminals.

I attest to this: the world is not white; it never was white, cannot be white. White is a metaphor for power, and that is simply a way of describing Chase Manhattan Bank.

— James Baldwin

I was pleased to read Timothy St. Pierre's essay, "Acknowledging and Confronting Racism in Franco Communities," in *Le Forum's* fall 2020 issue.¹ St. Pierre calls on us to acknowledge how racism and colonialism are embedded in Franco-American spaces. He is right that such confrontations seem particularly urgent in the present historical moment. The widespread Black Lives Matter protests of last summer, which did little to interrupt the cycle of violence against Black people in the U.S.; the ongoing violence against migrants along the country's southern border; the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on communities of color; and the increasingly explicit influence of White Nationalism in the U.S. political system, have made the past several years feel unusually eventful. In fact, they have merely revealed long-standing patterns in how we operate as a society, which is why I doubt that even these devastating events are enough to lift most White Francos from our complacency.

As St. Pierre observes, Francos gesture toward our historical persecution when it is convenient to do so, but much of our sense of our own history is based on "a series of tropes, historical glosses, and exaggerated self-perceptions" that obscure the lived realities of our ancestors. These facile glosses keep us comfortable, but will not help us to "build a Franco-American identity and culture that can address the modern reckonings of the twenty-first century," as St. Pierre invites us to do. Understanding our present and historical relationship to Whiteness is fundamental to building a Franco-American future, but doing so requires a kind of remembering in which we rarely engage, because we sense that doing so might disrupt our safe and comfortable place within the White majority.

Métis scholar Chelsea Vowel has written that "Indigenous cultures are all about remembering, while settler culture

is about forgetting and erasing."² This is a common and credible critique of North American colonial cultures. Historian Jean M. O'Brien studies it in depth in her 2010 book, *Firsting and Lasting*, which analyzes how local histories of New English towns were written to obscure the violence of colonial conquest and erase or, oddly, eulogize displaced Indigenous communities. Those of us who grew up in New England will recognize these narratives even if we have never noticed their tortured logic. O'Brien writes:

For the vast majority of authors the story of modernity they wanted to tell depended upon the inclusion of Indian history, and further, Indians provided dramatic material that Americanized the narratives. The central story line of the colonial past for New Englanders involved the heroic overcoming of the "savage foe" in a valiant struggle to make the wilderness "blossom as the rose," a phrase that is repeatedly invoked as the metaphor for subduing the land in English ways.³

This selective remembering/forgetting is fundamental to the colonial project. The Puritans' descendants wished to construct a narrative in which the Indian would represent prehistoric nature, and English arrival marked nothing less than the beginning of culture and civilization in the "New World." Their ancestors, they believed, were superior beings, preordained to inherit the virgin territory that Indigenous "savages" were too simple to properly exploit. These narratives also relegate Europe into "Old World" irrelevance, as modernity itself is structured as a New English enterprise. This narrative trick, intended to relegate Indians to the status of antiquities,⁴ is one colonizing peoples played on themselves, rendering their own histories illegible.

Colonial histories of English Canada often relegate French settlers to the same



Lettres/ Letters

oblivion. Peter C. Newman's *Hostages to Fortune* asserts that United Empire Loyalists, banished from the nascent United States, carried the mantle of civilization north, into an untamed, unspoiled, uninhabited wilderness, "largely barren," "with one big 'VACANT' sign across it." While Newman does acknowledge in passing the presence of a few "New France colonists clustered in primitive huts along the riverbanks of the mighty St. Lawrence," it is the Loyalists who "became the mother and fathers—nurturers and role models" of the Canadian nation, which they brought into being by the sheer force of their fealty to the Crown.⁵

Narratives that depict Anglo-Protestants delivering civilization and modernity to primitives, waiting to be lifted out of their ignorance and savagery, reveal the guiding logic of English colonialism.⁶ While the racial hierarchies of the U.S. and Canada have evolved away from one another, notions of Anglo-Protestant superiority still operate like a ghost in the Englishness. The machine is Whiteness.

In the U.S., White descendants of French Canada have attained our present place in the racial hierarchy not by challenging that hierarchy, but by renegotiating our proximity to Anglo-ness within it. Our ancestors understood that greater proximity to Anglo-Protestant culture would bring us closer to the prestige, social status, authority, influence, money, and other forms of power enjoyed and controlled by folks of English origin. They bargained for greater safety, stability, and comfort than their ethnic identities would afford them among the Anglo-Protestants who governed the vast majority of New England towns and villages. This negotiation was different for each of our ancestors as they navigated the gains and losses associated with assimilation, *but it was the color of their skin that gave them a position from which to negotiate.* By compromising outward markers of non-Anglo ethnicity, we have been able to assimilate into Whiteness and gain greater access to what is now commonly referred to as "White privilege."

The phrase unsettles many of us, but I have been grateful to add it to my vocab-

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(See more letters on page 11)

(N.D.L.R. All photos used with permission from the McArthur Public Library Archives & Special Collections)

Two Franco Americans in Biddeford, Maine

Our Fathers : Joseph Salvat and Felix Coulombe: Stage Actors, Both As members of the J. Salvat Troupe of Actors.

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

Acting was a beloved activity of individuals like my father and future father-in-law. My future sisters-in-law, frequently had parts in many theatrical performances given by my future father-in-law, Joseph Salvat of Biddeford, Maine. He, Salvat led and acted in his company of which my dad, Felix Coulombe, was a long-time member.

The two, my father and my father-in-law to be, had been these champions of theater and acting, albeit at a time when theatre was deemed the entertainment of the times, even as the motion picture industry was to soon become a most influential genre of entertainment, outpacing in-person theatrical works. But vaudeville remained a mainstay of Saturday entertainment at the City Hall Theatre in Biddeford, Maine, a town in which my wife and I grew up to attend Catholic schools in and, later, met.

While I was in college, Juliette Salvat and I had married. She was a graduate of Saint Mary's School of Nursing in Lewiston, Maine, we had two children at the University of Maine, Orono, in what was called the South Apartments, with near barrack type living, supervised by a draconian on the one hand but tough and fair man on the other, we thought, for, as a tough gentleman who was not always thought to be so by married students living on campus in the South Apartments; it became for all of us who lived there, a place where so many surprises took place weather-wise and otherwise, which in retrospect, wasn't at all that bad.

If anyone had asked me about my father, the actor, I could not have believed it, as for my father in our household, he was, except for Saturday afternoons and Sunday from ten-thirty a.m. to whatever hour we went to bed. The reason that my two younger sisters and I hardly ever saw our dad, in that he was sleeping when we awoke, dressed, prepared for school, and left home for school.

Starting in high school, 1946, I did not see my father because I had left for school before he was out of bed; although, my sisters might have seen him, I did not, as I was attending Saint Louis high school across town, and I had a job of one kind or another, and went to those jobs rather than return home during the school day. Only summers were different, when my sisters might have seen him more regularly than I, because they were not of employable age. I had one job after another while in high school. I was never an athlete, although I tried to be for one season of football. I was a good observer of the game, but never a good enough athlete to become one. And, so I worked at a variety of jobs.



Felix Coulombe

To be helpful and to stay occupied, I started working after school and week-ends, and summers. I was a paperboy, worked at the market near Pike and Cross Street where I helped by stacking shelves, and doing the most important job of scooping ice cream atop the cones we sold.

In the interim, my mother might have



Felix Coulombe

been sad over the fact that she had agreed that I be allowed to discern my vocation, which was that I become a Brother of the Sacred Heart. The summer following sixth grade, my father readily hired a car and driver to take us to Winthrop, Maine, where the Brothers had acquired an « L » shaped farm with an entrance on the Route above town but running through it on its way to the Capitol, Augusta. The good thing for those of you thinking where the school might have been, part of the farming property, the back end of it, abutted Upper Narrow Pond, Kennebec County, the front end was in Winthrop, the route going through it on its way to Hartford.

There, I stayed as a student. The student body was small, not much more than two-hands-full. I must confess that mother made the sacrifice of letting me go; it could not have been easy. I for one, enjoyed the discipline and the prayerful atmosphere in which we were to thrive. On the other hand, my future, was to become more traditional, in that after an illness that required hospitalization, I did return, fell down again with the re-curring pain in my right hip, and this time, I was sent home to recoup. But, instead of returning to the novitiate, I entered high school, having skipped eighth grade, altogether, recuperating; immobilization until the head of the femur healed. « Leggs-Parkinson » was the disease. But, I later learned that girls were affected, too.

I never learned how my father felt about my leaving, returning home, and never going back to the novitiate, as we never had much to say, one to the other. It was always

(Continued on page 5)

(Two Franco Americans in Biddeford, Maine continued from page 4)

mother, in the main, who supervised our growing up. And, it is here that I must add that mom left me to believe that I was to be responsible for myself because she had enough of my two sisters to care and counsel, whereas, I, a man, could take care of myself. Indeed, I did, in that all the while I worked, I gave her my wages, and she gave me whatever I asked for that I needed to the extent that I was working and self-reliant.

While the Joseph Salvás' Company of Franco American actors, men and women, with boys and girls as needed, the girls, often, from the Salvás family, his daughters, Rose and Anne and, perhaps, the youngest, too, Marguerite, performed. My wife, the youngest, never did. It took me a long time before I learned my father had been an actor before he married.

Had I known as a kid that acting had been one of my dad's avocations, I would have better understood his personal lack of communication; I had not witnessed any of this, what might have called, sermonizing, only because, as a altar boy, having had experiences as a listener to the priest preaching, which declamation sometimes uses acting to illustrate a point, I suddenly realized what my father was doing, whenever he spoke in company, or whenever, but, infrequently, when his three older brothers from Canada voyaged, via the Grand Trunk Railway, to Lewiston to visit with relatives there, and then to Biddeford, via Portland, to visit with my dad. And, having double bunked with us in Biddeford, and as my dad never owned a car in his life, and he never got himself a drivers license, whenever we traveled by car with company, as when his brothers visited, my dad rented a car and driver, even, as poor as we were, living in a tenement all of our lives as children, we could not have had the money to afford such largess, as to rent a car and driver to have us all driven, he and I and his brothers, to Hartford, Connecticut, where their married sister lived with her husband and child who, as a drafted adult during World War II, died in an accident, having been struck by a vehicle, as he crossed a Street in Baghdad while his outfit was posted in Iraq.

The acting company, owned by my father-in-law, Jovite Salvás, is remembered in a collection of artifacts given by Jovite Salvás, my father-in-law, who joined one of his actors, my dad, Felix Coulombe, to donate artifacts from their individual collec-

tions to the McArthur Library in Biddeford, Maine, where the collection is available for viewing upon request.

Postscript

Neither my wife nor I knew of this collection until we, somehow, learned about it. I, personally have been to the library in Biddeford, upon short visits to Maine, but never long enough to view all photos in the collection or other paraphernalia, such as posters announcing a play at the City Theatre or elsewhere in the New England States, wherever there were Franco-American Communities. The church hall was frequently the venue for such presentations.



Joseph Salvás

But **City Hall** in Biddeford had been their production center in the day.

Although I had never given acting a chance, myself. As a teacher, I had a friend, Mr. Barr, a teacher also, who had been a Hollywood child actor who had gone to college and had, too, obtained a teaching certificate in teaching and directing plays. In our town of Port Washington, N.Y., where we taught, he had been successful at directing high school students in plays, and, later, when he moved to Michigan, he taught a few students who later went on to appear on Broadway, and he was proud of this achievement.

While I, as his friend, had taken opportunities to try out for roles in plays wherever an adult was thought needed for a particular role. So, I landed the role of Sergeant Javorski in **The Great Sebastian**. I don't know that I knew it, but I was Russian in the role. Later, I had fun acting, as much as my father had, although, I became in my



youth and older years, a lot more verbal than my father had ever been for, how do you know a father if all of the time because we lived in the same household, and, although he visited us, once with mom in New York, where I chaired the English Department, with a Master's degree in English from the University of Maine, that while a University Resident of Orono attending school on the G.I. Bill, a choice that I had made because my wife to be was a recent graduate of the Saint Mary's school of nursing in Lewiston. When discharged from the Air Force, rather than attend school, elsewhere in the country, as I had thought I might, I registered at Maine to await intended's graduation. I may or may not have this right. But, for being more voluble than my dad, I had made a decision to get married. I never heard the story of how my dad approached marriage, for, as our mom, often said of her marriage, «We took the late train, » and as far as I was concerned, I might have, too.

As for acting, one of the actors in my father-in-law's company, was a cousin of ours, related to my dad. Where, exactly, Conrad Coulombe actually came from, I remain vague on the subject. In retrospect, I know Conrad's wife might have felt abused by him because he never left his mother's home after he married, and they had four children, I believe. Conrad's mother had remarried, a Mr. Grenier, and I cannot say that it was his or her home, while it was, obvious from our visits that Conrad and his family lived with his mother and her husband. I was old enough to wonder about that, but I never resolved the problem for the reasons that I mentioned already.. For an actor, Felix (Continued on page 6)

(Two Franco Americans in Biddeford,
Maine continued from page 4)

was never vocal. That is, as he was at work during half the day, he couldn't share much with his family. And when he was at home and we were all together, my dad said little, and was content to vocalize only when we had guests that he knew well, and, in front of whom, he could speak eloquently and profoundly, much as if he were delivering his lines in a role that he was portraying while acting.

And, so, my dad played a brief part in my life. As I have written, probably; he visited my wife, Juliette Salvas, and I when we lived in Port Washington, N.Y., where I taught English. A friend came for a visit just to meet my dad and to practice his French. But, in total surprise to both of us, my dad replied in English to the question posed in French. And so, both of us were stunned, as I had impressed upon our visitors that dad might just sit and not respond to any remarks in English because he did not speak it. But, the actor he was, he did and surprised us all, taking us all aback. What do you do with a man who is not supposed to speak English but does?

That, was one part of my father. For the rest of his life he remained what I later understood to be his reticent manner. Oh! All the while, more than for forty years, having taken the late train to marry, he continued being for nearly half his life, the absent man in our lives. He might have worked days, but his choice hours were those between two in the afternoon and midnight when he arrived back home.

Think about what he and we missed. Maybe, it was all for the better for him. I do not know how his wife, our mother felt. I got used to his hardly ever being home because I was away, too. My sisters told me, once, they had a better recollection of Dad than I do.

As for both, my father and my father-in-law, they, in the interim years between home-grown Franco-American theatre doing French and French Canadian plays when younger, it was their « metier, » in between the work that they did in the real jobs that each held, all those years. My father might have been older than my father-in-law, but I doubt it. My dad had taken the late train, my mother's term, one that I often heard her use in describing her marriage. Often enough, I might say, that the term stayed with me, « the late train. »



Advertising image for play "Le Mystere Barton" (1933)

Note: The Salvas/Coulombe collection is held by the Biddeford, Maine, McArthur Public Library, Special Collections.

(Beyond Whiteness: Imagining a Franco-American Future continued from page 3)

ulary. For me, it named the vague inkling I had, as a young person with loved-ones more marginalized than I was, that I had not earned the ease with which I moved through the world; my status derived from the circumstances of my body. (A friend of mine uses the phrase “White body privilege” for additional clarity.) It is no accident that Timothy St. Pierre grew up with a sense that “the histories and experiences of Black and Indigenous people” were “largely peripheral to my own life, something disconnected and relatively unimportant to my own daily experience or my own family’s history.” Assimilation has enacted and demanded of us such disconnection. It asks us to be silent and forget about personal and historical connections with people less assimilated than we are. Whiteness gives us no vocabulary to talk about itself. Our discomfort with naming our Whiteness and talking about it openly is an indication of its symbolic power. Claudia Rankine asks, “If you have never written consciously about race why have you never felt compelled to do so?” James Baldwin wrote, “The purpose of art is to lay bare the questions hidden by the answers.”

In the same issue of *Le Forum* where Timothy St. Pierre’s essay appears, poet Steven Riel bravely asks difficult questions about his own family history and rightly insists:

If we are too ashamed to tell the truth about poverty and violence in our families because we believe we that the past somehow reflects badly on us, not only will we never be able singular, but instances caused by wider social and economic forces — we will also not be able to perceive how their experiences influence our present lives.⁷

When we remove our genealogies from the larger historical narratives in which they unfolded, they become incoherent, and dangerously so.⁸ This is what I understand Timothy St. Pierre to mean when he cautions, “When we exclusively focus on moments where we ourselves were the victims of oppression and bigotry but ignore the moments where we ourselves have perpetrated oppression and bigotry against others, this is racism.” Incomplete stories protect us from difficult truths, but that is not all they do. They also exclude non-White members of our community, erase their contributions and experiences, and obscure how the

Franco-American history fits into the larger human narrative of the past five centuries.

I refuse to accept a history that erases, simplifies, or sanitizes my ancestors’ experiences, or cuts us off from the larger history of the North American continent. When I remember that my family has been on Turtle Island⁹ for more than ten generations, I understand that treaties made between settlers and Indigenous people apply to me. When I remember that my Acadian ancestors were sheltered by Mi’kmaq and other Indigenous peoples, I feel an obligation to speak up in support of Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination. When I remember the KKK burning crosses against Catholics in New England, I feel an obligation to speak up against White supremacists marching

Conceiving of assimilation as an ongoing process, rather than a job my ancestors completed, helps me to practice a more conscious relationship with my Franconess — and my Whiteness.

anywhere. When I remember the structural discrimination experienced by generations of francophones by anglophone institutions, I feel an obligation to speak up against the structural racism faced by Black and Brown people. My family’s generational history of living along the U.S.’s northern border gives me a sense of solidarity with people with a similarly long history on the border to our south. My family’s service in the U.S. Civil War strengthens to my commitment to the cause of freedom for African-Americans. My ancestors’ poverty nurtures my skepticism about capitalism and my sense of gratitude. Practicing this kind of remembering can be difficult and painful. It can feel transgressive. It requires us to sit with uncomfortable feelings of shame, guilt, and anger, and hold them in tension with our pride and our love. But, increasingly, this is how I practice my culture.

It is with no small amount of hope that I remind us: *our assimilation is still in progress.* We are still engaged in the negotiations that our ancestors began. Just as my ancestors made choices about which side of the border to live on, which languages to speak, which wars to fight, who to marry, how to raise children, who to befriend, where to

work, how to vote, how to worship, where and how to bury their dead, so do I. These are the choices that define a person’s cultural life, yet many of us negotiate these matters passively. Most of us don’t worry about our Frenchness threatening our employability, our income, or our ability to access services; we don’t speak enough French to wonder how we will teach it to our children. Safely removed from direct experiences of discrimination, many Francos wish to avoid the unpleasant, traumatic, or humiliating echoes of our ethnic history, and therefore engage with culture as a hobby, like a sports team they root for or a social club that offers them good food, music, and light conversation. They are (understandably) protective of their ancestors, and therefore see family trees as halls of fame and ancestry DNA results as scorecards. Culture becomes an exercise in self-protection and nostalgia.

For those of us invested in imagining a Franco-American future, nostalgia is an obstacle. It leads us into a cul-de-sac where Franco-American culture is reduced to a set of recipes and quaint, heroic legends about men in canoes. It is not alive. If it were, it might impact our lives in unpredictable ways. It might ask things of us: to remember suffering or painful mistakes; to make amends; to sacrifice or struggle; to tell the truth. Conceiving of assimilation as an ongoing process, rather than a job my ancestors completed, helps me to practice a more conscious relationship with my Franconess — and my Whiteness. I understand what Baldwin meant when he wrote that history is the present. My choices and actions have historical significance. They will resonate through generations. The culture I choose to live now can serve as a bridge between the past and the future, to make them cohere. We have the opportunity to live a culture greater, more specific and enduring, than mere Whiteness allows, but only by contending with Whiteness can we bring such a culture into being.

1 Timothy St. Pierre, “Acknowledging and Confronting Racism in Franco Communities,” *Le Forum*, Vol. 42, No. 3.

2 Chelsea Vowel, @apihtawikosisan, Twitter, November 28, 2017, 9:18am, <https://twitter.com/jfhigh/status/935639955178528768> Accessed October 30, 2020.

3 Jean M. O’Brien, *Firsting and Lasting: Writing Indians Out of Existence* (Continued on page 8)

(N.D.L.R. Reprinted from *Le Club Français Newsletter, Le Fanal*.
Publié par Marie-Anne Gauvin dans *Le Fanal (Le Club Français)*. Soumis par
Jacqueline Blesso)



LA PIE BAVARDE

À tous et à chacun:

Parlons des oiseaux rapaces nocturnes un peu, c'est-à-dire les hiboux et les chouettes. Je parie que vous connaissez seulement une de ces espèces qui nichent dans notre état et au Canada. Ce que nous appelons **hibou** en français sont les oiseaux rapaces nocturnes avec de aigrettes qui sont des plumes retroussées sur la tête. Les gens appelle le grand duc d'Amérique le hibou à tête de chat parce que la silhouette de sa tête ressemble à un chat avec ses oreilles bien en évidence. Ces deux petit panaches de plumes ne sont pas des oreilles. Le grand duc, en anglais *great horned owl*, est celui le mieux connu. Seuls six oiseaux rapaces nocturnes avec des aigrettes (7 dans l'ouest) s'appellent **hiboux** en français. Les autres sand aigrettes s'appellent des **chouettes**. En anglais on ne les diffère pas. Les deux sont des *owls*.

Nous avons dans notre environnement trois rapaces nocturnes communs dont un le grand duc. Les deux autres sont des chouettes, la petite nyctale (*saw-whet owl*) et la chouette rayée (*barred owl*). Rare sont les gens qui voient ces oiseaux justement parce que ils sont nocturnes. Vous connaissez probablement mieux les oiseaux de nuits sans plumes, hein! Non seulement sont-ils nocturnes mais leur vol est silencieux. La structure de leurs plumes ne fait aucun bruit au vol. Cette spécialité de vol leur est nécessaire parce qu'il chassent la nuit aux sons que peuvent faire leurs proies. Leurs oreilles sont comme les nôtres à chaque côté de la tête recouvertes de plumes et leus têtes pivotent par en arrière.

Si vous entendez un Hou, hou-ou, hou-hou, c'est le crie du grand duc, le plus populaire de trois. Mais si jamais vous entendez le crie de la chouette rayée vous ne l'oublierez pas. Après ma retraite je me suis mise à l'étude des oiseaux mais j'ai entendu son crie avant, sans le savoir. C'était au beau milieu de la nuit au lac Long de Ste-Agathe. Je me suis réveillée les cheveux droits sur la tête, le coeur me débattait et j'avais le bouche sèche tellement j'ai eu peur. Houhou-houhou, houhou-houhouâou. C'est le dernier houhouâou qui est inoubliable.



Le grand duc (great horned owl)

Je me suis levée ne sachant pas quelle bête pouvait crier comme ça. Ignorante de bien de choses dans la nature j'ai pensé peut-être que c'était un orignal. Il faisait claire de lune et j'ai fait le tour du chalet en regardant par les fenêtres. J'étais seule et pas assez brave de sortir dehors! Je ne voyais rien. J'ai entendu ce cri plusieurs fois au cours de l'été au point de pouvoir un peu l'imiter. C'est pire qu'un coq au levée du soleil. J'ai essayer d'imiter le cri à mon père qui a dit, "Je pense que c'est le hibou à tête de chat." Ce n'était pas le grand duc mais il m'a mise sur la bonne piste. J'ai cherché dans mes livres sans succès. À la retraite ayant joint le Club d'ornithologie j'ai refait du mieux que j'ai pu le hululement de mon hibou. La fondatrice a tout de suite répondu, "C'est le chouette rayée." En anglais, pour se rappeler du son, on dit, "Who cooks for you, who cooks for you all". C'est la dernière partie qui peut reveiller les morts! Facile à identifier de vue et de son. Elle est rayée horizontalement de tête et verticalement du ventre.

Je l'avais entendu plusieurs fois avant de la voir bien des années plus tard. Un jour ensoleillé de printemps en me promenant dans le bois près de chez moi je m'amusais à chercher les oiseaux que j'entendais chanter. Un chant nouveau à ma droite me fait tourner avec le soleil dans mon dos. Avant d'avoir le temps de mettre mes jumelles j'ai vu un ombrage arrivé derrière moi. Me retournant lentement j'ai fait face à une chouette rayée. Sans aucun bruit elle s'était perchée sur une branche sèche pas plus de cinq ou six pieds de moi. Je l'avais étudié dans mes guides et j'en étais ravie de lui faire face. Je l'ai admirée plusieurs minutes sans bouger. Le moi prochaine je vais vous raconter mon



Chouette rayée (barred owl)

— Votre pie bavarde. Marie-Anne



(*Beyond Whiteness: Imagining a Franco-American Future continued from page 7*)

in New England, University of Minnesota, 2010.

4 "Dead Indians are the only antiquity that North America has." Thomas King, *The Inconvenient Indian*, Anchor Canada, 2012, p. 54.

5 Peter C. Newman, *Hostages to Fortune*, Simon & Schuster, 2016. P.1-7.

6 This is not to minimize or excuse the violent and exploitative histories of other colonial powers, but rather to highlight how U.S. and Canadian culture still operate from this origin.

7 Steven Riel. "A Legacy as Plain as the Nose on My Face," *Le Forum*, Vol. 42, No. 3.

8 "This is one reason why writing the history in a one-sided 'everything was always happy' way is wrong. It makes people's own experience incoherent to them." David Vermette, July 28, 2020. Comment on "There has been some back and forth..." Laurie Graves, July 25, 2020, 5:04pm, Franco-American Connection, Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/groups/francoamericanconnection/permalink/10163759164010386> Accessed November 30, 2020.

9 Various Indigenous cultures, mostly in the northeast, refer to the North American continent by this name.

Tante Blanche, Marie Marguerite Thibodeau Cyr

By Dan LaPierre

Tante Blanche, was born on March 23, 1738, at Grand Pre, Kings County, Acadia, Nova Scotia, Canada.

Her Father, Jean Baptiste Thibodeau, was born in 1707, died 1795, at St. David, Maine. Her Mother, Marie M. LeBlanc, born, 1710, died 1797, at St. David, at 87, having lived a long life. Tante Blanche, married Joseph Cyr, before 1760, at an unknown age. She was the Mother of 12 children, some dying young or with sickness.

The Cyr's-Sires, were forced to flee six times during the French-British wars. From Beaubassin, N.S. To Fort Beausejour, N.S. Then again to St. Jean-Port-Jolie, Quebec. Then to Kamouraska, Quebec, back to St. Ann de Bay, New Brunswick, and then Madawaska Settlement.



General Monckton launched raids and pushed out the Acadians, once again from St. Ann's point, clearing the way for arriving Loyalists. How these poor Acadians survived is unknown, but mostly got help from the Maliseet who were their friends and provided shelter and food as they moved north.

At Ste-Anne de Pays Bas, 1783 a considerable number of French settlers are found, many having been there for over 15 years. Joseph Cire, wife, Tante Blanche are there, with 9 children and 30 acres cleared. A total of 61 families. Having no title to their land, flee once again to Madawaska before 1790. Many Sire's left in 1785 to settle in Madawaska, and received a grant in 1790.

Tante Blanche, was a person of great strength and ability. During her life, began to treat the Acadians in her villages. Was a mid-wife, fixed bones, pulled teeth, sewed cuts, healed the sick and buried the dead. Father Thomas Albert, in his book, says, if you didn't conform you got a fist in the forehead, from Tante Blanche.

I don't see Joseph and Tante Blanche getting a grant in Madawaska. Most probably moving in with her son, who had time to establish a home, a few years before. Joseph Jr. is listed on the 1790 grant list, of George Sproule. At the age of 52, their age was now against them and unable to start a homestead in the virgin forest. She used her trade instead to help the growing settlement.

Looking at her son's lot see many of her family, Father, in-laws, uncles, aunts, brother's and sisters, on both side of the St. John River. They lived more towards the north of the Green River than the south of the Madawaska River. A distance of approximately 3 miles. These lots today are Cyr Farms, Endico Potato Company, and may have changed hands again. Beautiful and rich farmland that produce high quality potatoes, having been a crop insurance inspector there, on this farm in 1984.

Being, 58, years old during the Black Famine, faced her most hardship winter. The men had gone out to hunt game and caught in an 8 day snowstorm. They had to hunker down in make-shift lean-to's, keep from freezing, keep a fire going. And with the blow of an axe survive in the best they could in a hostile environment. I'm sure they thought of their loved ones back in the settlement and how they were surviving.

It is not known which month they ran into trouble, most probably in March or April, 1797, after the crop failure of 1796. Starvation set in. During spring thaw, it was not possible to go across the river to St. Basile, because of the danger involved, with swift water and ice.

The oxen probably had enough hay as that crop was harvested during the July and Aug season. The buckwheat crop had failed due to early frost. Gardening was ruined. Those who evacuated knew of the hard times



As a special honor she was buried inside the church of St. Basile, Madawaska, New Brunswick, Canada.



The Tante Blanche museum was named in her honor.

that were to arrive.

The settlement counted all their food and supply's. It was the custom back then.

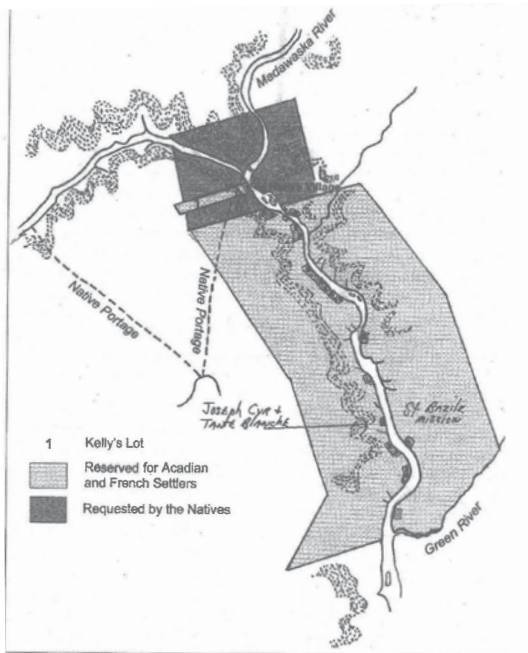
Tante Blanche, along with her son, Firmin, and Olivier, a brother, pulled the sled with provisions from house to house in the settlement, Tante Blanche carrying a backpack and medicines, for the settlers who were in dire predicaments. Doing miles everyday possible through snow on snowshoes. Saving the lives of the hungry and sick, discouraged at when their husbands would return from their hunt, and at the point of despair.

She continued her work, until no longer able to, passing at 72, and is buried at St. Basile, New Brunswick. Her husband, Joseph had died 5 years before. (*See page 10 for visuals*)

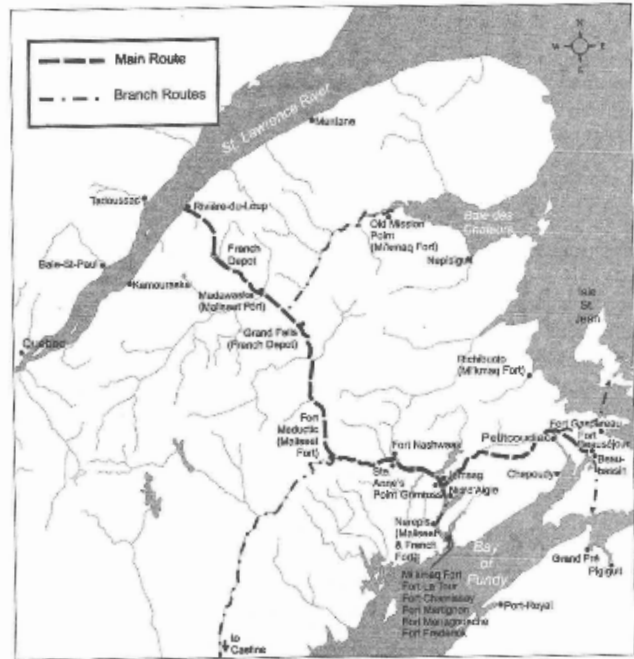
Notes, from Acadian Roots, by Dottie Hutchings and Paul Cyr

Papers of Prudent L. Mercure, History of Madawaska, History of Madawaska, Thomas Albert, The Land In Between, Beatrice Craig and Guy Dubay, Heroes of the Acadian Resistance, Dianne Marshall, The Road to Canada, Gary Campbell.

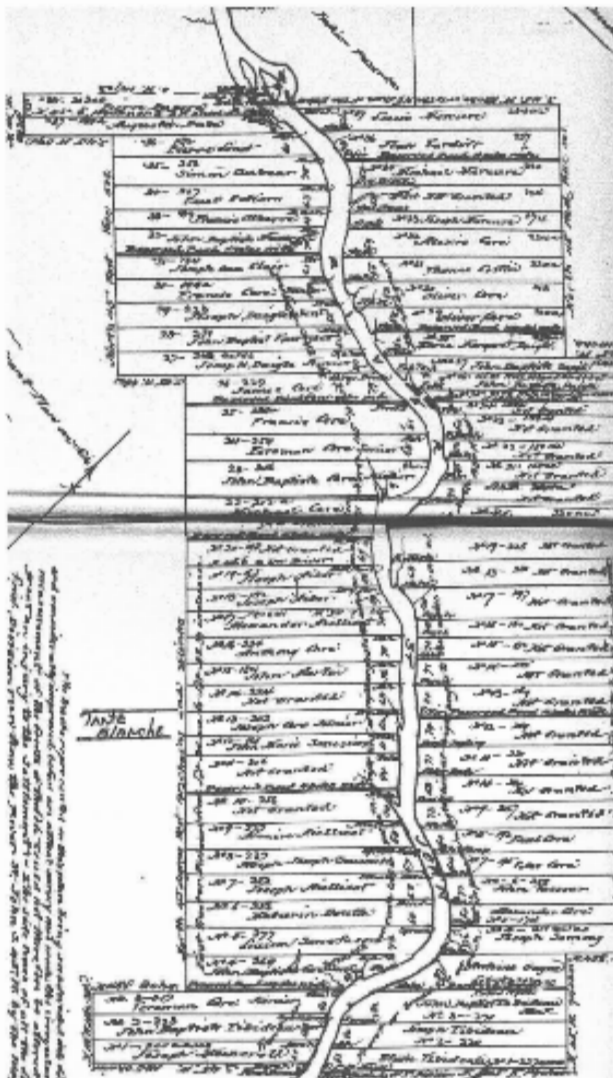
(Tante Blanche, Marie Marguerite Thibodeau Cyr continued from page 9)



Map 5-3: Madawaska settlements in 1787, showing land reserved for French settlers, and land requested by the Natives. Adapted from Sproule 1787 by B. and S. Craig



The Grand Communications Route. During the French period, the main route ran between Rivière-du-Loup and Fort Beauséjour. Secondary routes led towards Old Mission Point, on the Bay of Chaleur; the forts at the mouth of the St. John River (Saint John); Isle St. Jean (Prince Edward Island), Isle Royale (Cape Breton Island), and Port-Royal (Annapolis Royal, Nova Scotia).



Cyr Sire

Family	of JEAN BAPTISTE CYR and MARGUERITE CORMIER # 18821 [Couple]	
	Father: JEAN CYR	Father: PIERRE CORMIER
	Mother: FRANCOISE MELANCON	Mother: CATHERINE LEBLANC
	Family	Family
	Marriage: 1734-01-26 Acadie	
	Children born before 1800:	
f	before 1735 Acadie	before 1780-02-05 Acadie MARGUERITE [Family] JEAN BAPTISTE BOURGEOIS
m	before 1735 Acadie	before 1781-05-30 Acadie JOSEPH [Family] MARE MARGUERITE BLANCHE THIBODEAU
m		1767-01-12 Kamouraska JEAN BAPTISTE [Family] MARE JUDITH GUERET DUMONT
m		PAUL
m		1779-06-06 St-Jean-Peri-Jean JACQUIS [Family] MARIE URSULE BELANGER
f		before 1789-11-07 Lieu inconnu ANNE MARIE [Family] OLIVIER THIBODEAU

(Continued on page 11)

(More letters from page 3)



Lettres/ Letters

In response to Steven Riel’s “A Legacy as Plain as the Nose on My Face,” that appeared in *Le Forum*, Vol. 42, #3 and his quote from my book, *Wednesday’s Child*:

As Rhea Côté Robbins writes, “...we are our historical self while we are in the present.” And I argue—no, I insist—that the measure of our lives does not have to be simply a disturbing legacy we have received, but the positive things we fashion from it. When I contemplate how hard my mother strove to rise above the circumstances of her broken home, I see a life marked by nobility, not social stigma. Through her, I have witnessed what Côté Robbins describes: “The legacy of women in our family. To take brokenness and make things whole again.” And through my Great Uncle Harry, I have seen men in my family do this, too.

And specifically, my writing,
“...we are our historical self while we are in the present.”

followed by, his assessment,
“that the measure of our lives does not have to be simply a disturbing legacy we have received”.

My intent with the statement, “...we are our historical self while we are in the present” is not measuring my life receiving “simply a disturbing legacy,” but a complex measure of how we are comprised of everything that has formed us and moving in our present and future—creating ourselves anew.

My premise for the book was to understand, as my working question for the book kept me focused over the course of the five years it took me to write the book: What does it mean to be a Franco-American woman and growing up in Waterville, Maine in the South End/’ down the Plains.’ My focus was to write beyond the stereotypes that

plague the Franco-American literature. I am not a sentimental writer, nor a memoirist only—my focus was to free my legacy of the shackles imposed on women and go beyond the taboos of subject—as the hyper-virgins testify of my “sinful” self...how dare I write what I write. I do not experience my writing as accepting a disturbing legacy because my resolution is written in the final chapter of victor, and certainly not victim.

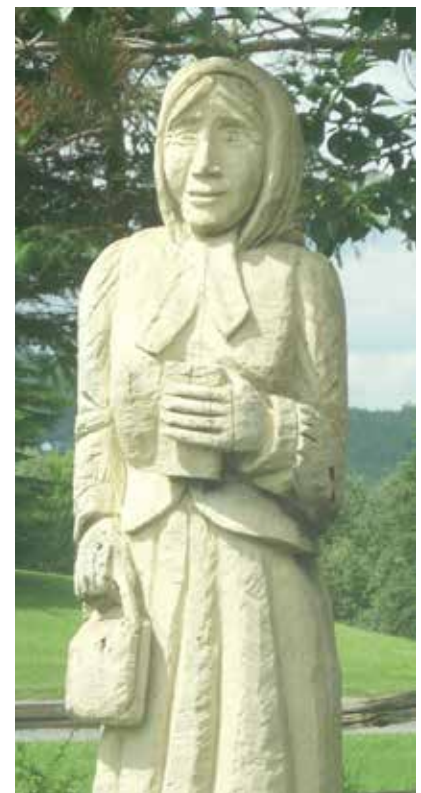
I can appreciate all of what Steven has written in his article, I agree with much of what he said, but he missed the point of my statement of how I am of my historical self as I am my present self—fashioning my own existence—not dictated to by the past and its judgements.

Rhea Côté Robbins
author of
Wednesday Child
and
‘down the Plains’

(Tante Blanche, Marie Marguerite Thibodeau Cyr continued from page 10)



Black marks
spirit of homesteads



(N.D.L.R. Reprinted with permission from UMaine News)

Claudia Desjardins: Hands-on lab experience benefits human health in pandemic

December 28, 2020

University of Maine senior Claudia Desjardins of Bangor pursued a major in animal and veterinary sciences and a minor in mathematics to make a difference in the lives of animals and humans through disease research and prevention. As an undergraduate, she collaborated with UMaine researcher mentors for a study of Maine's wild turkey population and helped test ticks for pathogens, including Lyme disease.

Ultimately, she discovered her passion for laboratory diagnostic testing — skills that proved particularly important in the midst of the pandemic.

For fall 2020, she joined UMaine's COVID-19 wastewater monitoring team, a part of the UMS Scientific Advisory Board focused on providing timely health and safety guidance for Maine's public universities. The wastewater monitoring team is led by Robert Wheeler, UMaine associate professor of microbiology.

In the Wheeler lab, Desjardins is involved in the initial processing of wastewater samples taken at UMaine, the University of Southern Maine and University of Maine at Fort Kent. Once the samples are purified, the wastewater monitoring team runs a qPCR test that amplifies the nucleic acid of interest, allowing the researchers with the help of special software to detect how many copies of the virus are in the sample through the graph generated by the software.

This is important in the health and safety needs of our community, Desjardins says, because people can shed the virus before they begin showing COVID-19 symptoms.

"Asymptomatic transmission is a huge concern with COVID, and by regularly screening our wastewater, we can determine if there is a significant prevalence on campus

before we get the chance to test individuals," Desjardins says. "That way, we'll know early on if the university needs to take action to prevent further spread on campus."

It has been exciting to generate and witness this data firsthand, Desjardins says, "and incredibly fulfilling when your work is making a positive impact on the rest of the community."

We asked Desjardins to tell us more about her UMaine experience:



Tell us more about your undergraduate research experiences:

My first research experience began with my senior capstone on reticuloendotheliosis virus (REV) in Maine's wild turkey population. I joined professor Pauline Kamath's lab, the Wildlife Disease Genetics Lab, to take on this project. This is where I discovered my passion for diagnostic techniques in a lab setting, especially when it comes to furthering our knowledge on disease — particularly animal diseases. I was able to expand on my skills after accepting a position this summer in the Tick Lab at the UMaine Diagnostic and Research Laboratory, where I do molecular lab testing on ticks for their associated pathogens, including the causative agent for Lyme disease. From there, I met professor Wheeler and joined his lab to conduct the COVID wastewater

testing. With current events, I thought it would be exciting to apply my skills to help my school monitor the disease. Now, I work between all three labs this semester, where I am involved with a variety of projects. Additionally, I presented my capstone research on REV at the 2020 UMaine Student Symposium, and received the award for the highest scoring undergraduate presentation in the natural sciences category.

When did you start working in the Wheeler lab on efforts related to the pandemic? And can you give me a sense of your typical day or week this semester, balancing classes, work in the lab and other UMaine activities?

I started working in the Wheeler lab this August. This semester, I took the equine management class at the J.F. Witter Teaching and Research Center, so some days I am up at 5 a.m. to report to morning horse chores at 7 a.m. Afterward, I was either in

the Wheeler Lab or the Tick Lab to begin my benchwork for the day. Once I got to a good stopping point, I attended my remote classes, and then I was back to work. Balancing classes between my three lab jobs has been a challenge, but it's a good feeling to be busy again after suddenly losing my routine last spring when we went remote.

Why UMaine for you?

I chose UMaine because the atmosphere was welcoming and familiar, since both of my brothers graduated from here. It was also close to home, so it was a great choice for me.

How would you describe the academic atmosphere and student experience at UMaine?

The atmosphere here is very supportive and motivating. I have met so many driven students and faculty who I look up to. The people here are always ready to cheer you on.

What other activities, hands-on experience or research opportunities have you been involved in outside of class?

(Continued on page 13)

(Claudia Desjardins: Hands-on lab experience benefits human health in pandemic continued from page 12)

I have studied REV in Maine's wild turkey population for my capstone, and I have also been involved with research on ticks in Maine and the prevalence of their associated pathogens. I had the opportunity to co-author a manuscript on deer ticks in Maine for the Vector-Borne and Zoonotic Diseases journal. Aside from that, I have been an active member of the German Club since my freshman year, giving me leadership opportunities as the president. As an AVS major, I have been involved with the chores and animal care at the Witter Center, where I had the opportunity to work with the sheep, horses and cows for my hands-on classes. When I was involved in the dairy barn, my days would start as early as 2:45 a.m. for milking, followed by a full day of regular classes. One of the most rewarding experiences I had was assisting with the lambing season in spring 2019 through the Ewe-Maine Icelandics Sheep Club, where I welcomed my ewe's twins into the world — a ram named Shadow and a ewe named

Meadow.

What have you learned from working with/being mentored by Dr. Wheeler, one of UMaine's leading researchers?

I learned so much from Dr. Wheeler, such as data analysis with qPCR and how to use the Bio-Rad software. I have also learned from his example about what it takes to be a great leader. Not only is he a highly knowledgeable researcher, but he also truly cares about the progress and success of every student that steps foot into his lab.

Describe UMaine in one word:

Inspiring

Explain:

At UMaine, there is a contagious "go-getter" attitude from my peers, advisers, and professors. I have met so many people that have inspired me to do better. The motivation from them helped me discover my passion for research and disease prevention in both humans and animals.

What difference has UMaine made in your life?

UMaine has taught me to embrace change and to have an open mind to new opportunities. I also learned that it's okay to take your time learning about yourself. When I graduated high school, it seemed like everyone expected me to have the rest of my life planned out, but that certainly wasn't the case. I didn't enjoy the major I was in, so after my first year I switched into AVS where all these opportunities started popping up. Over the course of four years, I got experience in leadership, event organizing, farming, animal care, lab benchwork and so much more.

What are your plans when you graduate? Where are you headed in your career?

I finished my coursework in December and am being hired full time to continue and enhance the wastewater testing initiative. I hope that in my career I can continue to make a difference in the lives of animals and humans through disease research and prevention.

Contact:
nagle@maine.edu

When Fake News About a Maine Epidemic Went Viral

January 31, 2021 Acadians, Fort Kent, Health, Journalism, Maine

By James Myall

On October 17 1897, the San Francisco Call published a sensational story about the northern Maine town of Fort Kent, some 3,500 miles distant:

"Two hundred and fifty cases of diphtheria and twenty five deaths are the appalling record up to the latest reports from Fort Kent...the disease has grown beyond control, and the strictest measures have become necessary. An armed cordon of guards has been ordered."

It's easy to see why the Call included the story, with its talk of disease run amok, quarantine enforced at gunpoint, and some cultural stereotypes for good measure. Unfortunately, the story doesn't appear to have much basis in fact.

The Call probably reprinted the story

from the east coast press. The article is date-lined Boston. And indeed the history of the diphtheria outbreak in Fort Kent, and how it was covered in the media can be traced in the Boston newspapers.

On Oct 15, both the *Boston Journal* and *Boston Herald* ran articles which were almost identical to that which appeared in the Call 2 days later. However, the most sensational claim which appeared in the Call — the cordon of armed guards — appeared differently in the Boston press. The Journal made no mention of the guards, while the Herald said only that such measures were being considered:

"The doctors say that unless the state will provide a strong force of guards, the residents along the St John River will continue to move about at pleasure."

And there was one group in particular the guards were intended to police:

"The authorities sent large quantities of anti-toxine [sic] and disinfectants to the place, and ordered the strictest quarantine regulations to be enforced, but the French Canadians among whom the disease has been making the principle ravages, are not to be restrained. They are by nature restless, and have been wholly beyond the control of the physicians and the Board of Health. Not only have communities wholly disregarded house quarantine, but people from the infected sections have travelled up and down the river, spreading the disease."

Both Boston papers included this slight against the area's Acadians, as did the Call.

Critically, however, this wasn't the only article on the subject to appear in the Boston press. Just two days later, on October 17, the *Herald* printed an important clarification:

"Diphtheria at Fort Kent: Reports Somewhat Exaggerated but Still the Situation is Very Serious."

(Continued on page 14)

(When Fake News About a Maine Epidemic Went Viral continued from page 13)

More headlines over the following days walked the initial story back still further. On October 19, small notice appeared under the heading “Nothing Serious Feared.” And on October 22, a full week after the first resorts were published, the Herald reported that “The outlook for controlling the disease is now believed to be more favorable.” According to the Herald, just one person had, in fact, been arrested.

Official accounts also show how much the first reports in the press were overblown. The Maine State Board of Health included a detailed account of the outbreak and its mitigation in the board’s 1898 annual report. The board’s account is much more straightforward. Doctor Wellington Johnson, who oversaw the state response, wrote that while local health officials had had trouble containing the diphtheria initially it

was brought under control quickly. Johnson confirmed that one person was arrested for refusing to quarantine; but made no mention of an armed cordon.

And while Johnson did mention that the disease was “being carried from place to place by those who were not disposed to obey quarantine laws and regulations,” he

did not single out the Acadians for blame as the newspapers had initially done. In fact, Johnson praised the local Catholic clergy for helped him spread public health advice to the general population. At Fort Kent, the parish priest, F X Burque (Bourque?) lent his assistance to Dr Johnson, as did the town’s health officer, Dr F G Sirois who has until then been unsuccessfully trying to contain the epidemic almost single-handed. Another Acadian, Doctor J F Archambault, was



View of Fort Kent, ca 1900.

Image: Maine Historical Society/Maine Memory Network

called in to assist.

Ultimately, the outbreak was brought under control by Johnson, Sirois, and Archambault within a couple of weeks. Johnson credited several measures. The doctors were armed with anti-toxins which were remarkably successful. Of the first 75 cases in the area, 25 had resulted in death. But

once the anti toxins were administered, only one of the remaining 75 cases ended with a death. Additionally, new local boards of health were organized in New Canada, Wallagrass, and Frenchville, with local residents instructed on the importance of disinfection and quarantine methods as well as ways to indenting and treat many other diseases.

It’s not clear why the initial press accounts of the outbreak were so fantastical.

Perhaps it was a case of misunderstanding as the news spread. Or perhaps a publisher just decided to add his own embellishments. Certainly there was a tradition of associating immigrants with public health scares, as I wrote in the case of smallpox in Maine in 1887. Public leaders have acted similarly today, trying to brand Coronavirus the “Chinese Virus”

But while we are able to reconstruct a more accurate version of the events in Fort Kent in 1897, it’s far less likely contemporary readers in California had the same

ability. Instead, they were left with a distorted view of events that reinforced existing prejudices.

With thanks to Steve Collins for bringing the original Call article to my attention on Twitter (some nine months ago!)

The Revolutionary War Veteran Who Eked Out a Living as a Poor Squatter

November 12, 2019 Home, Maine, Orono, Quebec, Revolutionary War

By James Myall

A murmur ran through the assembled crowd as the news spread. Antoine (or “Antwine” as some pronounced the name) was making an appearance! A later account described him as “Very infirm, and in his primitive style of dress and sugar loaf cap, made an exceedingly grotesque appearance.”

The 88 year-old man who lived in Orono at the edge of town was something of a local celebrity, so much that he was mostly

known by his first name alone. And on this September day in 1838, he was coming to cast his vote in the election for Congress at Great Works (now the town of Bradley). By mutual consent, it was decided that “instead of Antoine’s going to the ballot box, the ballot box should come to him.”

Such was Antoine’s reputation as a local character that this story was recounted by Israel Washburn, the former governor of Maine, in 1874, for the town of Orono’s

centennial celebrations.

Washburn, though born in Livermore, operated a law practice in Orono for several years. He said he had been at the 1838 election, which was “the last time [he] saw Antoine” before the latter’s death in 1839. However, Washburn would go on to help Antoine’s widow Sarah in her pursuit of a pension after Antoine’s death.

Antoine did in fact have a surname, LaChance (though it was sometime spelled Lyshon). He and his wife had many children, some of whom took Antwine as a last name, while others took Lyshon. As the name suggests, LaChance was a French Canadian. He was one of the first residents of what became the town of Orono, having arrived there around 1785(?). He was a veteran of
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the Revolutionary War, one of thousands (?) of French Canadians who joined the American cause.

A lot of what we know about LaChance comes from his own account of his military service, when he wrote to the federal government for a pension. In an 1833 affidavit, LaChance said that he was born “at Quebec” (a phrasing that implies he was born in or near Quebec City, rather than simply within the province of Quebec) in 1751. He volunteered to serve with the Continentals during the US invasion of Quebec in 1775.

He joined the forces of Colonel James Livingston, a New Yorker living near Montreal who joined the patriot cause and raised a band of volunteers for what became known as Livingston’s Brigade, or the 1st Canadian Regiment in the Continental Army. When LaChance joined the Continentals in December, they were preparing to lay siege to Quebec City, having routed the forces of the loyalists at Montreal in November.

The patriot forces, who numbered only a few hundred (with no artillery) failed to take the fortified and well-defended city. In the spring, reinforcements arrived from Britain and the patriots were forced to abandon the siege. LaChance said he served six months with Livingston, before he was captured, which well have been at the battle of Trois Rivières, in June 1776, where the remains of the patriot forces were defeated and forced to retreat to Fort Ticonderoga in New York. The British would follow them, and capture Ticonderoga in June 1777.

But our protagonist was not in captivity for long. He reported having escaped “soon after” (?) though frustratingly he did not say how, and he managed to rejoin the Continental forces. Even though the Continental Army had retreated from Canada, there were still Canadians sympathetic to the patriot cause operating in the province, including some like Clément Gosselin, who were official agents of the Continental Congress.

Again, LaChance offered no details of his escape or return to Continental lines, but he could well have made his way out of Canada via the Chaudière and Kennebec Rivers across the highlands and into Maine. This was the reverse of the grueling route taken by Benedict Arnold’s forces in 1775, and at least one other patriot prisoner, Simon Forbes, escaped British custody along the same route. Forbes, who had been part of

Arnold’s invading forces wrote about his escape in the spring of 1776 in his journal, and recalls being aided by sympathetic French Canadians on several occasions.

According to LaChance, his next service in the army was six weeks beginning in January 1778 serving with a “Captain Page” as a pilot in a scouting party to the Chaudière River in eastern Quebec. This is probably the same scouting party mentioned by Major-General William Heath to George Washington in a letter dated 7-10 February, 1778:



Anonymous sketch of a Canadien couple, c 1750-80. City of Montreal Archives. The man is wearing a “capotian” or “sugar-loaf hat” popular in the 18th century.

“Colonel Hazen was here a few days since to obtain several Articles requisite for the Troops intended to make the Irruption into the upper District of Canada. He requested that a small Scout of Ten or Twelve men might be sent from the upper Settlements on Kenebeck river to the French Settlements on Chaudier to spread a report of a large body of Troops coming that way. I have adopted the proposal and have ordered a party to proceed accordingly. I have directed them to proceed with all proper precaution, to report that they are sent forward to mark a road, and that a large Body of Troops are to follow, they are to enquire if provisions can be purchased for the Army, at what rate &c. and indeed to hold up every colouring of deception, and to make a precipitate return, this may perhaps divert their force.”

Colonel Moses Hazen was commander of the Second Canadian Regiment and another veteran of the Arnold Expedition. He was relentless in his advocacy for a renewed effort to invade Canada (which never came to pass), and the push in 1778 was just one of these efforts. Almost nothing appears to have been written about the scouting party from the upper Kennebec to the Chaudière in the winter of 1778, but if its purpose was to create a diversion, it may have succeeded. The loyalist Governor of Quebec ordered the posting of soldiers to the Chaudière later that year, as well as the construction of a fortified block house.

After the time with Captain Page, there’s a gap in LaChance’s history until June 1779, when he that he served as a marine on board a privateer, the Monmouth, under Captain George Ross at Castine, Maine, for three months. LaChance joined the Monmouth just in time to take was part in the disastrous Penobscot Expedition, which saw the patriot forces fail to recapture Castine from the British. The expedition was such a debacle that Paul Revere, one of the commanders, was subject to a court-martial on his return to Boston. The Monmouth and other ships in the expedition were beached and burned on the shores of the Penobscot near the present town of Brewer.

After this episode, there’s another unexplained gap in LaChance’s service record until 1781, when he says he served three months under Major-General Philip Ulmer (a commander in the Massachusetts militia) in the defense of Camden. In this capacity, he served with William Coburn, who would go on to be one of LaChance’s neighbors in Orono. Coburn testified to their shared service together in support of LaChance’s application for a pension. It’s possible that when the war ended, Coburn and LaChance came to Orono together.

From Washburn’s recollections, we get a few details of LaChance’s life in Orono. He seems to have lived somewhat on the margins of the community. Washburn described him as a squatter, living on land he didn’t own on the edge of town (the site is now part of the University of Maine campus). According to Washburn, he “*did a little at farming, more at shingle-weaving, and still more, perhaps, at fishing, living hand-to-mouth, but yet always managing to get enough.*”

Washburn relates a couple of anecdotes which poke fun at the French Cana-

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dian's manner of speech and temperament. He was accused of being "prejudiced against paying debts," and the anecdotes center on Antoine's taking advantage of the charity of a benefactor. Add to this the description of his appearance, above, and we get a picture of someone slightly misfit and out of place. LaChance was illiterate and at first only spoke French – neither of which would have been unusual for a French Canadian of his time. He signed his pension application with an "x," and noted that his lack of mastery of English might have meant he misremembered the precise names of his commanders in the war.

Nor did his service to his adopted country help his situation significantly. His pension application files show that he had trouble proving his service. He said he had received a discharge certificate but lost it. Correspondence with the Massachusetts Secretary of State shows that they held no records of crew or marines on the Monmouth, and that they couldn't find his name in connection with Colonel Livingston, Major Ulmer or Captain Page.

I fared no better when I went looking for documentary evidence beyond the pension application, even with the advantages of digitized records at my disposal. No records survive for Livingston's battalion before the end of 1776, once the regiment was at Ticonderoga. LaChance said he served in the company of Captain Abraham Livingston (the Colonel's younger brother), and in the muster rolls of this company for late 1777, there are two entries one entry for a private "Anthony Shoage", which could perhaps represent an Anglophones rendering of Antoine LaChance. "Anthony Shoage" is recorded as having enlisted in the

company May 17, 1777, which could represent Antoine's return from British captivity, and is recorded as "on command" in December 1777, which could reflect his assignment ahead of the scouting party to the Chaudière. Much of this, however, is speculation.

LaChance was eventually awarded a pension, under the Congressional Act of 1832, with a pension of \$60 a year from 1834. By this time he was eighty years old and his service had ended a half century earlier. When Antoine died in 1839, his



Street fight during the Battle of Quebec, 1775. Modern interpretation by CW Jeffries. Image: Wikimedia Commons

widow Sarah also had to fight to have his service recognized and to receive a widow's pension.

Although Sarah was entitled to Antoine's pension as the widow of a veteran,

it seems that she did not immediately apply for it. Perhaps she was unaware of that provision of the law. She certainly needed the financial assistance. Her application, made in 1843, was accompanied by a letter from Nathaniel Wilson, on behalf of the Overseers of the Poor of Orono, stating that "Mr Lachance died some 4 or 5 years since and left his widow very poor & she has since been supported by this Town." The letter went on to say that a pension would "truly oblige a respectable & poor woman"

The pension was restored but only after years of wrangling. A letter dated December 9, 1845 from the director of the Pensions Office stated that the federal authorities needed more evidence of Antoine's service before they could grant the widow's pension (despite having approved the original pension twelve years previously). She was initially awarded a pension based on 7 months and 15 days of service, which amounted to \$34.97 per year, far less than Antoine's original award. After more correspondence, this was increased to the full \$60 by 1849, a full decade after Antoine's death.

In a final indignity, Sarah's application for a land grant in 1855, based on Antoine's service, was also denied, despite the fact that she already had the pension, and the land grant required just 14 days of service.

For someone who became a local legend, there are significant holes in what we know about Antoine LaChance. Where exactly he was born* and who his family were remains a mystery, as do any details of his early life in Quebec. What motivated him to join the Revolutionary cause? Why did he finally settle in Orono? Nonetheless, that we know anything about him at all is unusual for a Franco-American of this era. The information we do have paints a picture of a man with a long life that



Destruction of the American Fleet at Penobscot Bay, 14 August 1779. Dominic Serres. Image: National Maritime Museum

(UK)/Wikimedia Commons

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Soeurs religieuses : French-Canadian Health Care in New France and Maine

January 29, 2021 Franco-American News and Culture COVID19, Hôtel-Dieu, Lewiston, Montreal, Quebec, Sisters of Charity

By *Juliana L'Heureux*

During the COVID19 pandemic, nurses are recognized as being more essential than ever. They are the front line professional caregivers. Often, nurses stay with the patients who are hospitalized when family members are unable to be with their loved ones because of the infectious virus.

Nursing's long history of caring is rooted with care provided by religious women that served communities from their convents or "hospices", meaning inpatient institutions.

In French, these hospices were called Hôtel-Dieu.

Justifiably, the nursing profession in America is honored to be recognized in the annual Gallup Poll as continuing to rate highest for honesty and ethics.

There is certainly precedent for this distinguished public opinion honor, described and documented in, "Along A River: The First French Canadian Women", by Jan Noel. The practice of "soeurs religieuses" (religious nuns) to provide care for the sick is rooted in the founding of New France. Moreover, the culture of caring transcended into New England, when French-Canadian religious orders established hospitals and nursing schools. St. Mary's Hospital – now, St. Mary's Regional Medical Center, in Lewiston, is one example whereby the Sisters

of Charity from Hyacinthe Canada, met the urgent need to care for the city's thousands of French-Canadian immigrants and their children. This religious order is also known affectionately as the "Grey Nuns", or "les soeurs grises", founded by Saint Marie-Marguerite d'Youville.



Grey Nuns St. Mary's Regional Medical Center sculpture

Nursing and French-Canadian history
Beginning in 1888, Lewiston/Auburn

was emerging as one of the state's leading manufacturing centers. The shoe and textile industries were flourishing. The migration of the French Canadians, mostly from Quebec Province was huge, at times reaching to 100 to 150, arriving each day at the Grand Trunk Railroad Station on Lincoln Street, in Lewiston. The population had increased to 35,000, but there was no hospital.

This changed in June 1888, when the Sisters of Charity of St. Hyacinthe purchased a house on Sabattus Street, in Lewiston, along with 36 acres of land, all owned by Sarah J. Golder. The Golder house became a 30-bed hospital with an addition that lodged the sisters and 40 orphans. This hospital, the first in Lewiston/Auburn and the first Catholic hospital in Maine, became known variously as the Sister's Hospital, the French Hospital, or the Catholic Hospital.

As a matter of fact, the sisters were experienced with organizing hospitals. They helped to found the Hôtel-Dieu de Montréal, the first hospital established in that city.

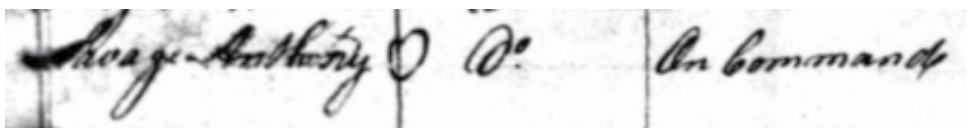
Hôtel-Dieu, literally translated in English as Hotel of God, is an old French term for "hospital", referring to the origins of hospitals as religious institutions.

In the city of Quebec, Hôtel-Dieu
(Continued on page 18)

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included service to his adopted country, but who also found himself marginalized and overlooked.

* A number of online family trees link the Antoine LaChance of this story to an Antoine Pepin dit LaChance who is listed in a British report of French Canadians who joined the revolutionary cause. This Antoine was living at Saint-François de la Rivière du Sud in 1775. However, he cannot be the Antoine LaChance who came to Orono, because other records show he stayed in St François and fathered children there during the time we know our Antoine was living in Orono.



"Shoage, Anthony" detail from muster roll for Captain Livingston's Company, Colonel Livingston's (1st Canadian) Regiment, December 12, 1777. Image via Ancestry.com



James Myall

While I currently work for an Augusta-based non-profit, I spent four years as the Coordinator of the Franco-American Collec-

tion 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.

<https://myall.bdn-blogs.com/2020/01/>

(Soeurs religieuses : French-Canadian Health Care in New France and Maine continued from page 17)

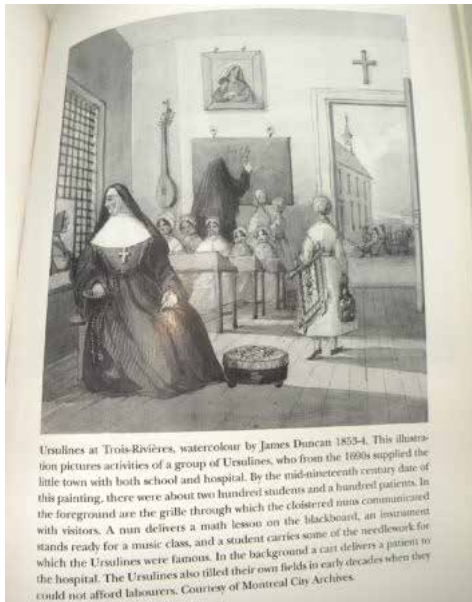
was officially founded in 1637, to meet the colony's need for healthcare, by Marie-Madeleine de Vignerot, the Duchesse d'Aiguillon (1604-1675), who was a niece of Cardinal Richelieu. She entrusted the task to the Canonesses of St. Augustine of the Mercy of Jesus, commonly referred as Hospitalier Sisters, a religious order known for their vocation as nurses.

Three young nuns left their monastery in Dieppe, France, on the coast of the English Channel, and arrived in New France on 1 August 1639, with the goal of opening the hospital. Mothers Marie de Saint-Ignace Guenet, Marie de Saint-Bonaventure Forestier and Anne de Saint-Bernard Le Cointre were the nuns who led this mission.

Although pro-bono support was provided for the patients in the hospitals, the fact was, physicians were scarce. Therefore, nuns carried on day-to-day duties, including those of apothecaries, ward supervisors and hospital administrators. The sisters understood their roles as healers and learned their skills well. Some of them considered themselves to be nurse practitioners (as per information documented in the Hôtel-Dieu museum archives).

Montreal's Hospital General was run by the "Grey Nuns" a religious order founded by Saint Marie-Marguerite d'Youville

(1701-1771). The hospital began caring for patients in 1740, and was a larger establishment than Hôtel-Dieu in Quebec, with about 80 beds and included social services, as well as patient care. This hospital had the reputation of having an "open door" and nursed indigents as well as women who were ex-



Ursulines at Trois-Rivières, watercolour by James Duncan 1853-4. This illustration pictures activities of a group of Ursulines, who from the 1690s supplied the little town with both school and hospital. By the mid-nineteenth century date of this painting, there were about two hundred students and a hundred patients. In the foreground are the grille through which the cloistered nuns communicated with visitors. A nun delivers a math lesson on the blackboard, an instrument stands ready for a music class, and a student carries some of the needlework for which the Ursulines were famous. In the background a cart delivers a patient to the hospital. The Ursulines also tilled their own fields in early decades when they could not afford labourers. Courtesy of Montreal City Archives.

Along a River- The First French-Canadian Women, by Jan Noel

periencing difficulties or trouble. There was also a home care service where the sisters cared for victims of Typhus in their homes.

Catholics and Protestants were cared for by the Grey Nuns.

Both Hôtel-Dieu in Quebec and Montreal's Hospital General owed their success to the ability the sisters had to energize the community and attract support from dedicated directors.

Noel's research about The First French-Canadian Women, documents, with footnotes, much more interesting information about the amazing group of brave, talented, and caring women who helped to settle New France, and developed health care and education, for the people. These institutions are still operating in various forms today. In fact, in Quebec, the religious order continues to be involved in the Hôtel-Dieu organization.

This history for providing health care transcended into the development of hospitals and social programs provided by the religious orders in New England. The nuns were exceptional role models for thousands of nursing students who learned to be Registered Nurses in the excellent schools affiliated with religious hospitals, in Maine and New England.

Like the nurses that rightfully have received high ratings in the Gallop Polls, the French-Canadian religions were an exceptional group of dedicated religious women who inspired others, with their devotion for helping others. Nurses, like me, are in awe of their many accomplishments.

Franco-Americans paved a path for integrated baseball

February 5, 2021 Franco-American News and Culture Mike Cherry, Nashua Dodgers

By Juliana L'Heureux

Franco-Americans have experienced the damaging stigma caused by ethnic racism, as reported in a blog published several weeks ago. Many transcended this experience by excelling in sports. In fact, a report about the Nashua Dodgers (New Hampshire) baseball team described how Franco-American sports heroes may have contributed to an acceptance for integrated baseball rosters.

"Nashua itself was unique," historian Hannings said. "Because of the Franco-American influence, they were a lot more tolerant than any other location in the country."

In fact, the Nashua Dodgers led the

way to integration in American baseball—reported by Mike Cherry for WMUR9 in Nashua, NH

Franco-American baseball players helped to pave the way. Three examples:

Freddy Parent (b. 1875 in Biddeford, ME – d. 1972 in Sanford ME) Shortstop Freddy Parent, the "Flying Frenchman," led the Boston Americans with Most Valuable Player (MVP)-type seasons to the first modern World Series championship in 1903, and the American League pennant in 1904. Lifetime batting average .262. (Reported by Dan Desrochers)

Louis Frances Soxalexis (b. 1871, Penobscot Reservation, ME– d. 1913 in Burlington ME), a member of the Penobscot Indian tribe of Maine, nicknamed The Deer-foot of the Diamond, played professional baseball in the National League for three seasons, spending his entire career (1897-1899) as an outfielder for the Cleveland Spiders. His lifetime batting average was .313. (Reported by David Fleitz)

Nap Lajoie (b.1874 in Woonsocket, R.I. d. 1959 in Daytona Beach FL). He was the first superstar in American League history. Napoleon Lajoie (typically pronounced LAJ-way, though Nap himself is supposed to have preferred the French pronunciation, Lah-ZHWA) was born on September 5, 1874, in Woonsocket, Rhode Island, the youngest of eight surviving children of Jean Baptiste and Celina Guertin Lajoie. The Lajoie clan traced its origins to Auxerres, France, though Jean Baptiste was born in Canada, and emigrated with his family to the United States in 1866, initially settling
(Continued on page 19)

(Franco-Americans paved a path for integrated baseball continued from page 18)

in Rutland, Vermont before moving to Woonsocket. Lifetime batting average .338. (Reported by David Jones)

The first integrated roster in sports: The Nashua Dodgers was a farm club of the Brooklyn Dodgers, operating in the class-B New England League between 1946 and 1949. It is believed to be the first professional baseball team based in the United States in the twentieth century to play with a racially integrated roster.

NASHUA, N.H. — When the Nashua Dodgers won their first New England Championship 75 years ago, they did so with the first integrated roster in American baseball.

The 1940s were a transformative time for American baseball. The great players of the Negro leagues had no path to the major leagues until Brooklyn Dodgers manager Branch Rickey paved the way, signing Jackie Robinson, Roy Campanella and Don Newcombe to minor league contracts.

“All three of them, they tried to package them to bring them into a league, and certain leagues, like Illinois, threatened to close the entire league down if they sent three players of color,” reports Negro Baseball League historian Rob Hannings.

Robinson went to Montreal, where Black athletes faced less discrimination at the time. Rickey then looked for similar surroundings for Campanella and Newcombe “Nashua itself was unique,” Hannings said. “Because of the Franco-American influence, they were a lot more tolerant than any other location in the country.”

“Their talent spoke for themselves,” sportswriter Steve Daly said. “They probably shouldn’t have been at this level of baseball. They were so much more talented than their teammates.”

Campanella and Newcombe ascended as two of the top players in the league, quickly earning the respect of their teammates and coaches.

“The manager of the Lynn Red Sox, a guy named Pip Kennedy, ran into Buzzie Bavasi after the game and said, ‘You guys wouldn’t have beaten us if it wasn’t for those’ — and then dropped the N-word. And Bavasi just freaked out, and they had to be separated,” Daly said.

The Nashua Dodgers won the title in 1946. Newcombe, who led the team to another championship in 1947, has a plaque outside Holman Stadium, in Nashua.

Newcombe’s and Campanella’s num-

bers hang on the stadium that provided a gateway of integration into American professional sports.

“They could’ve been the greatest ball-players you’ve ever seen, but if they weren’t accepting of the situation that they were in and they weren’t treated as well by not only the organization but the people who came to games, I think we would have had a much different story,” Daly said.



In the St. Ignatius Cemetery in Sanford headstone for baseball player Freddy Parent and his wife Fidelia. L’Heureux photograph.

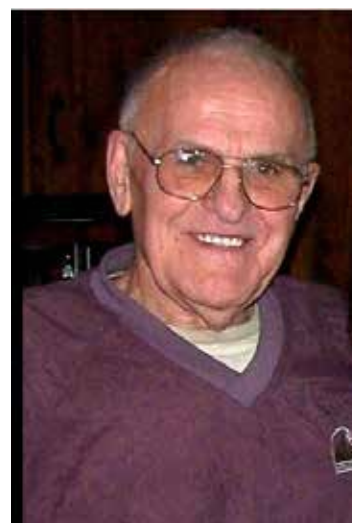
“Sports and Franco-Americans in Woonsocket, Rhode Island 1870-1930”, is an essay written by Richard S. Sorrell. “There is little doubt that those of French Canadian descent in the major leagues suffered from (discrimination), particularly because they were frequently put in the category of other southern and eastern Europeans and they were consequently seen as culturally inferior to those who arrived earlier...”, wrote Sorrell. In fact, the Franco-Americans clearly aspired to rise above this stigma and sports provided many with this opportunity. Walter L’Heureux and Henry L’Heureux are brothers and my husband’s first cousins who achieved recognition through their excellence in sports. They are both included in the Maine Baseball Hall of Fame.

Merci to Mike Cherry for permission to quote and reference this article. <https://twitter.com/MikeCherryWMUR>

Inducted into the Maine Baseball Hall of Fame



Walter L’Heureux



Henry L’Heureux



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/>

DAWSON

The Story of a New England Mill City

Matthew Pelletier

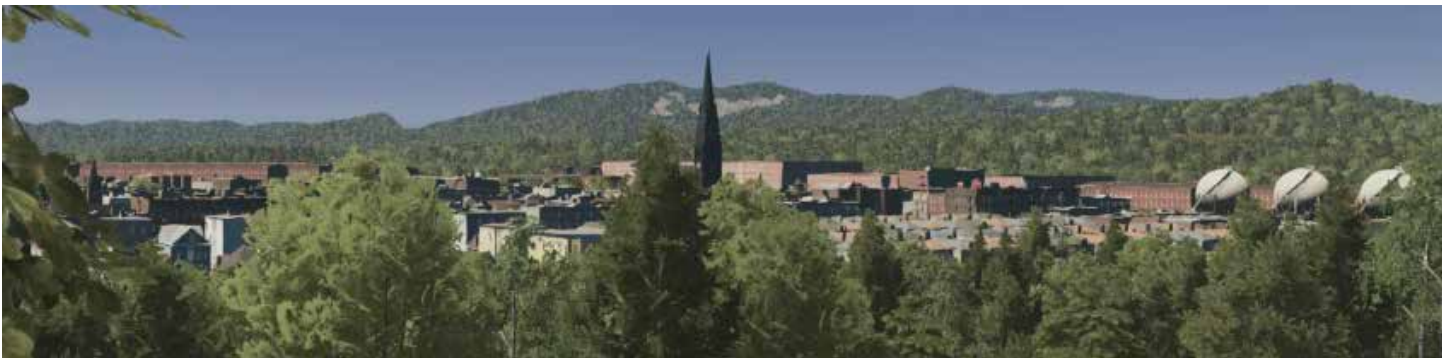


Photo courtesy of Maine Memory Network

“I come from a small city in Maine, called Lewiston. If you were to drive off the interstate exit, through the suburbs, into downtown, and stop at the corner of Pine and Lisbon Streets, you would see City hall, the library, a colorful mural, trees lining the wide sidewalks, and just down Pine Street, you see a tower made of brick. Under it are four stories of shiny new glass windows. If you walk even closer and stop over the canal this building stretches for two long blocks, towering over you like a fortress. Let’s say we had the power to turn back time 500 years. No more buildings, no more canals. All it is is a forest. Most of these buildings have only been here for a hundred years, maybe a couple hundred in some places. You put that into the perspective of cities in Europe, some have been standing since the medieval age. The thing about cities is that they are not just buildings and murals and streets. Cities are the people that live there. The history that brought it to where it is, and the tiny minuscule decisions of some people that end up entirely changing other people's lives down the road. There is a story behind these places. It has themes that are still so relevant to this day. I call these Mill Cities. Think of Lowell, Lawrence, and many others in Massachusetts, or Manchester, in New Hampshire, Woonsocket in Rhode Island, and Lewiston, Waterville, Biddeford, Brunswick, in Maine. These all share astoundingly similar stories. If there was only a way to capture the feelings, struggles, and lives of all these people. Maybe there is. Maybe, as long as it’s a fictional place in a fictional story, these lives can be captured and their stories retold.”

That’s the first paragraph spoken in the first episode of a YouTube series I’ve been working on. This is a ten-part video series on the evolution of a fictional New England Mill City using real history. The form is like a history podcast (inspired by Dan Carlin’s Hardcore History) mixed with scenes from the city-building game, Cities: Skylines. The fictional area consists of an old farming town named Stamford, the mill city named Dawson, and the neighboring twin-city of Wight. All in the fictional Amasek Valley. Each episode is an era in history, spanning nearly 500 years:

- Era/Episode 1: English and French colonialism in North America (1530 - 1710)
- Era 2: English colonial settlement of the Amasek Valley (1710 - 1800)
- Era 3: Early industrialization and Irish immigrants (1800 - 1850)
- Era 4: Mass industrialization (1850 - 1861)
- Era 5: Immigration of French-Canadians (1861 - 1880)
- Era 6: Continued immigration and golden age (1880 - 1918)
- Era 7: Mill decline and xenophobia (1918 - 1948)
- Era 8: Continued decline, suburbanization, and urban renewal (1949 - 1985)
- Era 9: Economic rock-bottom and a new wave of immigration (1985 - 2005)
- Era 10: Revitalization and gentrification (2005 - present)



YouTube channel: UnnamedNarrative
 Twitter and Instagram handle: @unnamedwithmatt

Three Brothers, One MBA Program

January 22, 2021 Alumni Profiles, MaineMBA, News, Student Profiles

Billy, Jonathan, and Daniel Roy grew up in Frenchville, Maine. They all earned their bachelor's degrees at the University of Maine and are now all enrolled in the MaineMBA program. *"Honestly, the three of us never planned to work on our MBA's simultaneously,"* Billy says. Jon, who works at the University of Maine Advanced Structures and Composites Center as a research engineer and project manager, was the first to begin the program. Dan and Billy joined him last summer.

While the brothers are naturally competitive with each other, they've gone their own way professionally and geographically. Read on to learn more about the journey they're taking at the Graduate School of Business.

Dan: Sales Manager for Valvoline, LLC. He lives in Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

Jon: Research Engineer and Research Project Manager at UMaine's ASCC. He lives in Bangor, Maine.

Billy: Construction Project Manager for Knowles Industrial Services. He lives in Windham, Maine.

What do you think is the benefit of an MBA degree?

Dan: Data analytics has been an interest to me for the last couple of years. Last year, we asked a company analyst to create a commission report for our team that would give us insight into the key performance metrics of contracts we executed with customers. The analyst did a good job, but my boss and I felt that he wasn't quite getting what we were looking for because he wasn't aware of our day-to-day activities. I decided that I wanted to provide value to our team and organization above my daily responsibilities. Our Senior Vice President offered to have the company pay for my MBA, and I was thrilled with the idea.

Jon: My goal is to pursue executive-level leadership roles in the future. I found that an MBA is one of the best tools to prepare for those types of management roles. An MBA gives you the knowledge you need to see the big picture and develop the core competencies required for effective business management. It helps you develop the foresight to predict risk and make sound and informed decisions. I also feel like it has been a powerful tool for me in building empathy towards the different professional

skill sets required in an organization. My strengthened understanding of the different business-oriented skill sets has helped me better communicate with coworkers across departments.

Why did you decide to earn your MBA at UMaine?

Billy: This was a no-brainer for me. My brothers and I are Black Bears through and through. We take pride in what we learned and the relationships we built at our alma mater. We believe in what UMaine has to offer and have profited from rewarding careers that would not have been possible without our education and networking at UMaine. I could not see myself pursuing an MBA at any other institution.

Jon: I work for the University, and one of the perks of that is free tuition for continued education.

Dan: I always found the University of Maine promoted a very open, warm, and inviting culture leading to the creation of lasting relationships. My friends from undergrad have remained some of my best friends to this day. I found the education to be top-notch yet affordable. The value is incredible! I am convinced that top students from the University of Maine can compete with students from anywhere in the world.

How has the MaineMBA program helped you in your current professional role?

Jon: The MBA has been a great and effective tool in strengthening my effectiveness and efficiency as a manager. I have been very fortunate to directly apply almost all aspects of what I have learned to my current job in project management, budgeting, operations and personnel management, marketing, customer relations, and more.

What is your goal upon completion of your MBA degree?

Billy: I plan to use this degree to help my company into the future. Some senior executives within Knowles Industrial Services are beginning to prepare their exit strategy, and financial management of the company is something we need to prepare for. I believe completing my MBA will help with this company's successful future progress, and I intend to be a significant part of that process.

Dan: I love the organization I current-



The Roy brothers from left: Jon, Billy, and Dan

ly work for. They care about their people and treat us with respect. I hope to someday step into an executive role here. If and when that day comes, I expect I will be fully prepared to handle the role's responsibilities due to my experience and education.

What has been your favorite class in the MaineMBA program?

Jon: I have really enjoyed many of the courses I've taken, but one of my favorite classes was Management of Contemporary Organizations with Dr. Muralee Das. It's the course that convinced me to pursue the MBA. The content was so practical, relatable, and insightful. I have a good amount of management experience from being a Drill Sergeant in the Army and my role with the UMaine Advanced Structures and Composites Center. Just about everything the course covered resonated with me. Another favorite class was Financial Management with Dr. Pankaj Agrawal. I didn't think I could learn so much about an unfamiliar field in such a short amount of time. Dr. Agrawal is a brilliant professor, and I enjoyed the literature covered during the course.

What is the benefit of earning your MBA alongside your brothers?

Billy: We're very close to each other. Family is very important to us. It's a good feeling to work towards the same goal with two other people that I respect and look up to in life.

Dan: Jon was very encouraging and helped explain what Billy and I should expect from our courses and how to best balance it with our careers. All three of us have very demanding jobs, which we are incredibly passionate about, so it can be challenging to figure out how to best prioritize time. Having my brothers alongside me in the MaineMBA program gives me confidence. I'm very proud to have two intelligent and ambitious older brothers to look up to.

Those Other Franco-Americans: St. Albans, Part II

2020-11-19 PL Borderlands, Franco-Americans, French Language, Lake Champlain, Mallet, Major Edmond, Roman Catholic Church, Saint-Jean-Baptiste, St. Albans, Vermont, Survivance

Six years after the invasion of St. Albans by Confederate agents, a different spectacle played out in the town center, though this one, too, was the doing of people who had descended from Canada:

At 11 o'clock in the forenoon the Convention formed in procession, under escort of the St. John Baptist Society of this place, and, led by the St. Albans Brigade Band, marched through the principal streets, bearing the colors of the United States and of France, besides the flags of their organization...

The day was August 30, 1870, and Charles Moussette received this procession at St. Albans's Academy Hall. Thus opened the annual convention of French Canadians in the United States.^[1]

Though more modest than subsequent conventions, this was no small affair. It drew delegates from communities as far apart as Detroit, Michigan, and Biddeford, Maine. From Quebec came Charles Thibault, who was beginning to make a name for himself as a Conservative activist and public speaker—he was then already an exponent of the providential mission of French-Canadian emigrants. Also present was Michel-Adrien Bessette, member of the provincial assembly for the riding of Shefford, who had married many years earlier in nearby Highgate, Vermont. A Catholic priest from Coaticook, in the Eastern Townships, also visited the convention; he had a special interest—and a special mission—as a colonization agent for the provincial government.^[2]

The French Canadian Convention.

The annual convention of the Canadian French resident in this country, which assembled here Tuesday, was composed of delegates from nearly all sections of the Union where there is any considerable number of Canadian French inhabitants. Societies at Biddeford, Me., Worcester and one or two other places in Massachusetts, New York City, Troy and Glens Falls in New York, Detroit, Mich., and other places sent delegates here to the number of about forty.

St. Albans Weekly Messenger, September 2, 1870

The convention did not make much of a splash in the Quebec press. The on-going war between France and Prussia was of far greater interest to editors and readers. But the St. Albans gathering did reverberate in a noticeable way in the pages of *La Minerve*, in Quebec City.

In September 1870, *La Minerve* printed convention reports from an unnamed correspondent, their likeliest author being Charles Thibault. This person denounced the presence of Arthur Buies in St. Albans. The editor of the irreverent, liberal, and occasionally anticlerical *Lanterne*, Buies attended the convention simply from personal interest. In the press, he and the *Minerve* correspondent would disagree on whether he was invited to speak at the August 31 banquet, which said something of the religious and political discourse that was or could be held in nascent Franco-American organizations.

At the request of New York delegates, Buies served as the recording clerk for an afternoon session. When he returned later that day for the banquet, pastor Zéphirin Druon—from a makeshift pulpit, apparently as master of ceremonies—prevented him from addressing the delegates. First, Druon called Edouard Lacroix of Detroit when some in the audience asked the *Lanterne* editor to speak. Then, Druon went a step further and announced to the members that this was the man behind the scurrilous attacks on the bishop of Montreal.^[3] As it was getting late, the pastor called delegates to leave with him such as to adjourn for the day. Many did. Buies was kept from delivering a proper address. As Quebec's divergent ideological visions disembarked in St. Albans in the persons of Thibault and Buies, truly French Canada was transplanted in the United States. Of course, if willing to make small, political concessions to the Great Republic, cultural and religious elites in French Vermont and French New England would overwhelmingly follow the vision laid out by Thibault and Druon.

Query the Past Patrick Lacroix, Historian

In the afternoon, after a spirited but very pleasant discussion, they voted to hold the next annual convention at Worcester, Mass., sometime in the latter part of August.

Officers were elected for the year ensuing, as follows:

President, Charles Moussette of New York;

Vice President, E. Peltier of Woonsocket, R. I.;

Recording Secretary, George Bachelor of New York;

Corresponding Secretary, A. Lord of Biddeford, Me.;

Treasurer, F. Boucher of New York; Additional members of Executive Committee, E. Lacroix of Detroit, Joseph Marchessault of Worcester.

In the evening a large meeting was held, of a political character, and Canadian annexation and the European war were discussed by the best speakers.

Resolutions were adopted in favor of establishing in this country French literary institutions and schools; favoring immediate annexation of Canada to this country, and expressive of strong sympathy for France in her present struggle against Prussia.

St. Albans Weekly Messenger, September 2, 1870

St. Albans's time as a centre de rayonnement of French-Canadian culture in the United States came to a close in the years following the convention. Almost exactly a year after that event, fire destroyed the offices of *Le Protecteur canadien*. Antoine Moussette had already sold his share in the paper to become a backer of Ferdinand Gagnon's first journalistic effort in Worcester, *L'Etendard national*. After the fire, Druon, now sole proprietor, sold the list of *Protecteur* subscribers to Montreal businessman Georges Desbarats, who owned Gagnon's paper. Gagnon, later deemed the "father of the Franco-American press," was thus doubly the heir of early efforts in St. Albans.

Soon after the demise of the *Protecteur*, Moussette and Frédéric Houde created *L'Avenir national* in St. Albans; they sold it either the next year or in 1873. Towards the end it had an impressive 3,500 subscribers and was circulated in the western states. In 1873, Gagnon and Houde joined forces to establish *Le Foyer canadien*. Houde moved the paper to St. Albans—the third French periodical in the city in five years—while

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(Those Other Franco-Americans: St. Albans, Part II continued from page 22)

Gagnon sold his share and established the long-lived *Travailleur* that made his fame. The *Foyer* ceased publication in 1875. Still, that an editor would move a French-language newspaper from central Massachusetts to northern Vermont is very telling of the French fact in this era—not to mention the contemporary stature of a city that would be eclipsed by new patterns of migration.

established.[4] That spirit of organization carried into politics: in 1892, the French-Canadian Republican club of St. Albans welcomed future president William McKinley.

We cannot argue that the winds of nativism never blew through the area, but this was a tight-knit community where economic interests facilitated a sense of common cause. Well into the twentieth century, French Canadians formed an important share of the railway labor force. An influx of farmers Quebec helped to revitalize

kudos and the local English newspaper, the *Messenger*, published a special issue to mark the occasion. A grand parade passed through the city on June 24 in the presence of Montreal mayor Camilien Houde and the bishop of Burlington, Edward Ryan. Adult membership in this USJB council—over 600 people—was then at an all-time high.[6]

Franklin County continues to have one of the highest rates of French-Canadian ancestry in New England. In 1990, among Vermont communities, the town of Norton, further east in Essex County had the highest proportion of people of French-Canadian descent. But places like Swanton and the City of St. Albans were not far behind—and were in fact ahead of Winooski. A sense of connection to this immigrant and ethnic past was still visible in 2000, when a full quarter of respondents in Vermont claimed their first ancestry as French or French-Canadian. In the decade that followed, St. Albans hosted a French-Canadian Heritage Festival. People who grew up in the region—artist Michèle Choinière, for instance—still tell the story of ethnic Vermont and Franco-America.

Today the culture survives not in the narrow ideological sense anticipated by Father Druon, nor perhaps in the language, but in customs and connections that invite wider participation and interest—something more eclectic, more inclusive.

Do you have a French Vermont story you would like to share? Comment below or on social media!



The initial wave of French-Canadian migrants attended services at the first Catholic parish in St. Albans, St. Mary. (Digital Commonwealth)



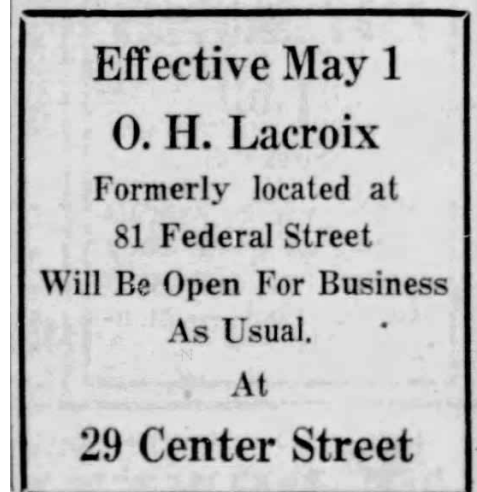
IT'S A GREAT LITTLE WORLD AFTER ALL
More Glory to St. Jean Baptiste On It's 50th Anniversary

The legacy of French-Canadian community organization in St. Albans also lived in the most illustrious Franco-American of the late nineteenth century. The anglicized Civil War veteran Edmond Mallet was allegedly inspired to renew with his heritage when picking up an issue of Druon's *Protecteur*; according to Alexandre Belisle, the paper “converted” Mallet to the cause of Franco-American survivance.

French Vermont culture did not disappear or become irrelevant. A grand celebration of St. John's Day involving Canadian delegations occurred in 1875. The French community had earned, by virtue of its numbers, its own religious space in 1871; a proper French Church, Holy Angels, was built in the 1880s. Around the same time, a circle of the Dames de Sainte-Anne was

the countryside following the Great War. French-owned shops were prevalent along Lake Street, in the vicinity of Holy Angels Church, but it was not unusual for business owners on Main Street to hire French-speaking clerks. Certain derogatory terms seem to have arisen at least as much from class prejudice as from ethnic feeling.

French was heard on the streets of St. Albans and the convent school still offered some of the core subjects dans la langue de Molière (or Crémazie) following the Second World War.[5] In fact, some eighty years after the great French-Canadian national convention it had hosted, the French-Canadian community in St. Albans continued to thrive. When the local council (no. 37) of the Union Saint-Jean-Baptiste reached its fiftieth anniversary, in June 1951, it earned widespread



Orin Lacroix's farm equipment business was one of many establishments owned by Quebec-born individuals in the city. (Messenger, April 29, 1948)

[1] Though some family relation between Antoine and Charles Moussette is
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Hauntingly Silent: Some Questions Concerning Maine's English Education Bill

by *Patrick Lacroix*

*"...provided, further, that the basic language of instruction in the common school branches in all schools, public and private, shall be the English language. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit the teaching in elementary schools of any language as such."*¹

On April 1, 1919, Governor Carl Milliken of Maine signed into law a bill authorizing the state's superintendent of education to enforce English-language education in public and private schools.² This assimilationist measure would hit all minority language groups in Maine equally. As the largest of these groups, however, Franco-Americans had special cause to be aggrieved and to feel targeted.

We can imagine the uproar when Milliken proposed this measure at the opening of the Seventy-Ninth Legislature three months earlier.³ We can imagine the Franco-American elite forming committees, drafting petitions, and marching Maine's French-Canadian and Acadian communities into the fight for their cultural survival. In the prior decade, it had done exactly that to remove parish property from the control of the Catholic bishop of Portland, Louis S. Walsh.

We can imagine the Association Canado-Américaine (ACA) and the Union Saint-Jean-Baptiste (USJB) drawing attention to the issue and raising funds across the region. Quebec newspapers would have joined the fray and insisted on the cultural threats standing before expatriates in the United States.

We can picture it now. But our mind's eye—informed by a tale of endless cultural and religious battles—has betrayed us if this is the image we are forming.

While many present-day Franco-Americans are aware of this bill and its effects on their cultural survival in Maine, the circumstances surrounding the bill's inception and enactment are murky. Surprisingly, landmark works penned by Adolphe Robert and Robert Rumilly in the 1940s and 1950s—works that closely mirrored the records of the ACA and USJB—made no mention of an organized struggle against

assimilation in Maine in 1919, unless we count Rumilly's cryptic reference to Walsh's stance on education.⁴

In more recent Franco-American historical syntheses, the education bill of 1919 usually earns a few sentences meant to corroborate other evidence about forced Americanization in that era. These books almost all cite another secondary source, and with reason: primary evidence of Franco mobilization against the bill is scant.⁵ Why this is so deserves greater consideration.

Background to the Bill

The Maine legislature passed the English-language education less than six months after the end of the First World War. In the prior two years, concerned about immigrants' commitment to their adoptive country, the federal government had closely monitored and sometimes censored the foreign-language press. Through the Committee on Public Information, it had also launched propaganda campaigns aimed to foster "one-hundred-percent Americanism." Loyalty to the United States was defined in increasingly narrow cultural terms. At war's end, a new threat appeared on the horizon: radical elements—no less foreign—aligned with the Bolsheviks. The country was entering the Red Scare; an exclusive nationalism was still the answer.⁶

To foster "Americanism," state legislators introduced English education bills (*Continued on page 25*)

(Those Other Franco-Americans: St. Albans, Part II continued from page 23)

likely, I have yet to determine with certainty what it was.

[2] Still, repatriation does not seem to have held the same significance that it would in later conventions' debates.

[3] The local société Saint-Jean-Baptiste had welcomed Bishop Ignace Bourget while he traveled to New York City a year and a half earlier.

[4] In the early years of Druon's tenure in St. Albans, the local education committee agreed to rent out the Catholic church's basement as a temporary classroom for public school children, relieving pressure on overcrowded tax-funded schoolhouses. Druon seems to have been widely respected in the community; he had earned similar

esteem as a leading religious figure in Civil War-era Montpelier.

[5] Vermont was spared English-language education laws that marked many other northeastern states in the 1910s and 1920s. Here, French Canadians, the largest foreign-language minority group in the state, found numerous Anglo-Saxon allies. S. N. Griscoll of St. Albans stated before the House Committee on Education that "French Canadian families are putting the abandoned farms of northern Vermont on the map and we should not discourage them by not allowing the teaching of the French language in the schools."

[6] St. Albans's French heritage was again on display when the city celebrated its bicentennial in August 1963. On this occasion, Quebec premier Jean Lesage sent Guy Lechasseur, a member of the legislative assembly, as his official representative.

Sources

Beyond the sources linked in the text, Alexandre Belisle devotes a full chapter to the Protecteur in his history of the Franco-American press. Edouard Hamon's work on religious organization and a local online history of Holy Angels are very brief; more extensive newspaper and archival research would be needed for a fuller story of the parish. Digitized newspapers on the Library of Congress website, Newspapers.com, and the Collection patrimoniale of the Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec hold an overwhelming amount of information on St. Albans down to the 1960s. La Minerve, available in digital form on the BANQ website, covered the national convention in early September 1870. I accessed census records on Ancestry.com.

For more on French Vermont, check out episodes of Brave Little State (VPR) and Northwest Passages (produced by the Saint Albans Museum).

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across New England. In 1919, asserting the bona fide patriotism they had manifested during the war, Franco-Americans strongly denounced the measures put to the Massachusetts and New Hampshire legislatures. Historians have studied these struggles and revealed that French speakers were not cowed into complete silence during Americanization campaigns. But what of Maine?

Biddeford's French-language weekly newspaper, *La Justice*, made no mention whatsoever of the education bill. More research will determine whether Lewiston's *Le Messenger* devoted more attention to the education debate than its counterpart in Biddeford; other Lewiston newspapers evince no groundswell of Franco-American activism in the city. Of the petitions submitted to the legislature in February and March in protest of the English-only law, not one originated in Biddeford or Lewiston. In Nashua, New Hampshire, *L'Impartial* carried articles on the education battle in its own state and in Massachusetts, but none on the situation in Maine. Surely it would have taken note of ferocious protests in the Pine Street State—had such protests materialized.

The bill on English instruction was largely buried in the record of legislative business reproduced by Bangor's *Daily News*. Evidently, for English speakers of central Maine, this was not a hot-button issue—a means of stoking patriotic fervor, or cementing their support for the Republican Party. But neither was it a carefully kept secret to be sprung on unsuspecting minority groups at the end of the legislative session.

For one thing, there were acts of protests prior to the enactment of the bill. House members from Aroostook County introduced petitions from Madawaska, Fort Kent, Caribou, St. Agatha, Van Buren, and other towns and villages, all contesting the bill.⁷ Contemporary newspapers made much of the fact that the postmaster of Fort Kent, Irénée Cyr, who had previously served in the House, traveled 300 miles to testify before the Committee on Education in February. The St. John Valley French were leading the charge against assimilation.

The Aroostook petitions only add to the puzzle. What would explain relative silence in Biddeford and Lewiston?

A Partisan Issue?

Electoral politics may help to elu-

cidate the issue—to an extent. Although willing to support Franco-Americans on the Democratic ticket, *La Justice* had a record of endorsing Republican candidates. It had welcomed GOP victories in the fall of 1918. Among those winners was Carl Milliken.⁹ In light of the federal Americanization campaign and its own suspicion of the labor movement, the paper's stance was not unusual. In 1919, editor Alfred Bonneau may have continued to back the GOP as a bulwark against radicalism and chosen to place education on the backburner.

In Lewiston, voters went to the polls to elect a municipal government on March 3, 1919. There, the Franco-American community was closely aligned with the Democratic Party; one of their own, Charles Lemaire, sought reelection as mayor on the Democratic ticket. The GOP put up a strong fight and came within a hundred votes of unseating

“The foreign languages should be taught in the elementary school as they can be learnt easier at that time than at any other period of life . . . It is easy for French teachers to teach through the French language to children of French extraction English and it is about the only way it can be done.”

Lemaire.¹⁰ We may wonder whether Lewiston Democrats sought to avoid the education issue because it would have pushed a soft Irish vote to the Republicans.

Yet more likely was a sense of powerlessness among Franco voters. At the state level, Maine's Republican establishment seemed unshakable. The exclusion of people of French-Canadian and Acadian descent became a vicious cycle. The Republican establishment's record of Anglo-Saxon, Protestant nativism pushed Franco voters to the Democrats; seen as a captive electorate, these voters could no longer expect GOP outreach. (*La Justice* would in time change its colors.) Beyond their industrial bastions, Franco-Americans were relegated to a political wilderness.

In 1919, the State Senate had but one Franco-American member, a Republican from Lewiston. Six Francos sat in the House, all of them Democrats—two from the St.

John Valley, two from Lewiston, one from Brunswick, and the last from Biddeford (Louis B. Lausier, then beginning a long and distinguished political career).¹¹ Aside from Fort Kent's William J. Audibert, who introduced petitions, historians must struggle to find evidence of these legislators' presumed public opposition to the education bill. Before the “silent playground,” there seemed to be silence of a different kind in the chambers and committee rooms of the state capitol.¹²

Questions and Interpretations

One prominent figure—far more influential than Irénée Cyr—did draw momentary attention to the bill. No stranger to the State House, Bishop Walsh appeared before the Committee on Education on March 5 accompanied by Peter Charles Keegan, the former member for Van Buren; Cornelius Horigan, the former and future mayor of Biddeford; and veteran and attorney Albert Beliveau of Rumford. All were Democrats.¹³

Walsh was primarily concerned about the extension of the state superintendent's jurisdiction to private schools. The Catholic hierarchy in the Northeast was more worried about the slippery slope of growing state control of parochial schools than about anglicization. In prior hearings, Walsh had explained to legislators that the basic course of instruction in parochial schools was already in English. There is little doubt, however, that prior to 1919 subjects beyond the state-mandated course of study were taught in French in Franco-American parish schools.¹⁴

How did the man charged with enforcing the law view language? State Superintendent Augustus O. Thomas expressed remarkable openness when he testified before the Education Committee. The bill “does not prohibit the teaching of foreign languages,” he declared. “The foreign languages should be taught in the elementary school as they can be learnt easier at that time than at any other period of life . . . It is easy for French teachers to teach through the French language to children of French extraction English and it is about the only way it can be done.” Thomas declared that he “was willing to make any change necessary to safeguard the right and objects of the bill.”¹⁵

From such declarations and others, we might conclude that the primary object of the bill was not to banish other languages, but to ensure sufficient proficiency in English in
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among minority groups. The time at come to bring unilingual island communities into the U.S. mainstream.¹⁶

One scholar asserts that after 1919, French-language instruction was illegal for fifty years in Maine.¹⁷ There is no question, from the letter of the law and Thomas's statements, that French could still be taught *as a language*. Historical misunderstandings occur on whether the bill could allow the teaching of other subjects in French. What, indeed, is a "basic" language of instruction, and would it be different from an exclusive language of instruction?

Some clarity comes from the equally symbolic moment when, in 1969, the legislature—with the notable support of Elmer Violette of Van Buren and Albert Beliveau's son Severin—voted to permit foreign-language education in the first two years of elementary school. Violette's remarks at that time are worth noting. "Thirty years ago," he declared, "they were starting us in the French language [in grade school], and then on to English." Only gradually, in the interwar period, had French disappeared from the classroom, Violette stated.¹⁸

In the 1930s, at Lewiston's Ecole Sainte-Marie, Lucien Aubé did not encounter serious study in (or of) the English language until fourth grade. By sixth grade, pupils could expect half-day instruction in each language.¹⁹ Michael Guignard adds that "in Biddeford parochial schools up to the sixth grade in the 1950s we had a half day of French; religion and bible history [were] in French, and then we studied French—*grammaire, dictée, épellation et lecture!*"²⁰

Public v. Private

Historian Mark Richard explains that when they arrived at Sainte-Famille parish in Lewiston, in 1926, the Sisters of Saint Joseph (a teaching order) chose to limit French instruction to one hour per day in hopes of easing Franco-Americans' acculturation. They felt pressure from Bishop Walsh to meet the spirit if not the letter of the education bill passed a few years earlier. Richard finds little resistance or opposition from Lewiston's Little Canada to the Sisters' decision—except from *Le Messenger*, which remained committed to the half-day system.²¹ "[T]he [1919] law did not apply to the elementary schools where the nuns taught,"

Richard also writes.²² The law spared parochial schools, but those under control of the bishop or of other teaching orders could not expect the same linguistic leniency.

But didn't the bill state otherwise? It read, again, "that the basic language of instruction in the common school branches in all schools, public and private, shall be the English language." This too has led to confusion. The same section of the state education code previously made reference to "private schools approved for tuition and attendance purposes" (seemingly eligible for state funds) and it may be that the private schools touched by the language clause were precisely those. It also happens that this section appeared in the duties assigned to the State Superintendent of *Public Schools*. All of this would point to the effective exclusion of parochial schools.²³

In her recent doctoral dissertation, Elisa Sance highlights the different educational regimes that explain the responses of different Franco-American localities. Maine's public education system was highly decentralized; its town-based structure meant that local trustees had considerable authority over what would be taught and by whom. In Aroostook County, predominantly French-speaking towns hired Catholic religious orders to run *public* schools where the French language was in an exalted position.²⁴ However, in industries cities—where they were most concentrated, more likely to pool resources, and under more assertive clerical leadership—Franco-Americans were less dependent on public schools.

The absence of a coordinated campaign in such places suggests that Franco-Americans there understood that their parish schools would remain untouched by the 1919 bill. They also seemed to willingly accept a two-tier system. Church schools provided instruction that matched French Canadians' values and cultural aspirations; upwardly-mobile families seeking a mainstream English-based education for their children could send them to public schools. When the parochial schools and their teaching staff narrowed the amount of French instruction in the interwar period, this was not a matter of public policy, but an issue to be resolved within the Church.²⁵

The St. John Valley French understood that their reliance on a publicly-funded school system meant that they would not escape "basic" education in English. This may have been the unspoken intent of the education bill, for there had been prior

attempts to bring this borderland people into the great (English-speaking) American family through school reform. But through its concerns and acts of protests, the French population in this region would find itself without the support of downstate compatriots.²⁶

The education bill proposed and adopted in 1919 captured the spirit of Americanism that swept through the country following the First World War—a spirit that had not yet seen its most extreme manifestations. Though various factors explain why Franco-Americans did not protest more vociferously in certain parts of the state, the key lies in the role of public and private schools. In this sense, the events of 1919 say as much about vastly different experiences within the Franco-American community as about the fracture between Anglo-Saxon Protestants and their French-Canadian and Acadian neighbors.

With special thanks to Michael Guignard and Camden Martin.

Patrick Lacroix's work on Franco-Americans has appeared in numerous peer-reviewed journals and his manuscript, "Tout nous serait possible": Une histoire politique des Franco-Américains, is under contract with the Presses de l'Université Laval.

1. Chapter 146, *Acts and Resolves as Passed by the Seventy-Ninth Legislature of the State of Maine – 1919* (Augusta: Kennebec Journal, 1919).

2. "Public Acts Signed by the Governor," *Lewiston Evening Journal*, April 3, 1919, 6.

3. *Legislative Record of the Seventy-Ninth Legislature of the State of Maine* (Augusta: Kennebec Journal, 1919), 26.

4. Adolphe Robert, *Mémorial des Actes de l'Association Canado-Américaine* (Manchester: L'Avenir national, 1946); Robert Rumilly, *Histoire des Franco-Américains* (Montreal: Union Saint-Jean-Baptiste d'Amérique, 1958). The part of Lewiston's Institut Jacques-Cartier, the city's foremost Franco-American society, in the debates of 1919 remains unclear.

5. Included here are the works of Gerard J. Brault, François Weil, Armand Chartier, Yves Roby, and David Vermette.

6. We should note that this debate occurred before the second incarnation of the Ku Klux Klan had gotten any meaningful
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4 Life Lessons We Can Learn

From the Filles du Roi

JANUARY 22, 2021 FRANCO-AMERICAN HISTORY, LES FILLES DU ROI, WOMEN'S HISTORY

BY MÉLODY DESJARDINS

Les Filles du Roi, or The King's Daughters, arrived in New France between 1663-1667 with the mission to repopulate the province.

King Louis XIV provided about 800-1000 young women mostly in their 20's with dowries, clothes, supplies, and a place to live with the nuns.

These women boarded ships to the New World, leaving behind everything they

knew in France. They suffered terrible conditions on these ships, from a lack of proper hygiene to the looming risk of sickness. If that weren't enough, they also faced possible death on the very ship bringing them to new opportunities.

We today cannot imagine how uncomfortable these conditions must have been for months on end. Once onboard, these young women had no other choice but to tough it



The King's Daughters mural by artist Annie Hamel in Montreal.

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foothold in the region.

7. *Legislative Record of the Seventy-Ninth Legislature*, 303, 322, 352, 392.

8. "Language in the Public Schools," *Lewiston Daily Sun*, February 27, 1919, 10; "Fort Kent Is Much Opposed," *Lewiston Evening Journal*, February 27, 1919, 7.

9. "Grande victoire républicaine," *La Justice*, September 13, 1918, 2.

10. "Lemaire Elected But City Government Is Republican," *Lewiston Daily Sun*, March 4, 1919, 1, 10.

11. *Legislative Record of the Seventy-Ninth Legislature*, 3, 8, 48-52.

12. The term is borrowed from Ross and Judy Paradis's essay in *Voyages: A Maine Franco-American Reader*, ed. Nelson Madore and Barry Rodrigue (Gardiner: Tilbury House, 2007).

13. "Bishop Walsh Opposed Bill Relating to Public Schools," *Daily Sun*, March 6, 1919, 1, 4.

14. "Committee Hearings at Augusta Thursday – Educational Committee," *Bangor Daily News*, February 7, 1919, 11.

15. "Bishop Walsh Opposed Bill," *Daily Sun*. More puzzling yet was a report

in the *Bangor Daily News* stating that "there would be nothing to prevent parochial and private schools giving instruction in other languages, so long as they complied with the provision of the law." What was the law's purpose if not to institute instruction in English? See "Committee Hearings at Augusta Thursday," *Daily News*.

16. This is not to deny the presence of firebrands whose nativism was far less elastic.

17. Susan Pinette, "Un 'étonnant mutisme': L'invisibilité des Franco-Américains aux Etats-Unis," *La jeune francophonie américaine: Langue et culture chez les jeunes d'héritage francophone aux Etats-Unis d'Amérique*, ed. J. E. Price (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2017), 185.

18. *Legislative Record of the One Hundred and Fourth Legislature of the State of Maine – 1969* (Augusta: Kennebec Journal, c. 1969), 1495-1496.

19. Lucien A. Aubé, "From the Parochial School to an American University: Reflections on Cultural Fragmentation," *Steeple and Smokestacks: A Collection of Essays on the Franco-American Experience in New England*, ed. Claire Quintal (Worcester: Editions de l'Institut français, Assumption College, 1996), 639-640.

out on the dreadful, long voyage.

Boarding the ships into the unknown shows us their determination to leave their less fortunate lives in France. All for the chance of making a life in a land they never knew.

Through historical accounts, we can only get a glimpse of the challenging lives of these women. From history and current forms of storytelling, we can gather lessons from the past that can enlighten our modern times.

And the stories of these captivating women have a lot to teach us.

So what core values can we learn from Les Filles du Roi?

1) Grit

Going anywhere into the unknown is scary. So imagine boarding a ship to a location you've never been to in those times. You couldn't look it up online and see if you might like the area. You boarded the ship for months and had to go along with whatever happened.

Many Filles du Roi were leaving behind broken lives in France. However, those
(Continued on page 28)

20. Personal correspondence. Guignard adds, "I had known nothing about [the 1919 law] until the 1980s."

21. Mark Paul Richard, "From Franco-American to American: The Case of Sainte-Famille, an Assimilating Parish of Lewiston, Maine," *Histoire sociale/Social History*, vol. 31, no. 61 (May 1998), 79-80.

22. Richard, *Not a Catholic Nation: The Ku Klux Klan Confronts New England in the 1920s* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2015), 54.

23. State Superintendent of Public Schools, *Laws of Maine Relating to Public Schools* (Augusta: 1919), 50, 52.

24. Elisa Sance, "Language, Identity, and Citizenship: Politics of Education in Madawaska, 1842-1920" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Maine, 2020), 103, 111, 170-172, 178. Also see Béatrice Craig and Maxime Dagenais, *The Land in Between: The Upper St. John Valley, Prehistory to World War I* (Gardiner: Tilbury House, 2009).

25. Protests may have become unimaginable after the defeat of the Sentinellism in the 1920s.

26. Sance, "Language, Identity, and Citizenship," 106-107, 180-181.

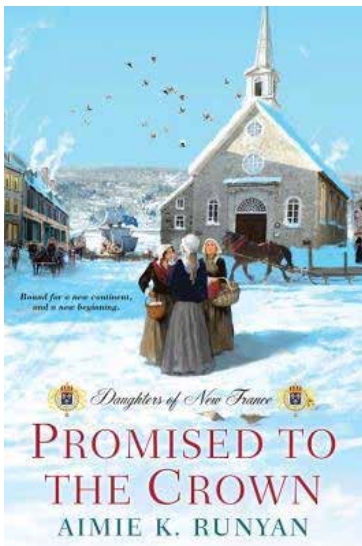
(4 Life Lessons We Can Learn From the Filles du Roi continued from page 27)

hardships were only the beginning of the challenges they would face on their voyage.

Sickness was prevalent on these ships and some Filles du Roi died on board. For those left, it had to take grit to keep their wits about them in those unsanitary and horrifying conditions.

Even after they had built their life in New France with a husband, life was still grim with surviving the wilderness. And their married lives did not always mean happily ever after.

For the women in “*Promised to the Crown*,” a historical fiction novel that focuses on three Filles du Roi, they discover that their lives don’t change for the better in New France. They each suffer their own losses, but must find the strength within themselves to survive.



“*Promised to the Crown*” by Aimie K. Runyan.

To keep going in a situation when everything is crumbling all around you, grit keeps even the smallest bit of hope alive. Their main focus had to be survival. They had to hold on until the day they were married to fulfill their promise of repopulating New France.

However, with this promise, slander was brought onto the names of the Filles du Roi. Even today, there is a narrative that the Filles du Roi were prostitutes. Although this has been debunked, this myth continues to live on.

Before we enter arguments to rightfully defend these women, remember how much resistance they were against in the 17th century. But this myth didn’t come out

of thin air: somewhere along the line, it was spoken into existence.

Prior to the journey, they were already approved to become Filles du Roi, which required them to be “proper” women. What could these women do about slander besides striving to be the best wife and mother they could be?

When dealing with slander, defend yourself (or the proper young women in your ancestry). But set the record straight with your head held high with the confidence of knowing the truth about yourself. Sometimes, grit comes with holding back from wasting energy on ridiculous lies and knowing who you are above it all.

2) Courage

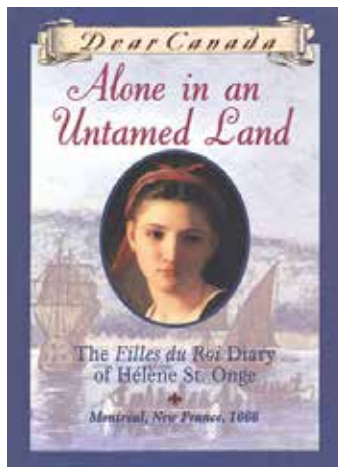
It is said that courage is being afraid, but facing the challenge anyway.

Some women had a change of heart about leaving France and decided to stay after all. This is not to suggest those specific women were not courageous. But deciding to get on that ship after others turned away is nothing short of bravely facing the unknown.

In “*Alone in an Untamed Land*,” a teenage girl named H el ene faces the same choice. She gets on the ship, but is torn between the only home she’s ever known and the chance at a new life in Montr eal.

“I may never see France again. I wept. My cheeks were damp with the mist and so I think that no one saw. I did not care if they did. I only wished to be alone inside myself and let the image of France burn into my mind.”

—*H EL ENE ST. ONGE, ALONE IN AN UNTAMED LAND*



“*Alone in an Untamed Land*” by Maxine Trottier as part of the *Dear Canada* historical fiction series.

Once arriving in New France, the surviving Filles du Roi found themselves among strangers: men, women, and landscape alike. The only people they knew were each other, navigating the harsh reality of 17th century country life.

This meant hard labor just to survive, especially during the freezing winters of New France that they were unfamiliar with.

Many of these young women were accustomed to city life in Paris and had to learn to prepare for what was coming.

3) Choice

You would think that at the time, the women would be put into an arranged marriage. But the Filles du Roi had free will over who they wanted to marry.

Even in the 17th century, when the reason they were asked to move was to populate the province, these women still held the power of making their own choice.

The nuns who housed the women planned socials for them to meet the men of New France. Which meant they could choose their future husband wisely and on their terms.

The Filles du Roi had a lot of power for women at the time.

Even if a man made a proposal to one of the Filles du Roi, the decision for the marriage to move forward was solely at the discretion of the woman. Only an approval from her would result in a marriage contract and a life together.

National Geographic’s Barkskins tv series (based on the novel by Annie Proulx), partially focuses on the Filles du Roi. The show portrays a matchmaking social to suggest what the mingling in New France might have been like for the men and women.

Melissande, the headstrong Filles du Roi, says she will only choose a rich man to provide for her. Meanwhile, her shy but devoted companion, Delphine, wants to choose a man for love and family.

“If you put your mind to it, you can remake yourself here.”

—*MELISSANDE*

No matter how different their wishes, they respect each other’s choice. They then focus on their own mission to find a husband and secure their new life.

4) Hope

(Continued on page 29)

(4 Life Lessons We Can Learn From the Filles du Roi continued from page 28)

The life of the Filles du Roi wasn't all that great at the end of the day. Living in the 17th century as a woman was a harsh reality that we in modern times could not possibly imagine.

Living in Québec when the possibility of death came back every winter must have been terrifying. Not to mention many other threats from the wilderness year round.



A scene from Canada: The Story of Us of one Filles du Roi after becoming a wife and mother.

With these unforgiving realities came childbirth in a time without proper hygiene, medical care, or painkillers. These women usually had many children to repopulate New France. Plus, they received payment for each child they had which created more incentive to have many children.

It was a life of horrendous labor pain, over and over again. So they grew their family, receiving those payments that were also crucial for survival. But with that pain came life and a future for French-Canadians in the land that would be known as Québec.

If it wasn't for the Filles du Roi, there might not even be a province of Québec today. The hope for the future of New France fully relied on the Filles du Roi.



One of the Filles du Roi signing a marriage contract, depicted by Canada: The Story of Us.

Because these women had hope for a new life, they kept the culture alive for generations of descendants they would never know. In our present time, we can remember the intense struggles these women experienced and become inspired to do our part in reviving the culture they saved.

Whether that is learning French, adding celebrations and holidays of days past to our calendars, sharing our culture with others, or other positive ways to show the

world our remaining presence, we all have these women to thank.

We must remember that the reason we are here today as Québécois, French-Canadians, Acadians, and Franco-Americans is due to the Founding Mothers of Québec, our fierce Filles du Roi.



Les Filles du Roi arriving in New France, as depicted in Barkskins.

**Moderne Francos
All About the
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Experience**

<https://modernefrancos.com>



**French-Canadian
Legacy
Podcast**

Today, there are more than 2 million descendants of French-Canadian immigrants living in New England. These are Our Stories.

Episode 56: Louis Cyr The World's Strongest Man with Jason Newton



When we first interviewed Jason, we were lucky enough to have him in the studio. After our interview with him, we started talking and came across a topic all of us were interested in, Louis Cyr. So Jesse and Jason researched "The World's Strongest Man" and have an amazing episode for you. The facts about him may or may not be true but his legacy is a great one. We hope you'll enjoy this episode, it's a little different but we hope you love it.

Don't forget to check out our Patreon for extra bonus content. If you've always wanted to have a French-Canadian Legacy t-shirt, GOOD NEWS!! Check out our merch on Teespring. All money earned from both goes directly to improve the podcast.

Listen to the show on Sound Cloud, Stitcher, Spotify, Google Play Music, Castbox and Apple Podcasts. Once you subscribe or follow us on any of those services each new episode will be added to your library.

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THE SUN

Can we honor native son Jack Kerouac?

Jack Kerouac is a world-renowned writer. He opened new avenues for American writers of the 20th century. He was central to the Beat Movement of the 1950s and 1960s. He wrote the founding novel of the Beat Movement: *On the Road*.

He also wrote five novels about Lowell, plus a stream of poems, letters, and other novels exploring life, death, and spiritual realities as he experienced them in his travels, writing, worship, addictions, and relationships. And he was a product of Lowell's Franco-American community — not speaking English until he was six, always speaking French with his family members, continuously in contact with French and French-Canadian literature and culture, and never abandoning the French-Canadian strain of Catholicism that colored and shaped his worldview.

Do we fully honor him here in his native city? What do we offer visitors from around the globe who come to explore his roots in Lowell and see the places where he lived, studied, worshiped, drank, brawled, fell in love, and played sports even as the larger world called him to grow beyond his birthplace? (Though Lowell constantly called him to return again and again.) How do we establish the link to his ethnic community and the ethnic culture that grounded him?

There's Commemorative Park on Bridge St. with its lovely polished monoliths engraved with passages from his books. There's the plaque on the Lupine Road cottage where he was born and lived in his infancy. There's a growing archive of materials by and about him being gathered, organized, and digitized by the Kerouac Center at UMass Lowell for scholars, writers, and Kerouac devotees of every background and calling. There's the Kerouac corner at the Pollard Memorial Library, where he spent days expanding his mind and mastering his command of English as he read omnivo-

(N.D.L.R. The following op-ed was written by frequent *Le Forum* contributor Suzanne Beebe and was printed in the December 14, 2020 edition of the *Lowell Sun* daily newspaper. It asks why Lowell has failed to provide readers and admirers of Franco-American writer Jack Kerouac a place where they can learn more about him in the city of his birth. The *Visions of Gerard* cover (lower right corner) graces the current Penguin Books printing of the novel and was designed by Daniel Rembert.)

rously and encountered the great minds of literature. There's a small Kerouac display at the National Historical Park Visitor's Center on Market Street. But there is no one place in Lowell where short-term visitors can view exhibits or attend events that provide a comprehensive look at his life and work in the context of his city and its Franco-American community.

Other cities and towns manage to honor their artistic giants, whether the artist lived there for years or was born there and



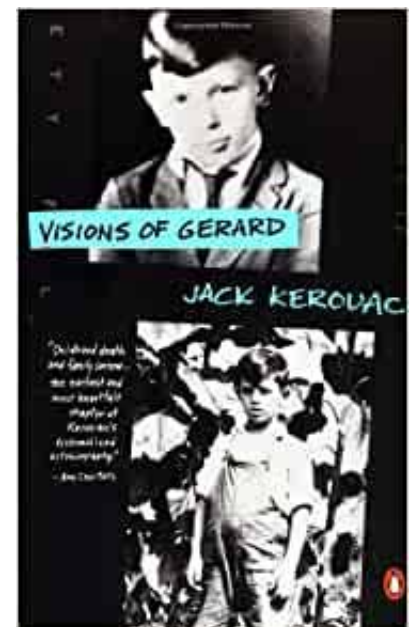
left. Stockbridge has its Norman Rockwell Museum. Salinas, Calif., has its Steinbeck National Center. Tulsa, Okla., has its Woody Guthrie Center, while small-town Okemah, Okla., (Woody's birthplace), is working to restore the original Guthrie home.

Cambridge has the Henry Wadsworth Longfellow House. Concord has the Alcott family's Orchard House, where Louisa May Alcott wrote *Little Women*. Concord also has the Ralph Waldo Emerson and Nathaniel Hawthorne homes. Lowell itself has the Whistler Museum, the birthplace of an artist who lived here the first three years of his life, despised the city and its industrial nature, and never returned, famously saying when he declared himself to have been born in St. Petersburg, Russia, "I shall be born when and where I want, and I do not choose to be born in Lowell." Can't we at least provide a museum or center on the scale of the Whistler Museum for a world-famous author who loved the city of his birth, wrote about it, visited regularly, and is buried here?

Right now, the church where Kerouac was baptized and the school he attended

for a few years — St. Louis de France in Centralville — stands empty, unused, and awaiting sale by the Archdiocese of Boston. Kerouac wrote about those buildings in his novel *Visions of Gerard*. At this writing, there is no public commitment on the part of the Archdiocese to preserve them as part of any purchase agreement. Nor has the city exerted any discernible effort to influence the Archdiocese in its sale of the St. Louis site, although a 2005 survey conducted by the Massachusetts Historical Commission recommended it be declared eligible for the National Register of Historical Places.

Shouldn't the city at least consider what it might do to keep those buildings standing — and how at least one of them (perhaps the church?) might become a center for public exhibits and events centering on Kerouac, his work, and the Franco-American community that shaped him? Couldn't the city explore with UMass Lowell's Kerouac Center how a partnership of the two could work with the Archdiocese to achieve mutually satisfactory goals while fully honoring the native son who helped change American literature in the 20th century? Opportunities like the St. Louis site's availability don't arise every day. Surely, the city, the university, and the Archdiocese can find a way to capitalize on it. The only thing that seems needed is the will.





(N.D.L.R. The Lowell Sun daily newspaper of Lowell, MA, published the following OPINION piece. It appeared in the January 2, 2021 edition of the Lowell Sun. Permission for reprinting has been granted by Rev. Steve Edington.)

So, who is tending the Kerouac flame in Lowell?

By REV. STEVE EDINGTON

A quick introduction: I am a near 30-year member of the Lowell Celebrates Kerouac Committee and have twice served as the organization's president.

Our current President is Judith Besette. LCK was originally formed in 1986 to create the Kerouac Commemorative at Bridge and French streets. It has continued on, producing an annual Jack Kerouac Festival in October, a Kerouac birthday observance in March, and other various Kerouac related events.

Since the time of LCK's founding, Kerouac has become an internationally recognized literary and cultural figure. As the year 2000 approached, Modern Library ranked his signature novel, "On the Road," 55 in the top 100 American novels published in the 20th century. Time Magazine rated it as one of the 100 best English language novels published between 1923 and 2005. Kerouac's literary legacy has become an integral part of the curricula for American literature courses taught at American colleges and universities around the country.

Reflecting on all this, I view my involvement with Lowell Celebrates Kerouac with a mixture of pride and frustration.

I am proud to join with my fellow LCK committee members in keeping the Kerouac flame alive in his hometown. I am pleased at the ways we honor and celebrate his Lowell roots, as shown in the five Lowell-based novels he wrote that portray the city in the 1920s and 30s. I am pleased to host the Kerouac tour requests we get year-round, by way of our website, from persons who want to see his birthplace, gravesite, as well as many other places in Lowell that Jack describes. I especially remember meeting a busload of students from Aberdeen, Scotland, a few summers ago who wanted a Kerouac tour included in their American East Coast visit.

I'm grateful for the friendships my LCK involvement has given me with persons all around the country and world who

have been touched by the writings of Kerouac. It is a joy to witness, every October, those who make the trip to Lowell to nurture and replenish their Kerouac Spirit.

Here is where my pride mixes with frustration: The lion's share of keeping the Kerouac flame and spirit alive in Lowell falls to an all-volunteer group with no paid staff, and no physical base of operation, and who do all we do on a nickel-and-dime budget that we manage to cobble together from one year to the next to keep LCK going. Such has been the case now for the past 30 years even as Kerouac has become a global figure.

Yes, the University of Massachusetts at Lowell has the Jack and Stella Kerouac Center for the Public Humanities. I commend the very good work my friends, Professors Michael Millner and Todd Tietchen, do in giving Kerouac his much-deserved standing in academia. But what about Kerouac's standing in the city of his birth that first shaped his literary consciousness?

I appreciate the fine contributions the Whistler House and its staff make to Lowell's artistic and cultural life.

I'm also aware that these contributions are done in the name of world-renowned artist who quite vehemently renounced his ties to Lowell. What about a world-renowned writer who devoted five of his numerous novels to his Lowell origins, and honored its Franco-American culture?

But, in the end, it's really not about my pride or my frustration. It is about the city of Lowell, along with its many historical, cultural, educational, and artistic communities and organizations, coming to a fuller awareness of just what they — what we — have here with respect to the ever-growing legacy of Kerouac. We at LCK have, in recent years, received some modest support for our efforts from the city for which we are grateful. Let's treat this as a start towards an even greater civic engagement in Lowell when it comes to celebrating Kerouac.

A little over a year from now the Jack



Jack Kerouac

Kerouac Centennial will get underway. Jack was born on March 12, 1922 in Centralville. I am pleased to be the convener of a broad-based coalition in Lowell that is coming together to make plans for a series of Kerouac Centennial events to take place during 2022. This coalition consists of representatives of the kinds of groups and organizations cited above.

In addition to giving Jack Kerouac the recognition he deserves in his hometown in the 100th year of his birth, my hope is that those of us who are coming together now can show the way forward — in the years beyond 2022 — for keeping the Kerouac flame in Lowell burning even brighter.

Rev. Steve Edington is the Minister Emeritus of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashua, N.H. He is the author of The Beat Face of God: The Beat Generation Writers as Spirit Guides and Kerouac's Nashua Connection.



THE SUN

(N.D.L.R. The Lowell Sun daily newspaper of Lowell, MA, published the following Roger Brunelle Appreciation piece in its March 4, 2021 edition. Permission for reprinting has been granted.)

Remembering Roger Brunelle, Lowell and Kerouac's biggest cheerleader

by Barry Scanlon

LOWELL – Even at the end of a 48-year teaching career, Roger Brunelle couldn't wait to leave his Lowell home to reach his classroom.

Rising at 5:15 a.m., Brunelle would approach each day with the zest of a first-year teacher.

"He was out of the house like a bullet," his wife of 48 years, Alyce said. "If you knew him, he was always on the go. He faced life every day like here we are, let's go. It was so important for him to reach the kids."

Brunelle, 86, died Feb. 10 at a Boston hospital after a short period of declining health.

Best known for championing famed Lowell writer Jack Kerouac, Brunelle was a curious man who never stopped learning, a man incredibly proud of his French-Canadian heritage.

He was also proud to call Lowell home.

"He loved Lowell. That's why he never moved from Lowell. He was a Lowellian at heart. He loved everything about Lowell," Alyce Brunelle said.

Kerouac died in 1969, at age 47, after writing such books as "On the Road" and "Doctor Sax." In the mid-1980s, there was a resurgence of interest in the Lowell-born Kerouac. Leading those efforts was Brunelle, who was born 12 years after Kerouac, one of the founders of the Beat Generation.

"Roger loved Lowell as much as Jack did. Roger understood Jack to the point where they could have been brothers," Alyce Brunelle said.

A founding member of Lowell Celebrates Kerouac, Brunelle operated tours of Lowell inspired by Kerouac's writings. Each tour had a name. Most were walking tours, but if there was enough interest Brunelle offered bus trips. The tours were a 35-year labor of love for Brunelle.

"By the mid-80s he was very interested in raising the profile of Kerouac," said writer and publisher Paul Marion. "He

had his own enthusiastic take on Kerouac. Nearly all of the tours he did were for free. Just for the enjoyment of it and he was enthusiastic to tell the Kerouac story. And the tours were an extension of Roger the teacher. No one can replicate what he was doing. Roger brought a unique perspective of what made Kerouac tick."

The tours brought scores of international travellers to Lowell. Brunelle would often speak French during the tours. One of the tours, "Ghosts of the Pawtucketville Night," would be held at dark.

Sean Thibodeau took the tour in the early 1990s when he attended Lowell High.

"I was a student at LHS at the time and immediately caught Kerouac fever. Roger was a natural tour leader. He had an expansive voice and expressive gestures — and just oozed mirth and passion. He read Kerouac's French passages in their original 'joul patois' with special gusto. He later taught me to pronounce my own last name. As a third generation French-Canadian, French speaking was lost with my grandfather and I grew up not knowing any of it. Roger helped me feel connected to my roots and encouraged my curiosity and education," said Thibodeau, the coordinator of Community Planning at Lowell's Pollard Memorial Library.

"Roger lived life with his whole beautiful heart on his broad sleeve. He and I shared a love for Kerouac and for Lowell's public library. There were a few times when he asked if I could open the library off hours so he could give a quick tour to out of town Kerouac enthusiasts. I never said no to Roger," Thibodeau added.

In addition to his wife, Brunelle is survived by a son, Denis Brunelle, of Dracut, and daughter, Dr. Stephanie Brunelle, of Seattle, Wash.

He attended St. Louis School in Lowell, then graduated from a high school in Sherbrooke, Quebec. He received a bachelor's degree from St. John Seminary in Brighton, then a master's degree in Lin-



Roger Brunelle at Kerouac Park in downtown Lowell. (Photo courtesy of Brunelle Family.)

guistics from Middlebury College. He also studied in Paris.

"He had a very formal education. He was a very sophisticated guy but he was also very regular. He would talk to anybody and he treated everyone the same. He loved all the deeply Lowell things that people in Lowell love about the city. The Kerouac influence kind of gave him a distinctive niche," Marion said. Brunelle taught French and Latin to high school students in Dracut, Lowell, Ayer and Nashua, the majority of which (29 years) was spent at Ayer High.

"He loved his kids. His head was always in a book. He loved Roman history. He loved Latin," his wife said.

Brunelle was Susan Curtin Copeland's French teacher for four years at Ayer High School.

"He had such a love for language, friendship and people. We loved to ask him questions on his travel or family to get him off the lesson. Every college acceptance letter he read and yelled out in celebration for us. He was a gentleman and a gentle man. I wish I had a chance to tell him what a positive influence he was to us," Copeland wrote on a sympathy page set up by McKenna-Ouellette Funeral Home.

(Continued on page 33)

Changing a Present Focused On The Past

By Timothy Beaulieu

I am someone who is newer to the French-Canadian/Franco-American world. It can be a disadvantage at times and advantage at others. I am not a French speaker (yet) and my recent family history is devoid of the traditions handed down from Québec. That said, Franco-Americans like me don't carry some of the emotional scars that many who grew up in the culture have. It can be a great advantage when rediscovering where we came from.

Growing up in my American upbringing I have heard that people from Québec, generically called the French, are hard to work with and stuck up. Hearing that your entire life can turn off potential "re-born Francos" from even engaging in a very vibrant community. A "re-born Franco" is someone who was raised completely away from the culture, but for whatever reason, has come back on their own.

Somehow, I was able to see through those untruths and connect with the Franco community. Huge shout out to movie the *Réveil* for giving me the final push to do something.

A Present focused on the Past

Fast forward to present day, I have been interacting with many Franco-Ameri-

(Remembering Roger Brunelle, Lowell and Kerouac's biggest cheerleader continued from page 33)

The Rev. Steve Edington, a retired Unitarian Universalist minister and Kerouac author, is the past president and the current treasurer of Lowell Celebrates Kerouac.

"It was Roger who introduced me to Lowell Celebrates Kerouac when I took one of his Lowell tours back in the summer of 1989. I came onto the LCK Committee a couple of years later with a lot of encouragement and support from Roger. He was of great assistance to me in some research I did on Jack Kerouac's French-Canadian ancestry. Roger was very proud of the Franco-American roots, and this was one

can organizations throughout New England. All doing some truly amazing work up against difficult odds. What I have noticed, is our groups tend to focus a lot on the past and academic type stuff. That is very important, but I fear as a larger community we have become one dimensional (i.e. talking about the past).

One thing that seems to come up periodically is that Franco-Americans are largely unknown in Québec. There are small pockets of Québécois who know of us and a large amount who don't. After a few years of social media interaction with the Québécois they fall into two generally defined teams.

Équipe no 1: We view Franco-Americans as assimilated and dead.

Équipe no 2: I am interested in our cousins in the US and happy they are interested in us.

I'm a big fan of Équipe no 2. I don't dislike Équipe no 1, I understand their viewpoint. I have tried to engage with them and it has not gone so well. Maybe they'll come around, but we aren't there yet.

So how do we work with Équipe no 2?

Reaching Équipe no 2

When my working group and I launched New Hampshire PoutineFest in 2016, one of my hopes was that it would act as a beacon for any Québécois looking south of the border to realize we were still here.

In the years since NH PoutineFest, social media contact to the Event and the Franco-American Centre of New Hampshire has sharply increased....and not just to say Bonjour.

In early 2018, a very motivated and talented Québécois named, Luc Trépanier,

of many things that gave him his connection to Kerouac. The tours he gave during our Kerouac Festival weekends in October were wonderful. We still do these tours for our annual festivals, but there will never be another tour guide like Roger," Edington said.

The Lowell Celebrates Kerouac Festival this October will be dedicated to Brunelle's life and legacy.

In a 2019 story in *The Sun*, Brunelle said, "I was a high school teacher and I taught French and Latin. To me, words are like a game and it was like that with Kerouac. That's why I relate to him so closely, because what he did was he did not write language. He printed his spoken language on paper."



Statue of Ferdinand Gagnon in Manchester, NH

reached out to us. When I began speaking with Luc I could tell he was an obvious member of Équipe no 2. Luc was a big fan of the local Double A team in Manchester, The New Hampshire Fisher Cats, and also curious to know more about Franco-Americans.

Over the last several years Luc and I have become pretty close friends. His efforts to learn English and mine to at least try to pick up some French have come in handy.

In 2019, we planned a small baseball tournament of sorts between kids living around his town of Saint-Hyacinthe, QC, and kids in Nashua, NH. It went really well for a first time. Our goal is to bring it back *(Continued on page 34)*



Roger Brunelle (left) receives plaque from John McDermott of Lowell Celebrates Kerouac in 2019 as Alyce Brunelle looks on.

(Photo by Suzanne Beebe)

(Changing a Present Focused On The Past continued from page 33)

once COVID-19 is a thing of the past.

In talking with Luc over the years I noticed he was surprised how many Franco-Americans were interested in Québec and the Québécois. Most folks in Québec only heard the Équipe no 1 narrative growing up.

A Pipeline of Francophones Returns?

One of the main reasons from my, non-academic perspective, on the fading of the French language in New England is our isolation from Québec. Once immigration stopped around 1930 and recent immigrant families stopped going back “home” in the 1950s and 1960s we then see a couple generations that are largely unilingual.

Around the start of the global pandemic, I mentioned to Luc that I was looking into starting a bilingual blog that took a different approach to our shared story. The intent of the blog, *Ma famille canadienne-française*, was to bring the descendants of New France back together. It would do this by educating the Québécois on who Franco-Americans are and showing Franco-Americans they can be proud who they are. Essentially reaching out to Équipe no 2 and pushing back on the American narrative I was taught about our shared culture. Luc was all in. We began to create some fun content for the blog and also looked at how we could have a unique social media aspect to the page.



Franco American flag in Montreal

Le rêve de Gagnon

One of my favorite authors, David Vermette, gave a lecture that I attended at Saint Anselm College a few years back. It was a great lecture mostly focusing on some of the information in his iconic book, *A Distinct Alien Race*. In this lecture he mentioned a person I had never heard of before, Ferdinand Gagnon. Gagnon’s story really resonated with me.

Gagnon was a journalist who envisioned a national union of French-Canadians in the US and Canada. He also put some time into having Franco-Americans move back to Québec, this didn’t go so well. While he wasn’t always so popular amongst many in the community at the time (19th century), his idea really interested me. He was also born and raised in Saint-Hyacinthe and spent quite a bit of time in Manchester, NH.

I had a passing conversation with Jesse Martineau from the *French-Canadian Legacy Podcast* about names for a potential Facebook group and he brought up Gagnon...I loved it. I explained the idea to Luc and literally the next day he created a Facebook Group – Le rêve de Gagnon or Gagnon’s Dream in English.

What’s the Purpose?

There are quite a few Facebook groups out there on French-Canadians, most of which focus on Genealogy. There is absolutely nothing wrong with that, but it is leaving a gap. Le rêve de Gagnon is focused on the living. Some examples 1) What’s going on in Québec today? 2) What’s Happening in the Franco-American World 3) Businesses in the French-Canadian Community 4) new projects launching and yes “some” genealogy stuff.

We don’t shy away from tough topics in the group. If we don’t talk about things how else will we learn? It’s led to some pretty great learning opportunities.

We are super fortunate to have some great administrators working with us too. Melody Keilig adds a younger female Franco perspective to our group. She is part of the “reborn Francos” and is doing some awesome work with her blog *Moderne Francos*.

Patrick Lacroix needs no introduction



Kids from Saint-Hyacinthe

in *Le Forum*. He is a bilingual Québécois living outside the province of Québec. His in-depth knowledge of history and contemporary Québec is a huge asset to the team.

Next Steps

It will be interesting to see where this goes in the post COVID-19 world. My hope is we can do what Irish-Americans and Italian-Americans cannot do. That is, use our proximity and recent shared history to bring us back together...fulfilling Gagnon’s Dream.

Timothy Beaulieu is the Founder of NH PoutineFest, a Trustee at the Franco-American Centre of New Hampshire, Advisory Board Member of The Association for the Advancement of the French Language and Francophone Culture in the United States, and writes for the blog Ma famille canadienne-française.



Victoria Lambert and her fiancé visit Québec City

REMINISCING, life in the '40s

by *Xavier de la Prade*

When my brother André calls me from Vermont, one of our favorite activities is to reminisce about our childhood. One day, we asked each other what was the first thing we could remember about Graniteville. For me, it was my grandmother's wake. I was only two years old. My grandmother passed away at the age of 63 from a very preventable ruptured appendix. However, living on an isolated farm 15 miles from the hospital in the middle winter, that was a death sentence. Because my grandparents' farm was so isolated, the wake was at our house. I can remember the eerie low light in the living room, the casket itself, but for the life of me, I cannot remember my grandmother. Both André and I, along with four other siblings, were all born in Barre, Vermont. My parents were first generation Québécois. However, we lived in Graniteville, about five miles in the hills next to the granite quarries. In one of the houses we lived in we could see the derricks (huge hundred foot cranes built with Oregon Douglas fir), hear the warning whistles and the heartbeat of the compressors. The town was a mixture of Francos and Irish but we all got along. The biggest controversy was whether or not our parish church, St. Sylvester's, should be painted yellow or green.

OUR FIRST HOUSE

My parents bought their first house in Granitville in 1942 for \$900. It was definitely a fixer upper. The only toilet was in the cellar directly over the sewer pipe. My parents, who both grew up on farms, worked hard to remodel it and make it livable. A forty hour work week was anathema to them. On a farm you worked from sunrise to sunset. So, my dad would clean up, relax and have supper after his eight hours as a tool maker at the Rock of Ages Corporation and then put on his carpenter's apron. Weekends also were spent remodeling. Step by step, our living quarters improved, no more Saturday night baths in a washtub. I was lucky again because being the oldest, I was the first to wash in the clean, lukewarm water. I can still remember my mother telling me to make sure I washed my "peanut".

THE MODEL A FORD

The other major event in my first ten years on the planet was the accident in my Dad's Model A 1929 Ford. Back in November of 1944 we were all driving to Uncle Roma's in Orange, VT. We were all going to drive down to our grandparents' in Worcester, MA to celebrate Thanksgiving. Uncle Roma had a 1932 Pierce Arrow, a much more comfortable and safer car for the 400-mile round trip. It was snowing hard and it was dark outside. About a quarter of a mile away from my uncle's place, we had



Xavier and Madeleine Laprade wedding, May 1940. Standing: Amédée Laprade and Joseph Beaudin. Sitting: Madeleine (Beaudin) and Xavier.

a flat tire. My dad decided to walk to Uncle Roma's for help. While he was gone, my brother and I were standing on the back seat looking out the Model A's rear window. We could see these bright lights coming down the road. Soon the snow plow's lights were upon us. The driver did not see the black car on the unlit street in the fast falling snow. Crash, bang!!! I was almost four, so I ducked. My brother, who was a toddler, did not. His injuries looked as if he had been in a war zone, but miracles of miracles, no glass shards went into his eyes. (Merci à Saint Joseph.) My grandmother was devastated. Vic was her "petit bonhomme de savon". With his curly hair and very white skin, he could

have been the poster boy for Ivory Soap. My sister Rachel who was two and my mother who was seven months pregnant with my sister Monique were in the front seat. They both were rattled but not hurt.

I remember the war years when a flag with a star hung from a cable across the main street in Graniteville. It was to show we had a local boy fighting overseas. I remember the night they knocked at our window during a blackout drill. My mother had put on a low light to warm a baby bottle. I remember playing outside and shouting "Nazis" when planes flew overhead. Occasionally, we would hear a car horn blaring. Those were the "Boys of Tuff End" being rowdy. They got their kicks by sticking matches in car horns.

Life was good. We had a lot of friends and a lot of freedom. We explored the woods, built cabins, snowmen, skied, played hockey, etc. School however, did not start on a positive note. I ran away from school on my first day of Kindergarten. That was serious. Dad was called to handle this. He rarely left his hot furnace where he made shanks and threads for the drills used in quarrying granite. He found me next to the railroad tracks and gave me a soft kick in the tush. "Ne fais plus jamais ça!!!" I think I was frustrated because I barely spoke English. I would count to twelve in English and then convert to French. I did learn to read the "Dick and Jane" primer quickly and enjoyed reading our weekly "Messenger". I still remember the picture of Truman holding up the newspaper claiming Dewey had won.

THE NEW BUICK

Even though my parents already had two boys and two girls by 1947, they had been able to save enough to trade in their 1934 Chevrolet for a new Buick. This car was my parents' pride and joy. Neither drank or smoked, they had a big garden and canned over one hundred quarts of fruit and vegetables, and they always looked for a sale. They always shopped at the super market that had a weekly special of three pounds of hamburger for one dollar. They barely got by on my dad's meager salary. My mom told me once they had as little as five dollars in cash sometimes until the next pay check.

Now the house was remodeled, they had their new car, and they had time on their hands. What do you do when you're off work, and back then there was no TV? You

(Continued on page 36)

(REMINISCING, life in the '40s continued from page 35)

looked for another job. My dad decided to buy a milk route. That was before the days of the tankers. A milk truck would bring the milk cans to a dairy. My dad would get up at 4:30 AM and collect milk cans before going the quarry to work an eight-hour day. On weekends, he would fill up the truck with shavings for different clients. He would take my brother and I on these Saturday mornings and on some of them we froze. After about a year my father started having ulcers. He was just working too hard. He would go see a supposed healer, "Le Septième". In Franco folklore the seventh son of the seventh son has magical curing powers. I do not know if he helped my dad. He must have seen a regular doctor also because he took this medical powder in a funny blue oval box for a long time. One thing for sure he must have told him to slow down, so my dad sold the route.

Before selling the 1947 Chevrolet flat bed, we had an unusual holiday. "Mon oncle Oscar et mon oncle Moïse" came down from Quebec to Graniteville with my Mom's aunts as well. The gang decided we would take the Chevy to Worcester to visit my grandparents with everyone in the body. With Uncle Roma's family we were probably fifteen. We must have looked like gypsies but we made the 200-mile trip safely not withstanding a lot of moaning and groaning.

THE 1936 LASALLE

My dad's next car was a classic. It was a 1936 LaSalle. It was basically the Cadillac with a different grill. It was black with a hood a mile long and a spare on each fender. It looked like a gangster car. I asked my dad why it had two spares. His answer was, "Sometimes you need them". On one of our trips to Lake Champlain we did need them.

Every summer our Sunday outings would be the eight o'clock Mass and then off to the tomato fields and the fruit stands around Mallet's Bay. The weather was milder near Lake Champlain and a lot of tomato growers would let you pick your own. We would fill two or three bushel baskets and

then head to the beach. We would also look for peaches. Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday evenings our kitchen became a canning factory. As children we all had our responsibilities, like going down cellar to get the empty jars, putting on the rubber gaskets, covers, etc.

At Easter we always got two bunnies. We loved them but we did not know they were for food. They were our responsibility. Lo and behold, we started having baby bunnies. By Thanksgiving, when there was no more grass to feed them, my dad butchered them. We all helped prepare them for the



The new BUICK 1947

freezer. I will never forget the day when my brother Vic said, holding up an intestine filled with rabbit scat, "Doesn't this look like a rosary?"

FIRE!!!! FIRE!!!!

In 1949 Armageddon hit. My dad and uncle were out cutting the wood they needed to heat their homes in the winter. Around 6:30 on a hot August night, my uncle came running to say that our house was on fire. What happened was that our neighbor fixed cars as a sideline and he was soldering a gas tank. The tank had not been completely emptied so it exploded and four houses burned that day. One of the big problems was the lack of a water and hydrants. Hoses had to be laid out for a mile to an old quarry. In the newspaper, they put the losses

of the four houses at \$20,000. For our family though it was devastating. Fortunately, my parents had a \$2,800 fire policy that allowed them to buy a duplex. That was the duplex at the side of the quarry that was later taken down to expand the quarry. I was sent to live with Uncle Roma and Aunt Bertha's family. They were all super nice but the second day, like at school, I ran away. Back at the fire scene the next day I was walking through our burnt house when a beam fell on my head. My dad was at the end of his rope. He begrudgedly brought me to Doctor Bailey's for stitches. No wonder he had ulcers.

One of my Dad's neighbors, Mr. Letourneau chided my dad one Sunday before the fire. He told my dad that God would punish him for working on Sundays. My dad took this as an omen and never worked on Sundays again.

The rest of 1949 was spent helping our dad rebuild the house. It was a slow process because my dad was building alone most of the time. All of his friends and relatives who had good intentions of helping rarely if ever showed up. We did live in an unfinished house for a while but like they say in French,



The spectacular picture above, taken shortly after the fire at Upper Graniteville started last evening, shows three homes which were destroyed by flames. Left to right the houses are those of Joseph Letourneau, Homer Miller and Xavier LaPrade. The unoccupied Rene Morin red block, not shown in the photo, located on a hill back of the Letourneau home, was the fourth building burned. (Photo by Jeanne Rousse.)

"Petit à petit, l'oiseau fait son nid". Little by little, the bird builds his nest.

So, thank you André for reminiscing. Each one of our lives is quite a journey.

First-ever online, bilingual portal to Franco American archives launches this spring

March 12, 2021

Franco American Programs at the University of Maine will collaborate with four other institutions in the region to launch the first-ever online, bilingual portal to Franco American archives and history collections from repositories across North America this spring.

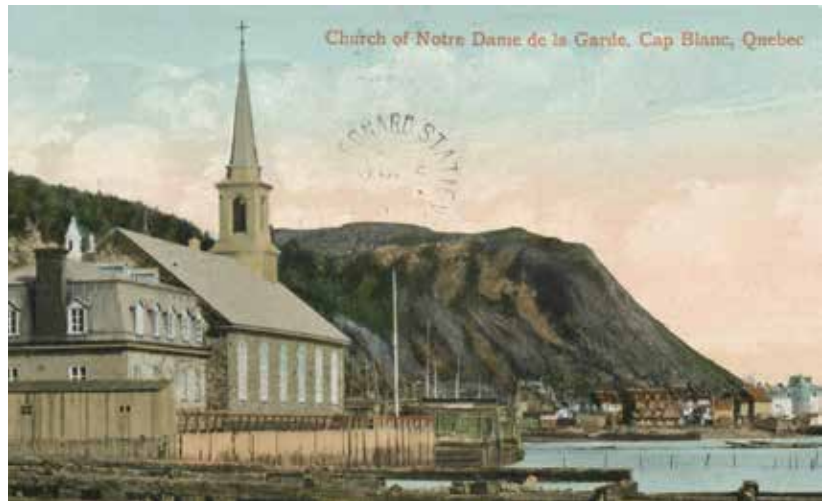
Franco American Digital Archives/Portail franco-américain, formerly known as the Franco American Portal project, will offer access to various primary sources about the French-Canadian, Acadian and Québécois(e) diaspora communities of the Northeast. Available records will include letters and other correspondence, scrapbooks, family and business records, newspapers, photographs and other media depicting Franco-American history, culture and people.

Information about the project can be found at francoportal.org.

"This online, bilingual portal to Franco American archives, manuscripts, and finding aids begins with our partners' bilingual, materially diverse collections as the portal's originating cache," says Susan Pinette, director of UMaine's Franco American Programs.

The National Endowment for the Humanities provided an almost \$60,000 grant to help finance the development of Franco American Digital Archives/Portail franco-américain. The University of Maine at Fort Kent Acadian Archives, the University of Southern Maine Franco-American Collection, the French Institute at Assumption University in Worcester, Massachusetts, and the Msgr. Wilfrid H. Paradis Archives & Special Collections at Saint Anselm College in Manchester, New Hampshire, partnered with UMaine to develop it.

The project team is seeking other institutions willing to contribute to the portal by sharing access to their materials depicting Franco American history.



Postcard is from the Fortunat Michaud collection
https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/fmichaud_postcards/

"We also recognize, however, that Franco American primary sources exist outside of our partners' care," Pinette says. *"In fact, thousands of records documenting the lives and activities of Franco Americans beginning in the nineteenth century can be found in over 75 other major collecting institutions throughout the United States and Canada, including the Library of Congress, Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (BAnQ), New York Public Library, Harvard University and more."*

"It is our intention to place all of these materials and their home repositories in conversation with one another through our portal. Making plain the contents of Franco American collections and their locations collaboratively will cast light on the truly national and international scopes of Franco American history and life," Pinette says.

Primary sources detailing the French-Canadian, Acadian and Québécois(e) diaspora of New England can sometimes be difficult to find. The digital, bilingual archive portal will make them more visible, searchable and accessible to researchers, educators, students, genealogists and the general public.

Users will be able to browse and search through the catalog of records featured on the website, which it will categorize by indicators like place, family name, subject or cultural theme. Once a user selects an item to view, the portal will connect them to that item at its original source in the digital sphere or a physical archive.

UMaine Franco American Programs will host a Zoom presentation for Franco

American Digital Archives/Portail franco-américain at 7 p.m. on March 16. This online event is free and open to the public. Anyone can register for the event through the Franco American Programs' events calendar.

"This collaboration works hard to overcome barriers to the discoverability of Franco-American archival materials, and in doing so it aims to open them to new forms of study, and to improve access to pieces of our communities' histories that may have become hidden," says Jacob Albert, project manager for Franco American Programs who led development for the project.

For more information about the project and its contributors, contact Pinette, spinette@maine.edu, or Albert, jacob.albert@maine.edu.

UMaine has been active in Franco American studies for more than 50 years. The university established the Franco American Centre in 1972, then created a Franco American Studies Program, still the only one of its kind in the U.S., in the 1990s.

Contact: Marcus Wolf, 207.581.3721;
marcus.wolf@maine.edu

<https://umaine.edu/news/blog/2021/03/12/first-ever-online-bilingual-portal-to-franco-american-archives-launches-this-spring/>

More from Maine on page 38

A Solitary Birch

by
Caroline Castonguay

Last year, when I studied abroad in France, I expected a home-coming of sorts.

French-Canadians are quite proud of their culture. However, there tends to be a subliminal message ushered from generation to generation that France is still the old country. France is still adorned in luxury, Versailles its crowning jewel; it is the aloof pinnacle of sophistication. For all my ancestors, France was home, if only for a time.

Yet when I arrived and began speaking with people there, I felt alienated. I had no special connection and there was no familiarity to be found. People were not taken with my last name. There were no signs of recognition, no sentiment of reunion. My Quebecois expressions were shunned, and any detection of a non-native Parisian accent led to being ignored or worse, laughed at. For so many years I studied French so as to connect with that lost part of me. I told my host mom when I initially arrived that I was considering living there someday. She

turned to look at me incredulously and told me "I don't think you should do that". Why? In her words, "you're French-Canadian". Distinctly not French; somehow lesser. Clearly, too much time had been spent in the New World and so any familial bonds, in their eyes, had dissolved. I was just another stranger.

At this point, I decided to lean more into my true heritage. But, even now I wonder: what is a French-Canadian? I want to ask my ancestors that question, and I want to know if it's already too late for me since I am writing this in English. I want them to hear me, to hear my case, and to decide for me who I am. Have too many winters passed?

My family is completely French-Canadian, with no exceptions on either side. It is filled with names like Roche and Louis and Jacques, with men and women with dark hair and fair skin like fresh snow. Their eyelids tend to droop tenderly at the edges, and their noses tend to be more proud and prominent. My grandparents were all from Canada. They came from simple farms and overcomplicated, large families (my father had 54 first cousins). When my grandparents moved to the United States, they moved to a factory town for work and became part

of the diaspora. At home, my grandparents used French for different purposes. For my father, French was a secret language only his parents shared; it was spoken in short quips and hushed tones. For my mother, it was used more often, although she and her sister tended to respond in English. It became clear during their adolescence that speaking any French at public school was somehow wrong, and that perpetrators would be punished accordingly. My aunt was forced to repeat kindergarten and during middle school, my mother was back-handed in the face with a thick, hard-covered dictionary, courtesy of an English-speaking nun. On multiple occasions, their knuckles were rapped, the wood cracking so loud that the classroom was disconcerted into a timid silence. They were forced to assimilate. It was at this point that the language was lost, for when I was born, I was not taught a lick of French.

*I'm angry because I feel
I am too American to be
French-Canadian, and too
French-Canadian to be
American.*

I formally learned French in high school and college. I attended classes, poured over toppling mountains of books, diligently listened to French music for hours, practiced and honed my speaking at every opportunity. However, nothing could ever teach me my grandparents' accent. My grandparents don't speak with a modern Quebecois accent; they speak with an older Acadian accent. While similar, there are distinct linguistic and auditory differences that are difficult to replicate. When they die, their antiquated language will die with them.

My mother is still subconsciously ashamed of her heritage. Rural French-Canadians have a reputation, or at least they used to, of being rough - alcoholics and drug-users. My own family lineage is full of poor potato farmers who placed zero value on education. By middle school, many had left to work full time in the potato and tobacco fields or to fell lumber in the dense sylvans of the glacial north. What my mother doesn't acknowledge or perhaps doesn't understand is the oppression

French-Canadians have faced. Where she sees weakness, I see resilience. Our ancestors survived the perilous journey

over the Atlantic, they survived a war that should have stayed back in Europe, and they suffered through the Great Upheaval where families and friends were ripped apart violently. They endured forced sterilizations in Vermont and even harassment from the KKK. Yet, we are a stocky breed and we persist against all odds.

I want to know if my ancestors feel indignant at being seen by my mother only in half-shadow and then cast aside. But I also want them to know that I'm carrying the ceinture fléchée; I've tied it firmly around my waist as I continue to move forward, with them, for them, because of them. I still make pâté chinois, my grandmother makes tourtière. Our holiday house is filled with the sweet aroma of ployes, tarte au sucre, and bûche de Noël. I still tap my feet and link arms with my younger sister when I play a quadrille on Spotify. My heart still aches upon hearing C'est la belle Françoise. I still tell and translate our stories of oral tradition, from the "Chasse-Galerie" to the "Loup-Garou". I have even picked up Quebecois vocabulary and phrases, which I try to use as often as I can. I am the raconteur of my family.

But I also want mes aïeux to know I'm angry. I'm angry because I feel I am too American to be French-Canadian, and too French-Canadian to be American. I'm angry because I am the sole individual in my family, outside of those in Canada, who still speaks even a little French. Hundreds of years of tradition and wisdom, lost in a few strokes of the tongue - yet, it means a lifetime of searching for me. Why didn't my school teach me about the Great Upheaval? Why did I have to dig through Google to find historical figures like Léo Major? Why do we in America rejoice at posters that declare sentiments such as those along the lines of: "if you're reading this in English, thank a soldier"? I wonder what my 11th great grandmother, the first French child born in New France in 1620 would think upon hearing demands of "speak English, you're in America". I wonder if their children would have been kept in cages too.

Whenever I have the time during the winter season, I go walking in the woods. There, the world is shrouded by a white veil; I like to believe that I'm piercing it, that I'm walking through a portal made of maple and pine to the past. I lose myself in thought as I meander, my boots sinking in the deep snow. In another's gaze perhaps I'm a ghost,

(Continued on page 39)



Biddeford Cultural and Heritage Center

Biddeford Cultural and Heritage Center

*Preserving, teaching and sharing for the future. Honoring our past.
Celebrating the present.*

Biddeford is home to many great women, both past and present. We have had artists, musicians, opera singers, authors, civic leaders, teachers, activists and much more, but many do not realize Biddeford had its own "Poet-Laureate" of international fame. Her name was Helene Thivierge.

Helene was one of 5 children born of immigrant parents. Her father, Narcisse, was a doctor and opened the first french pharmacy in the City of Biddeford. Her mother helped to found the first parochial school in the city under the supervision of Reverend Ponsardin and was Helene's first teacher. Helene also taught at St. Joseph's School for more than 20 years, the same school that her mother founded.

Helene loved writing and graduated at the top of her class. She wrote under various pen names for "La Justice" in Biddeford, the "Bulletin" of Biddeford, "Le Soleil" in Quebec. She also wrote for "L'Action

Catholique" of Quebec, "La Semaine Paroissials" of Lewiston and had articles in various French magazines, "Le Messenger de New York" and "Renovation" in France.

She won many literary prizes as a result of her writings and poetry. In 1936, Helene won both first and second prize in an international in a contest sponsored by the National Literary Circle and was awarded the title of "Poet-Laureate". She was awarded the "Medal of Merit" in Boston by the French Consul, Albert Chambon on May 7th, 1950.

In addition to her writing, Helene was involved in many civic organizations and causes. She was one of the founders of St. Andre's Home and Hospital and the first president of its auxiliary. She was well known, admired and respected in the community. She died in 1963 and is buried at St. Joseph's Cemetery in Biddeford.



The Biddeford Cultural and Heritage Center, a joint collaboration of like minded people and organizations, is hoping to preserve, share and teach the heritage, culture and rich history of the City of Biddeford and its people for present and future generations by piecing together the fabric of our ethnic quilt, one piece at a time.

(A Solitary Birch continued from page 38)

a dark omen of what could be; or maybe in a quick glance I am a contemplative birch tree, thanks to my pale skin and burnt umber tresses. The streams, the frost, the birds, they are all silent. I try to imagine a shack is just up ahead, in a snowbank, with lumberjacks making tire d'erable. Gossamery smoke is twirling and rising from the chimney, enticingly dissipating into the arctic breeze. It briefly coils and curls a faint wispy finger, beckoning me forward, only to dematerialize with the rest of the apparition. At other times, I dream there's a cabin with a fire gently roaring inside, filled with all of my forebearers; I walk in, not even needing to knock, and they know me. They even smile. But the vision always melts away as soon as we try to speak; I don't let the fantasy go beyond that. Alone in the quiet, I atone by pausing and listening. I listen for a whisper, an affirmation riding the wind which blows southward towards me. Je me souviens.



Helene Thivierge



Helene awarded the "Medal of Merit" in Boston by the French Consul, Albert Chambon on May 7th, 1950



The Mill

by *Claude Milot*

I grew up in Manville, Rhode Island, a village on the Blackstone River, four miles south of Woonsocket.

The Blackstone has been called the hardest-working river in the United States. It is not long, flowing a mere 48 miles from its source near Worcester, Massachusetts, to Pawtucket, Rhode Island, where it empties into Narragansett Bay. But in those 48 miles the river drops 1,300 feet, supplying water-power for 200 years to a string of mills along the way. One of those mills was in Manville. I say "was," because a complex of retirement homes now covers the area where the mill once stood.

The Manville mill has a long history. At its apex in the early decades of the 20th century it was the largest textile mill in all of New England, with over 100,000 spindles, 4,200 looms, and as many as 3,200 workers. Then the Depression hit, reducing production by 50%. In 1932 employment dropped to 400. But fortunes were soon to change. When World War II produced a great demand for cotton cloth, it turned Manville into a boom town. Some 2,500 mill employees worked three shifts, 24 hours a day, to satisfy the demand. Sadly, the good times did not last.

The post-war period saw many of the Blackstone Valley textile mills move south where labor was plentiful and cheap. The Manville plant was no exception. Unable to restore the mill's glory days, the owners closed its doors in 1948. From then on, the mill would be used as a storehouse by various companies. But that was not the end: it would come less than a decade later with a disaster seared in my memory.

The month of August in 1955 had been hot and dry, and people were hoping for a little rain to break the spell. On August 18th they got a lot more than hoped for. A dying Hurricane Diane passed over the area and deposited a record 9.5 inches on Woonsocket. Some surrounding areas got as much as 11 inches. Cold Spring Park where I had played Pony League baseball was under water. Several streets were washed out. Flood waters threatened industrial properties all along the river. One man was electrocuted when he tried to remove a live power line from his son's car. Then it got worse.

The dam at Horseshoe Falls above

Woonsocket broke. The local newspaper described water five feet deep pouring down city streets, carrying away a television set, a couch, an empty showcase, a mannequin; cars from dealerships on their sides, upside down, on top of each other; mud all over everything.

Towns downriver fared no better, especially the mills in places like Albion and Ashton where my mother had worked in 1943. Raging waters ripped the steel bridge in Berkeley from its moorings; debris piled up against other bridges; spectators gathered above to watch the tumbling waters.

I went down to the Manville bridge to see for myself. The river was so high I



Manville Mill, Largest fire in Rhode Island, September 12, 1955

couldn't tell where the 18-foot dam was. The water barely passed under the bridge, which had been 30 feet above the river before the flood. I saw a refrigerator float by. Others said they had seen coffins. That may very well have been true, because when the Horseshoe Dam broke, the rushing waters carved a huge swath out of the cemetery below. Dozens of caskets went for a ride through Woonsocket streets looking for a new final resting place.

Spectators came from all over to view the worst destruction of all. Standing on the bridge, they witnessed the mill's weave shed, which had straddled the Blackstone for more than a century, topple into the boiling, flood-swollen river. With it went the five-story brick tower jutting from the west side of the mill. Then a huge section of the main building, undermined by the torrent below, fell into the river. A wall collapsed,

taking with it a section of flooring and the roof above. It wasn't long before thousands of cartons, which had been perched precariously on the edge of exposed floors, began to plunge into the cascading surf.

The demons of destruction weren't finished. Less than a month later the mill burned to the ground. People came from all over to see it; so many, in fact, that their cars blocked some roads needed by fire equipment to reach the blaze.

The Manville fire was the largest fire in Rhode Island history. People who looked down from Woonsocket saw a huge cloud of smoke; some thought it looked like an atomic bomb had been dropped. The smoke could be seen from Providence, 20 miles away.

Authorities could not agree on how the fire started. A friend and former classmate of mine claimed to have the definitive version. He told me that sparks from acetylene torches used by welders working on the roof during repair operations had fallen through the roof and ignited rubble on the floor below. The flood had destroyed the water lines that fed the sprinkler system, and by the time fire engines showed up, the fire was out of control, fed by exploding barrels of chemicals, walls with who-knows-how-many coats of paint, plus 800,000 square feet of wooden floors impregnated with a century's worth of oil drippings from hundreds of textile machines.

Within minutes the blaze was so hot it destroyed a nearby crane. Fire companies concentrated on wetting down buildings across the river. Fortunately, winds carried the fire downriver, and the village was spared. Five hours after the fire started there was nothing left to burn.

A large flock of pigeons circled the remains for hours. They had roosted in the mill towers and now had no place to land. The same could symbolically be said for the many hundreds of villagers who had earned their living in the mill before a flood and a fire had reduced 200 years of history to a pile of smoking rubble.





BOOKS/LIVRES

Franco-Americans of the State of Maine U.S.A. and Their Achievements

*Michael Guignard
Alexandria, VA*

For many years, I have had in my possession a book I bought from a private collector entitled Franco-Americans of the State of Maine U.S.A. and Their Achievements. It was published in 1915 by the Royal Press in Lewiston, Maine with J.H. Burgess listed as the editor. It is seldom cited in books about Franco-American history and is not in any holdings of libraries that I frequent in Maine. The editor states in a preface that “the work seeks to make familiar to English reading people the status of those French-Canadian birth or parentage in the professions, business, religious and social affairs of our State.” It reads like a publication that would have been produced by the Chamber of Commerce.

The book contains 204 short biographies of notable Franco-Americans in the state of Maine. Eighty-seven are from Lewiston which, according to Mr. Burgess boasted 10,841 Franco-Americans out of a population of 26,247 in 1910. Trailing far behind Lewiston in second place was Biddeford where there were 19 Francos listed out of a Franco population of 8,697. Biddeford’s population was 17,079 in 1910. The other 98 Francos listed are scattered throughout the state.

Editor Burgess adds that “fully two-thirds of all of the personal property tax in Lewiston was paid by Francos.” Lewiston was also featured in the photographs at the beginning of the book including two of its priests, St. Mary’s General Hospital with a photo of one of its founders, Dr. Louis Martel, the Dominican monastery, the old St. Peter’s Church, the Dominican block, the New St. Peter’s Church, the Healy Asylum and the Association St. Dominique’s Club House. There are no photographs of any Franco institution in York County with only two francos listed for Sanford and none for Saco. It is interesting to speculate what such vignette of biographies would have featured

had it been published in Biddeford.

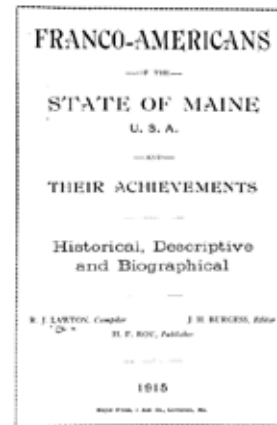
Back 50 years ago when I started writing about Franco-Americans, I concentrated on their most common occupation, mill workers. Recent books also focus on Franco-Americans as millworkers. In his excellent book entitled, A Distinct Alien Race, David Vermette writes that French Canadian migrants were generally poor when they came to New England and, at least in the first few generations, remained poor when compared to other working-class ethnics.

During the course of my research on Franco-Americans, I slowly shifted the focus of my study to learn more about Franco-American businessmen and professionals in my home town of Biddeford and elsewhere in Maine. The Franco Americans of the State of Maine provided me with a new source of information.

In a nutshell, the biographies in the book invariably mention that the subjects are hard-working, honest and “held in high esteem” in their community. The short biography of Joseph Hélie is representative of the story of many of the other 203 subjects of the book.

“Among the most prosperous Franco-American businessmen of Cumberland County, Maine must be included Joseph Hélie, the well-known baker of Brunswick. Moreover, he is one of the most representative of his race considered from an industrial standpoint, achieving pronounced success by his own exertions, enterprise and progressive methods. Mr. Hélie was born in St. Can. P.Q., Canada, in April 1870..... (on) June 1, 1892, the family removed to Augusta, Maine, and then to Brunswick in November, 1893.

Mr. Hélie was first employed at farming and then, at the age of 19, he commenced to learn the trade of baker. He continued in this employment for Saint Maria for 20 months and then on April 1, 1897 established his present prosperous baking business. Four skilled assistants are employed on average, and the products stand unsurpassed in high-grade excellence with the demand steadily increasing. Mr. Hélie was married in Augusta, October 16, 1892, to Miss Marie Lepage and 12 children have been born to them. Three of whom are living. Mr. Hélie has not only met with financial success, paying as he does \$100 in real estate taxes and doing a large annual volume of business, but he is esteemed universally in Brunswick for his commercial integrity and good qualities of citizenship.



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He is a member of Union St. Jean Baptiste, C.O.F. (Catholic Order of Foresters) and Artisans.” (p. 77)

So in 23 years of marriage, Mr. Hélie fathered 12 children but only three survived infancy or adolescence. Almost all the biographies mention the number of children born to the individual described and the number who survived. The infant mortality rate was depressing to read, and Mr. Hélie arrived in Brunswick 7 years after the diphtheria epidemic that hit Brunswick in 1886 as described by David Vermette. (pp. 131-142) I find it curious that the authors of The Franco-Americans of Maine would have included such an alarming statistic in a book aimed at showing the successes of those migrants they were describing. Child mortality was so common, I guess, that the authors did not give it a second thought. In Brunswick, even Francis Cabot and his wife Mary Louisa, who owned the overcrowded, mill company tenements without proper sanitation that housed Franco-American workers, “buried two of their ten children.” (Vermette, p. 141)

Mr. Hélie’s bio contains the phrase “one of the most representative of his race.” (p. 77) The term “race” is found throughout the book. “Possessing the various traits of his race that have gained so much for it in the State of Maine” is how Lanio Bérubé of Lisbon is described (p. 81) “No citizen probably is a better representative of the race than F.X. Marcotte of Lewiston.” (p. 84) Joseph Leblanc, President of the Lewiston Steam Dye House “has been practically an eyewitness to the great increase and importance of his race” (p. 98) George Simpson, a clothier from Waterville, is “considered one of the most influential of his race:” (p. 87) There are only five non-francophone surnames in the book and all of them had both parents born in Canada and had French-Canadian mothers. Parents were always listed (Continued on page 42)

(*Franco-Americans of the State of Maine U.S.A. and Their Achievements continued from page 42*)

in these biographical sketches as were the number of brothers and sisters and the number surviving. The infant mortality among the children of the subjects of this book was lower than among their brothers and sisters.

Eugenicists and nativists at the time that The Franco-Americans of Maine was published referred to Franco-Americans as a “race” – an inferior race and “a distinct alien race.” I find it curious that editor Burgess uses the term “race” throughout his book simply as a synonym for ethnic group or nationality when describing very favorably the 204 subjects he writes about. But there was never a negative word attributed to any of Burgess’ subjects. Like with Mr. H elie, when one of those described paid property tax in the three figures, Burgess made sure to highlight the achievement.

The occupations of these 204 prominent Franco-Americans were varied. They were grocers, furniture dealers, clothiers, actors, musicians, priests, public servants, pharmacists, shoemakers and shoe repairmen, jewelers, bakers, candy makers, watch repairmen, lawyers, doctors, undertakers, journalists, traveling salesmen, sales clerks, photographers, insurance agents, real estate agents, retail clerks, tailors, bookkeepers, policemen, firefighters, politicians and accountants. Fourteen doctors were listed, as well as 4 lawyers and 4 dentists. Most of these professionals had been educated in Canada. An exception was Dr. Robert Wiseman, Lewiston’s first Franco mayor and Maine’s second behind Albert Marcille of Biddeford. “Dr. Wiseman is largely a self-made man” (p.46) After a career in business, he entered Bowdoin College’s medical school and also studied at the Post Graduate Hospital in New York City. The other famous Franco-American doctor in Lewiston, Louis Martel, who was instrumental in founding “Ste. Marie’s Hospital” was educated at Montreal’s College of Physicians and Surgeons. He is the only subject among the 204 who received recognition posthumously, having passed away in 1897. (p. 46) Marcille is described as “Biddeford’s highly esteemed ex-mayor.....he is one of two of his race to thus serve” (p. 147) After graduating from Biddeford High School, Marcille worked as a stone cutter in a quarry for 8 years followed by three years as a grocery store clerk. Before being elected mayor in 1910, he served as city clerk for 3 years. Married

in 1901, he and his wife had five children, “three of whom are living.”

Biddeford’s other counterpart to Dr. Wiseman would have been Dr. George Pr ecourt who having graduated from Saco’s Thornton Academy in 1904 matriculated to “the Bowdoin Medical School, graduating with the degree of M.D. in 1908.” From high school graduate to M.D. in four years! “Always deeply interested in all measures and movements that may be of benefit to his race” Dr. Pr ecourt organized La Cause National. (page 201) Burgess does not mention that La Cause National was the organization which opposed the Bishop of Portland during the Corporation Sole Controversy or that he was interdicted for his efforts. He was subsequently elected mayor of Biddeford but after The Franco-Americans of Maine was published.

While doing research on the Franco-American community in Biddeford, I read the Pepperell Sheet, an internal textile company newsletter. Employees with many years of service were regularly recognized for their service. There was no place where one could read about employees who had used the mills as a stepping-stone to more remunerative, less physically taxing and higher status employment.

Most of the 204 featured migrated from Canada. Their first stop often was not the city that they eventually settled in. One bio that caught my eye was Nacisse Renouf who had married the daughter of a prominent band leader in Biddeford, Pierre Painchaud, who is not listed in the book. Born in Trois Pistoles in 1865, Renouf went to Troy, New York at the age of 17. “At the age of 20 in 1886, Mr. Renouf shipped on a whaler from Boston to the West Indies and the coast of Africa. From here he shipped to the Azores, at Port Horta, where he remained two years and made himself familiar with the Portuguese language spoken there and he speaks several languages fluently.” He then went to England and Ireland and to several European countries. Upon his return to the U.S., he worked in the mills in Lewiston for 3 years and then settled in Biddeford where he worked as a photographer. “In 1893 he became established in the real estate and insurance business.....The business today is one of the most successful of its kind in entire York County (p. 184-85). Renouf married in 1891 and “five children have been born two of whom are living.” (p. 185)

The editors of both Le Messager and La Justice are featured. Jean Baptiste Couture is described as “wielding a trenchant

pen..... in the interests of his race” in Lewiston (p. 190) while Alfred Bonneau is also recognized as “wielding a trenchant pen.....among those of his own race.” (p. 153) Both are cited as great businessmen though and for their civic-mindedness. There is no mention of them having been interdicted by the Bishop of Portland for their role in the Corporation Sole controversy, an intra-ethnic, public conflict that no doubt did nothing to endear French Canadian migrants among the WASPs of Maine.

Unfortunately, there was not one woman featured among the 204 biographies. No nuns are mentioned, even those who were school principals. No women who were teachers, journalists or millinery and other shop owners that catered to women’s clothes and shoes are listed. Two of the 204 subjects are featured with a photo of their wives and children: Henri Brosseau, a pharmacist in Rumford and wife Eve and Philippe Roy, a grocer in Fort Kent with wife Lina. (p. 110 and p. 142) Except for the priests, all subjects who provided photos wore coats and ties for those photos.

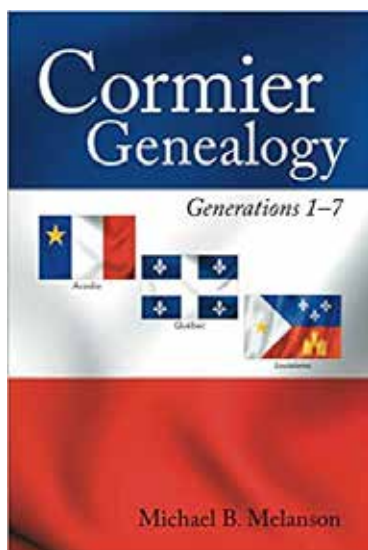
Having worked in the immigration field and still doing pro bono work now, I get a chance to meet many foreign nationals who have recently immigrated to the U.S. Recent immigrants I know generally do well in the U.S. economy. They open start-up companies at a greater rate than those born in the U.S. although the effects of this pandemic could easily wipe out some of the gains made by those who have immigrated recently. But immigrants are generally the more ambitious, risk-taking and hard working segments of their populations back home. Our ancestors were once those immigrants. Of the 204 subjects of The Franco-Americans of Maine, almost 90% were born in Canada.

In summary, the authors of The Franco-Americans of Maine write: “Many.....have noted the fact that numerous young men seeking employment in the industrial centres of Maine have gained final business success from a very humble beginning. This shows, better than by any other means, the sterling traits of the race as applied to enterprise, ambition to advance, thrift, and earnest endeavor.” (p. 103) I trust that the continued flow of legal immigrants which until very recently numbered over one million a year in the past decade will not render socio-economic mobility a thing of the past in America, although such mobility may have to wait until the second generation.



Cormier Genealogy: Generations 1-7

by Michael B. Melanson

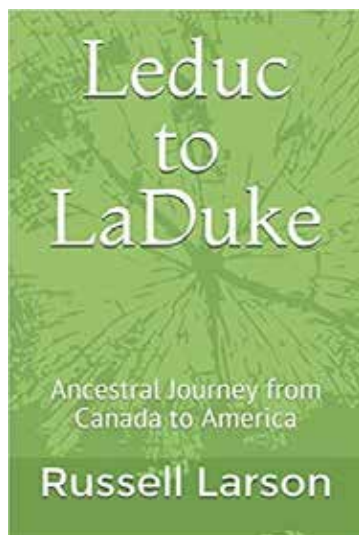


In the spring of 1644, Robert Cormier, a master ship carpenter, his wife, Marie Péraud, and their two young sons, Thomas and Jean, sailed on the Le Petit Saint-Pierre from La Rochelle, France, to Cape Breton (Nova Scotia). Robert was among the tradesmen hired to work at Fort St-Pierre (today, St. Peters). His three-year contract was the longest among the men and his salary of 120 livres a year was the second highest. He was also the only one to take his family with him. In the 1670s, Thomas Cormier, his wife, Marie-Madeleine Girouard, and their young family were among the pioneers who founded the colony of Beaubassin, Acadia. They settled in the village of Ouescoque (Amherst Point, Nova Scotia), a place the Cormier family called home for 80 years. In 1755, the forced deportation of the Acadian people tore families apart. While some Cormiers were deported and held prisoner in South Carolina and Georgia, others escaped into the woods only to experience the horrors of refugee camps. *Cormier Genealogy: Generations 1 – 7* tells the story of these remarkable and resilient people from their first arrival in Acadia to their post-deportation resettlement in New Brunswick, Québec, Cape Breton, Louisiana, St-Pierre et Miquelon, and St-Domingue (Haiti). This well-documented, 643-page paperback includes a 5,900-person index, complete endnotes, and a full bibliography. Michael B. Melanson is also the author of *Melanson-Melançon: The Genealogy of an Acadian and Cajun Family*; *The Melansons of Southeastern New Brunswick ~ A Genealogy*; *Journey: An Irish-American Odyssey*; and *Journey Genealogies: Hart, Cunningham, Hanney, Feeney, Mackey & Mahoney*.

https://www.amazon.com/Cormier-Genealogy-Generations-Michael-Melanson/dp/0975260944/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=Cormier+Genealogy&qid=1616442289&s=books&sr=1-1

Leduc to LaDuke: Ancestral Journey from Canada to America

by Russell Larson



Nearly 400 years of family history covering the Leduc family name. From their beginnings in France to the arrival in New France, and finally America, their history and stories tell the pioneering spirit of this family.



https://www.amazon.com/Leduc-LaDuke-Family-History-America/dp/B08XGSTQ2V/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=Leduc+to+LaDuke&qid=1616442158&s=books&sr=1-1



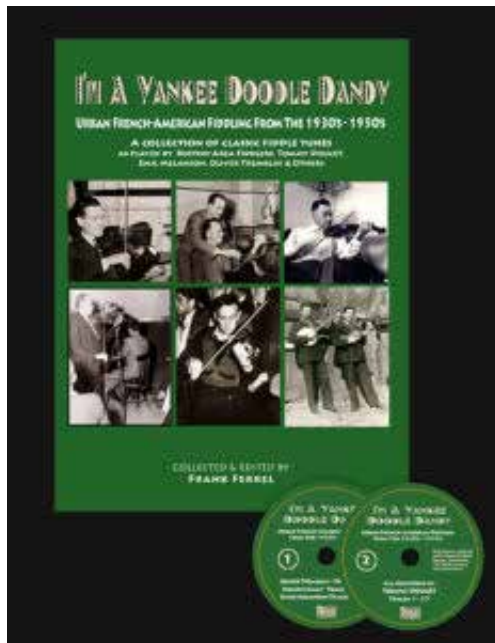
NEW!

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An extensive collection of personal interviews, oral histories, home recordings, collected books and hand-written manuscripts reflecting the rich French-American fiddle tradition that flourished around New England urban and metro areas in the mid-20th century. The principal players in this collection include Tommy Doucet, Emil Melanson, Oliver Tremblay, Alcide Aucoin, Romeo Lemay and Gerry Robichaud, all of whom played together, shared tunes and accompanied one another.

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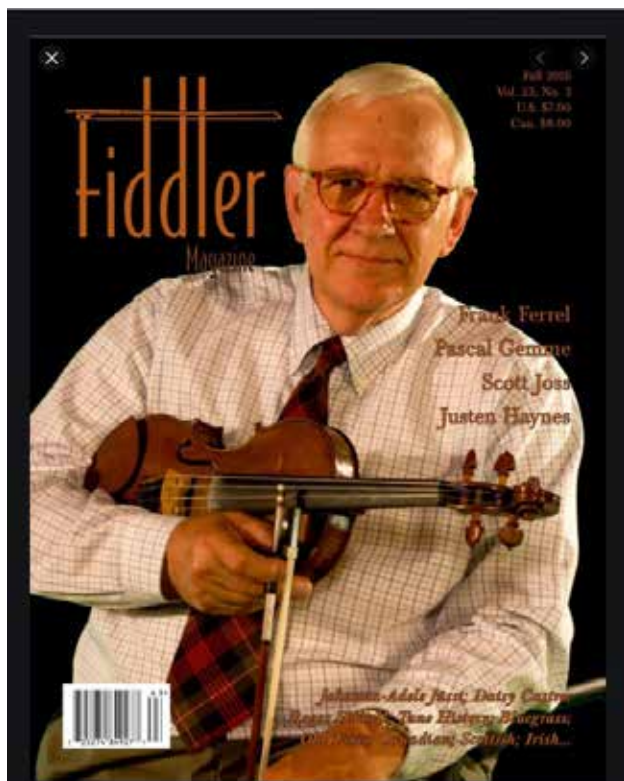


About Frank Ferrel

Frank Ferrel is widely regarded as a leading authority on North American traditional fiddle music. Along with his collecting, publishing, and music research, he is considered to be one of the leading American fiddlers performing today.

Frank began his fiddling career at age 8, being first influenced by his grandfather, a traditional musician and native of Ohio and West Virginia. In the early 1970's, while teaching in New England, he rekindled his interest in traditional fiddling under the influence of local Irish, French-Acadian, and Canadian Maritimes fiddlers.

Mr. Ferrel has kept active musically over the years playing for major festivals as well as local music sessions and dances. Frank has made numerous appearances on the nationally broadcast American radio series, A Prairie Home Companion, and is included on their anthology recording, "PHC Tourists." He has performed with the legendary Celtic group, The Boys of the Lough, both as guest artist on their Scottish Highlands and Islands tours, as well as being a featured performer in numerous festival and concert performances throughout North America. His major label CD release, Yankee Dreams, was chosen by the Library of Congress for inclusion in their Select List of 25 Recordings of American Folk Music. Most recently he was featured in the fall, 2016 issue of Fiddler Magazine. In 2017 Frank was inducted into the North American Fiddler's Hall of Fame.



<http://frankferrel.com>

POETRY/POÉSIE...

BOOKS/LIVRES

Habi*by Meghan Murphy*

Habi he, Habi who,
Rien et tous qui nous sépare,
Mais j'ai besoin, seulement, de vous.

Je manque les mots pour m'exprimer,
La langue de mes ancêtres,
La langue qui reste dans ma bouche,
Sont inutiles quand j'essaye de communiquer ce que j'ai au fond de ce cœur.

Habi he, Habi who,
Rien et tous qui nous sépare,
Mais j'ai besoin, seulement, de vous.

Mais mon chéri, si tu as le temps,
Je vais prendre chaque minute qui reste,
Pour essayer de prouver ce que je sens,
Pour je suis pour toi, comme tu es pour moi.

Habi he, Habi who,
Rien et tous qui nous sépare,
Mais j'ai besoin, seulement, de vous.

La distance est faible contre l'amour et passion,
Les deux aux fin, ils nous manquent pas
C'est claire dans ce que nous lèvent chaque jours contre nos tristesses,
Je te remercie pour d'être ma bouclie contre les temps durs.

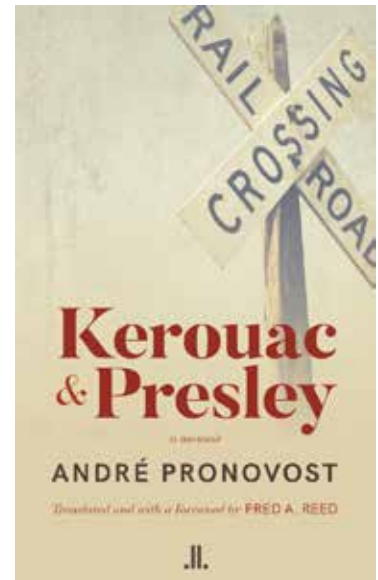
Habi he, Habi who,
Rien et tous qui nous sépare,
Mais j'ai besoin, seulement, de vous.

Comme un cadeau de Dieu lui même,
Je vais garder nos histoire précieux,
Pour inspirer les possibilités qui vient
J'espère cette offre des mots c'est assez.

Habi he, Habi who,
Rien et tous qui nous sépare,
Mais j'ai besoin, seulement, de vous.

Donc, avec ce temp et ce cadeau parfaits
On y va pour la meilleure chose de nos petites vies
Ici vers la, je reste fidèle et forte
Je ferai de mon mieux pour toi, moi, et nous.

Habi he, Habi who,
Rien et tous qui nous sépare,
Mais j'ai besoin, seulement, de vous.



Kerouac & Presley
André Pronovost
Fred A. Reed

Kerouac & Presley takes you on the road, guitar slung over your shoulder. Beginning in the Montreal neighbourhood where a teenage girl was brutally murdered in 1975, the International Year of the Woman, the story travels to an Abbey in Connecticut where a former starlet and Elvis co-star fled Hollywood to become a nun. This is the memoir of a wanderer who sets out to rewrite "the blank and flawless page" that is America. Inspired by the history of Quebec and America, *Kerouac & Presley* is an American prayer in prose and paragraphs.

Originally from Laval, Quebec, **André Pronovost** has a Master's degree in Animal Psychology. In 1978 he hiked the Appalachian Trail from one end to the other. The original French version of his seventh book, *Kerouac & Presley*, won the 2018 Quebec Arts Council (CALQ) literary prize. He lives in Montreal.

A three-time winner of the Governor General's Award for translation, Fred A. Reed has translated works by many of Quebec's leading authors, as well as works by modern Greek writers. His most recent work, with David Homel, includes Philippe Arsenault's *Zora* and Martine Desjardins' *The Green Chamber*. His latest book is *Then We Were One: Fragments of Two Lives*, an autobiographical essay, published in French by Fides Éditeur. He lives in Morocco.

https://www.lindaleith.com/eng/Pages/bookDetail/Kerouac_Presley

POETRY/POÉSIE...

Would the Woods that I know

by Paul Marin

Would the woods that I know
bare all
and tell who's been here
and when and why?

Would I learn that others, too,
have dialogues with your leafy limbs?
or
Were they just thinking board feet?

Did they see you as so many cords?
or
Were you but pulp and paper
down-river to pay envelope?
Did they think of you
as solid fuel
meant to spit and crackle
till spent into mounds of gray?

Maybe someone had fine pieces in mind
on which to slap polish.

Were you greeted with a civil tongue,
by the way,
or was it with but a grunt?
Was there no "May I"?
or "Sorry big fella"?

Tell me, mighty pine,
Was your grandfather felled by an ax,
one keenly edged
and made sharper
with the cutter's spit,
made brown
with a plug cut fresh
at mid-morn's break
for that most telling cut?

Was each blow a whack
surgically executed and calculated rhythmically?
Or was it but a series of mindless thuds
followed by the silent sylvan seconds
measuring your last proud stand?

FRANCO-AMÉRICAINS -- POURQUOI, POURQUOI PAS?

Par **Ronald G. Héroux** (© *Février 2021*)

POURQUOI avons-nous
Les Franco-Américains
Pour la plupart
Perdu notre langue natale
Oublié notre histoire?

Disparu pour beaucoup
Entre nous
Sont nos liens
Avec nos cousins
Nord de la frontière.

Il me semble aussi
Que la plupart
Des Québécois
Des Canadiens français
Nous ont oublié
Comme la France
A laissé tomber
La Nouvelle France
Le Canada Français
Sauf de Gaulle
Avec son cri
"Vive le Québec Libre".

Oui, nous avons été
Assimilés, acculturés
Dans la multitude
D'anglophones Américains.

Quand même
Il ne faut pas oublier
Notre héritage
Nos ancêtres.

POURQUOI PAS se réunir encore
Comme en dix neuf cents
Soixante seize
Le grand colloque
"Les Franco-Américains
La Promesse Du Passé
Les Réalités Du Présent"?

Aussi, c'est le temps
De renouveler nos liens
Avec nos cousins
Du Nord
Pour assurer ENSEMBLE
La survivance
De notre langue française
Au moins notre héritage.

J'ai un peu de chagrin
Mais aussi un peu d'espoir
Que demain
De façon ou d'autre
Nous commencerons
Une nouvelle histoire
De la Franco-Américanie.

Were you logged and yarded
one by one,
next to your kin,
one on the other
and the other
on the other
until all the others
were on top of you
to please the scaler's eye?

Were you logged and yarded
by someone answering to the name
of Nellie,
Jake
or Ned?



Franco-Americans of Maine, Then and Now Home Where We Were

The story of Franco-American immigration to Maine is complex and fascinating—but not a short story to tell. Where We Were is a compendium of interactive maps and visualizations that investigate the history and genealogy of the Franco-American community in Maine.

Life Along the Rails — Armand Vachon on Love & Work Between Quebec & Maine



Tying In — Antoinette Therrien Remembers Lewiston



Notre 5¢ / Our 5¢:

A Farm & Family — The Lives of Women in Lower Canada

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Grandi a Grand Isle (au nord du Maine en 1960)

— par Don Levesque

J'ai pêché au bôrd su' Primme
En arrière d'su' Leaudivine.
J'ai marché su' l'île de Lille
Écouté d'la musique avec ti-Gill,
Joué d'la guitar avec Jim pi Jim,
Allé a Van Buren pour voir les filles,
Manger des bines l'samedi soir
Des hot dogs rouge routis b'en noir.

Assis su' l'bôrd d'la rivière Saint-Jean
Pêcher pour d'la truite, poigner des p'tit blancs,
Manger des ployes pi des cortons,
Jouer au file avec un vieux bouton.
Ont allais patiner su' Guy Beaupré
Pi ont allais au movies l'samedi après midi.
Jouer d'la basketball au côté d'su' Neil,
Rider jusqu'a Lille avec nos vieux bicycles

Jouer d'la pool s'Octave Caron,
Jouer au cartes assis su' l'perron.
Aller s'beigner a l'éclûge a Pierre Cyr.
Manger des crêpes avec d'la tire.
Rider en skateboard dans route a 'Lexis.
Voir mon oncle Denis bouére son Pepsi.
Manger des groisselles pi d'la rhubarbe sûre,
Des p'tites pommettes pi des confitures

Soigner 'es poules su' pepère Ouellette,
Couper du bois su' un vieux joualette.
R'garder l' tv su' Guy Beaupré
Pendant qu' mon père prenais une p'tite bière.
Rider en chars dans l'chemin des concessions,
Écouter ma mère jouer son accordéon.
Sonner 'a cloche d'école avec un gros clou.
Ramasser des noissettes pi des fraises itou

J'ai grandi a Grand Isle au nord du Maine
J'ai grandi a Grand Isle au nord du Maine



Don Levesque was born in Grand Isle, went to high school in Van Buren, university in Fort Kent, and worked in Madawaska for 25 years at the St. John Valley Times, the last 15 years as editor and publisher. He is in the Maine Journalism Hall of Fame and the Maine Franco-American Hall of Fame, neither of which has an actual physical presence anywhere,



Un Noël pandémique et les Prières

par *Virginie Sand-Roy* (© 10 Janvier, 2021)

Chez Albert, le Noël 2020 venait sans mémé et pépé. «La grippe était venue cette année» maman a dit ses trois filles (Tina, Beverly et Ginny), «et il serait plus sauf si mémé et pépé restent chez eux ce Noël-ci. Cette grippe-ci est partout dans le monde et beaucoup de gens meurent d'elle»

Tina: Maman, ça veut dire que mémé n'apportera pas de la tarte à la tourtière? Chaque veille de Noël elle nous apporte sa tarte à la tourtière délicieuse.

Beverly: Et maman, ça veut dire que pépé ne nous apportera pas un sac de cadeaux pour sous le sapin de Noël cette veille de Noël?

Ginny: Maman, quel désastre! Que pouvons-nous faire? Il doit y avoir quelque chose.

Maman: Souvenez-vous, mes petites, les moments difficiles nous rapprochent de Dieu. Cependant, il y a quelque chose que nous pouvons faire au milieu de l'adversité.

Tina, Beverly et Ginny (à l'unisson): Quoi, maman???

Maman: Nous pouvons prier et aussi rendre grâce à Dieu pour toutes nos bénédictions.

Ginny: Maman, comment pouvons-nous rendre nos prières plus fortes et plus puissantes?

Tina: Oui, maman, comment pouvons-nous nous assurer que nos prières sont entendues par Dieu?

Beverly: Je sais. Depuis les églises sont fermées pendant la pandémie, faisons un autel ici chez nous.

Maman: Excellente idée, Beverly! Utilisons la petite table où nous mettons la plante poinsettia de Noël.

Ginny: Parfait, maman! Nous allons avoir une vraie fleur Poinsettia sur l'autel juste comme à l'église. Pouvons-nous chacun ajouter une bougie à l'autel?

Maman: C'est une merveilleuse idée, Ginny! Tu sais où sont les bougies votives. Apporte quatre bougies à l'autel!

Tina: Nos chapelets aussi, maman! Ne devrions-nous pas également apporter nos chapelets à l'autel?

Maman: Absolument, Tina. Allez chercher nos chapelets et posez-les sur l'autel!

Beverly: Maman, avons-nous de l'eau bénite de l'église?

Maman: Oui, Bev.

Beverly: Pouvons-nous ajouter un petit bol d'eau bénite à l'autel, maman?

Maman: Bien sûr que nous pouvons, chérie. La petite bouteille d'eau bénite est sur mon bureau. Va là-bas et ajoute un peu d'eau bénite dans un petit bol et apporte-le à l'autel!

Ginny: Maman, en récitant nos prières, je voudrais jouer de ma flûte et chanter la chanson «Ô venez tous, fidèles» pour que je puisse envoyer nos prières encore plus haut dans les cieux. Je veux m'assurer que Dieu entend nos prières.

Maman: Dieu entendra sûrement nos prières sur les ailes des notes de musique, Ginny. Permits-moi d'imprimer quatre copies de «Ô venez tous, fidèles» pour que nous pouvons tous chanter, pendant que tu vas trouver ta flûte.

(Maman a également ajouté sa pierre gemme d'amour en quartz rose à l'autel à la dernière minute. Dès que Tina l'a remarqué, elle a posé une autre question à sa mère:)

Tina: Maman, peux-je ajouter ma plume de dinde à l'autel pour aider à donner grâce à Dieu?

Maman: Pourquoi pas, Tina? La dinde symbolise les remerciements. Va chercher ta plume de dinde et pose-la près de la pierre de guérison rose si tu veux.

Eh bien, l'autel Albert était enfin prêt pour la cérémonie et la prière avec une plante poinsettia animée, quatre bougies, quatre chapelets, un petit bol d'eau bénite, une pierre précieuse de quartz rose, une plume de dinde, la flûte de Ginny et quatre copies de la chanson «Ô venez tous, fidèles»

C'était la veille de la veille de Noël. Avant le souper, maman et ses trois filles se sont rassemblées devant l'autel sur quatre chaises. Elles allèrent chacun à l'autel pour allumer une bougie, faire le signe de la croix avec l'eau bénite et ramasser et embrasser leurs chapelets. Puis elles ont chacun jeté les mains devant leurs coeurs et ont commencé à prier:

Beverly: Je suis tellement reconnaissante pour cet autel fait maison qui nous aidera à envoyer nos prières à Dieu.

Maman: Je rends grâce au Créateur pour nos vies, notre bonne santé et pour garder notre petite famille en sécurité et bien soignée en tout temps.



Ginny: Merci Dieu pour toutes nos bénédictions, nos comforts et notre abondance. Merci pour tout l'amour, la paix et la joie dans nos vies et pour les chansons.

Tina: Merci mon Dieu pour cette saison magique de Noël et de l'Avent.

Beverly: Dieu, merci pour mémé et pépé et pour leurs merveilleux tartes à la tourtière et leurs cadeaux.

(Maman ne pouvait pas arrêter de sourire et de rire en entendant la démonstration de gratitude de Beverly.)

Enfin, les quatre membres de la famille ont prié pour mettre fin à la pandémie et pour garder la famille en bonne santé et heureuse pendant la saison de la grippe. Elles ont commencé à réciter le «Notre Père» et «Je vous salue Marie» sur leurs chapelets.

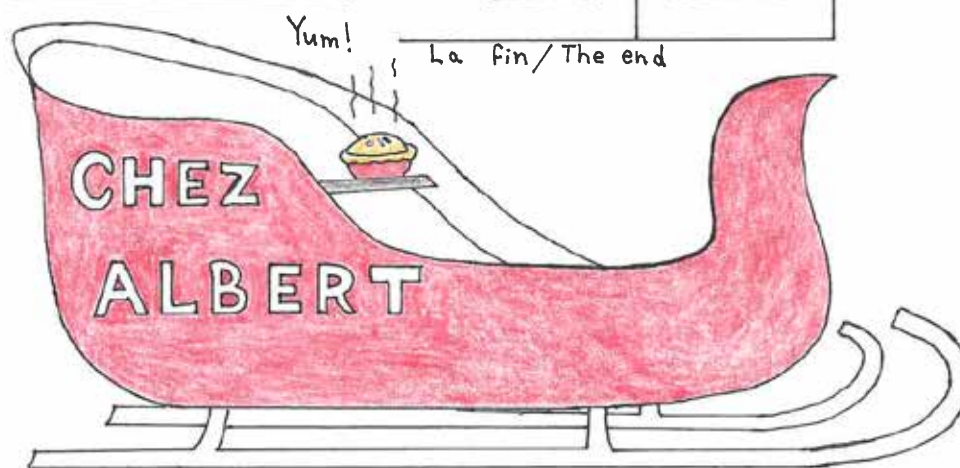
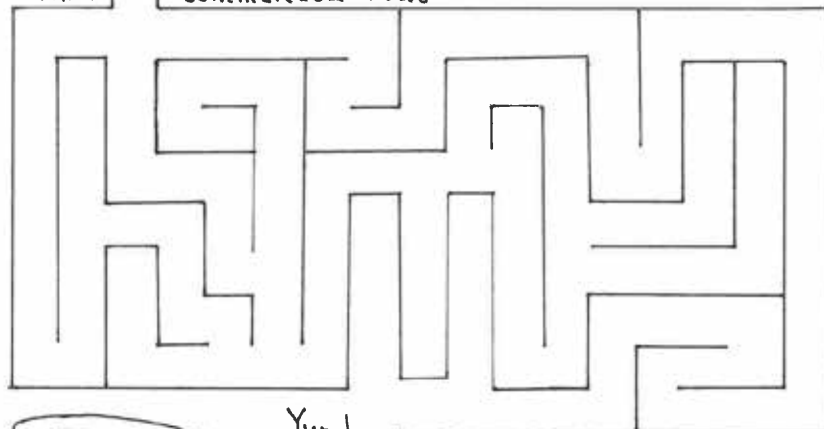
Tout à coup, Ginny commença à jouer de sa flûte tandis que les autres continuaient à prier le chapelet. À la fin du chapelet, Ginny a distribué les feuilles de chansons et a amené la famille à chanter «Ô venez tous, fidèles.» Sur l'autel, les bougies se mirent à scintiller comme par magie.

Le lendemain a apporté la veille de Noël avec une surprise très inattendue. Mémé et pépé ont appelé les enfants au téléphone et leur ont dit de regarder dans leur garage. Tina se précipita à travers la cuisine pour ouvrir la porte du garage. Les trois enfants ont alors atteint un sommet dans le garage et leurs yeux se sont grands ouverts de joie et de surprise. Là, assis au centre du garage, elles ont vu un grand traîneau rouge comme celui du Père Noël, tout illuminé de lumières scintillantes rouges et claires. Le côté du traîneau indiquait «Chez Albert» en caractères blancs gras. Sur le siège du traîneau elles trouvaient quatre des célèbres tartes de mémé (deux tartes à la tourtière et deux tartes à la crème de biscuits graham.) Mémé a affiché un signe fantaisiste juste derrière les tartes, qui disait «Bon appétit!» Pourtant, il y avait plus. Alors que les en-

- Can you find Grandma's meat pie on Santa's sleigh?

- Pouvez-vous chercher la tarte à la tourtière de mémé sur le traîneau du Père Noël?

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By Virginia Sand © 2021

Par Virginie Sand

(Un Noël pandémique et les Prières suite de page 48)

fants se rapprochaient du traîneau de pépé, elles pouvaient voir un énorme sac en tissu rouge posé sur le plancher du grand traîneau. Les enfants sont allés au sac et ont atteint un sommet à l'intérieur:

Tina: Maman, le sac rouge est rempli de cadeaux emballés de toutes tailles avec des noeuds brillants et un joli papier d'emballage de Noël. Pouvons-nous mettre tous les cadeaux sous notre sapin de Noël?

Maman: C'est ce que pépé veut que vous fassiez.

Ginny: Maman, après avoir apporté les tartes et les cadeaux dans la maison, pouvons-nous exposer le traîneau dans la cour d'entrée avec toutes ses lumières allumées?

Maman: Oui, ma chère. C'est pourquoi ton pépé t'a fabriqué le traîneau du Père

Noël dans son atelier de bois cette année. Tu trouveras même la longue corde électrique dans le traîneau pour connecter les lumières. Ton père allumera le traîneau de pépé sur la pelouse dès que tu m'aideras à apporter les tartes et le sac de cadeaux dans la maison.

Ginny: Eh bien, Beverly et Tina, mettons-nous au travail en apportant les tartes et en plaçant ces jolis cadeaux emballés sous le sapin de Noël.

Une fois le traîneau vide, le père des enfants a poussé le traîneau sur la pelouse avant puis a branché les lumières. Selon les enfants, cela semblait ajouter la touche finale à leurs décorations de Noël en plein air, grâce à pépé Albert. Les enfants se tenaient devant la fenêtre du salon et regardaient le traîneau de Noël de leur pépé avec une grande fierté. Les trois filles rayonnaient de joie. Comme c'était la veille de Noël, maman a invité tout le monde à la table pour

des tranches de tarte à la tourtière de mémé avec salade, puis pour les tartes aux biscuits graham de mémé avec du cidre chaud et du chocolat chaud. Après le repas, tout le monde a ouvert un seul cadeau pour la veille de Noël et puis a regardé la messe de minuit à la télévision. Le lendemain, qui était Noël, la famille a ouvert le reste de ses cadeaux de Noël près de l'arbre de Noël.

Il s'était avéré que ce Noël pandémique n'était pas si décevant après tout. Les prières des enfants ont été entendues et exaucées. Tina, Beverly et Ginny se sont senties si reconnaissantes pour toutes leurs bénédictions ce Noël et ont remercié Dieu pendant leurs prières au coucher la veille de Noël et la nuit de Noël. Ce serait une semaine de Noël très mémorable pour la famille Albert; Noël 2020, un Noël pandémique.

A Pandemic Christmas and Prayers

By Virginia L. Sand-Roy (© January 10, 2021)

At the Albert Family's home, Christmas 2020 was coming without Grandma and Grandpa. "The flu had come this year," Mama told her three girls (Tina, Beverly & Ginny), "and it would be safer for Grandma and Grandpa to stay home this Christmas. This flu is everywhere in the world and many people are dying from it."

Tina: Mama, does that mean Grandma won't bring over any meat pie? Every Christmas Eve she brings us her delicious meat pie.

Beverly: And Mama, does that mean Grandpa won't be bringing us a sack of gifts for under the Christmas Tree this Christmas Eve?

Ginny: Mama, what a disaster! What can we do? There must be something.

Mama: Remember, my little ones, hard times bring us closer to God. However, there is something we can do in the midst of adversity.

Tina, Beverly & Ginny (in unison): What, Mama???

Mama: We can pray and also give thanks to God for all of our blessings.

Ginny: Mama, how can we make our prayers stronger and more powerful?

Tina: Yes, Mama, how can we make sure our prayers are heard by God?

Beverly: I know. Since the churches are closed during the Pandemic, let's make an altar here at home.

Mama: Great idea, Bev! Let's use the small table where we put the Poinsettia Christmas plant.

Ginny: Perfect, Mama! We'll have a real Poinsettia plant on the altar, just like at church. Can we each add a candle to the altar?

Mama: That's a wonderful idea, Ginny! You know where the votive candles are. Bring four candles to the altar!

Tina: Our Rosary Beads too, Mama! Shouldn't we also bring our Rosaries to the altar?

Mama: Absolutely, Tina. Go find our Rosaries and lay them on the altar!

Beverly: Mama, do we have any Holy Water left over from the church?

Mama: Yes, we do Bev.

Beverly: Can we add a small bowl of Holy Water to the altar, Mama?

Mama: Of course we can, Honey.

The small bottle of Holy Water is on my desk. Go ahead and add some of the Holy Water to a small bowl and bring it to the altar!

Ginny: Mama, while reciting our prayers, I would like to play my flute and sing the song "O Come All Ye Faithful" so I can send our prayers even higher into the heavens. I want to make sure that God hears our prayers.

Mama: God will surely hear our prayers on the wings of musical notes, Ginny. Let me go print off four copies of "O Come All Ye Faithful" for all of us to sing, while you go find your flute.

(Mama also added her rose quartz gem-stone of love to the altar at the last minute. As soon as Tina noticed that, she asked her mother one more question.)

Tina: Mama, can I add my turkey feather to the altar to help give thanks to God?

Mama: Why not, Tina? The turkey symbolizes giving thanks. Go get your turkey feather and lay it by the rose healing stone if you would like.

Well, the Albert Altar was finally ready for ceremony and prayer with a lively Poinsettia plant, four candles, four Rosaries, a small bowl of Holy Water, a rose quartz gemstone, a turkey feather, Ginny's flute and four copies of the song, "O Come All Ye Faithful."

It was the day before Christmas Eve. Before supper, Mama and her three girls gathered in front of the altar on four chairs. They each went to the altar to light a candle, to do the Sign of the Cross with the Holy Water and to pick up and embrace their Rosary Beads. Then they each clasped their hands in front of their hearts and began praying.

Beverly: I am so grateful for this homemade altar that will help send our prayers to God.

Mama: I give thanks to the Creator for our lives, our good health and for keeping our little family safe and well cared for at all times.

Ginny: Thank you God for all of our blessings, our comforts and abundance. Thank you for all the love, peace and joy in our lives and for the songs.

Tina: Thank you dear God for this magical season of Christmas and Advent.

Beverly: God, thank you for Grandma



and Grandpa and for their wonderful meat pies and presents.

(Mama could not stop smiling and chuckling upon hearing Beverly's display of gratitude.)

Finally, all four family members prayed for an end to the Pandemic and to keep the family healthy and happy during flu season. They began reciting the "Our Father" and "Hail Mary" on their Rosary Beads.

All of a sudden, Ginny began playing her flute while the others continued to pray the Rosary. At the end of the Rosary, Ginny handed out the song sheets and led the family into singing "O Come All Ye Faithful." On the altar, the candles began to flicker like magic.

The next day brought Christmas Eve along with a very unexpected surprise. Grandma and Grandpa called the children on the telephone and told them to look in their garage. Tina rushed across the kitchen to open the door to the garage. All three children then peaked into the garage and their eyes opened wide with delight and surprise. There, sitting in the center of the garage, they saw a large red sleigh like Santa's, all lit up with red and clear twinkle lights. The side of the sleigh read "Chez Albert" in bold white letters. On the seat of the sleigh sat four of Grandma's famous pies (two meat pies and two graham cracker cream pies). Grandma displayed a whimsical sign just behind the pies, which read "Bon appétit/Good Appetite." Still, there was more. As the children drew closer to Grandpa's sleigh, they could see a huge red fabric sack sitting on the floor of the large sleigh. The children went over to the sack and peaked inside:

Tina: Mama, the red sack is filled with wrapped gifts of all sizes with shiny bows and pretty Christmas wrapping paper. Can we put all the presents under our Christmas Tree?

Mama: That's what Grandpa wants you to do.

(Continued on page 51)

(A Pandemic Christmas and Prayers continued from page 50)

Ginny: Mama, after we bring in the pies and gifts, can we display the sleigh in the front yard with all of it's lights on?

Mama: Yes, my dear. That's why your Grandpa made you Santa's sleigh in his wood shop this year. You'll even find the outdoor extension cord in the sleigh for the lights. Your Dad will light up Grandpa's sleigh on the front lawn as soon as you help me bring in the pies and the sack of gifts.

Ginny: Okay Beverly and Tina, let's get to work bringing in the pies and putting those pretty wrapped presents under the Christmas Tree.

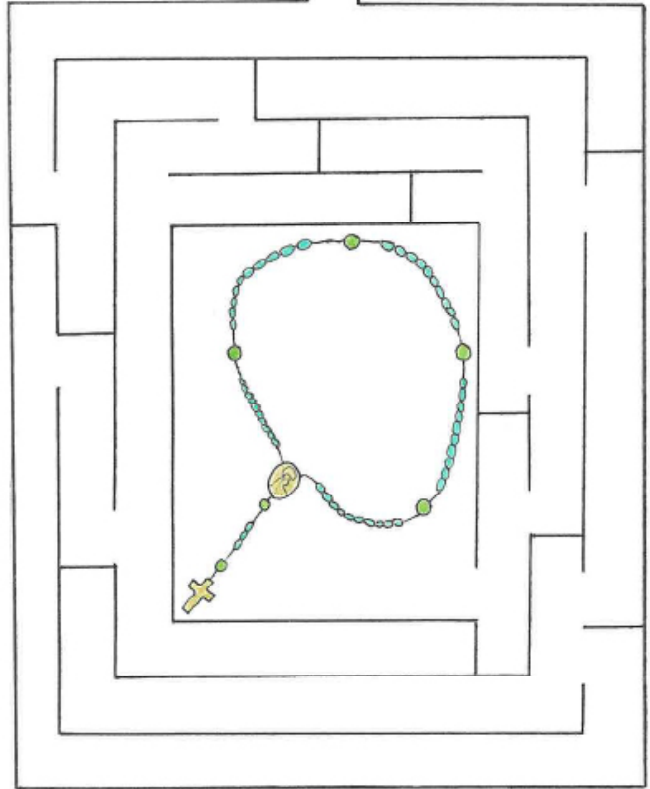
After the sleigh was empty, the children's father pushed the sleigh onto the front lawn and then plugged in the lights. According to the children, that seemed to add the finishing touch to their outdoor Christmas decorations, thanks to Grandpa Albert. The children stood in front of the living room window looking out at their Grandpa's Christmas sleigh with great pride. All three girls were beaming with joy. Since it was Christmas Eve, Mama invited everyone to the table for slices of Grandma's meat pie with salad, then for Grandma's graham cracker pies with hot cider and hot chocolate. After the meal, everyone opened just one gift for Christmas Eve and then stayed up to watch Mid-night Mass on television. On the following day, which was Christmas, the family opened the rest of their Christmas presents by the Christmas Tree.

It had turned out that this Pandemic Christmas wasn't so disappointing after all. The children's prayers were heard and answered. Tina, Beverly and Ginny felt so grateful for all of their blessings this Christmas and thanked God during their bedtime prayers on Christmas Eve and Christmas Night. This would be a very memorable Christmas Week for the Albert family; Christmas 2020, a Pandemic Christmas.



- Can you find the rosary?
 - Pouvez-vous chercher le chapelet?

By Virginia Sand Par Virginie Sand © 2021



DEDICATION

This story is dedicated in loving memory to my mother, Albertine (Tina) Albert-Pimperal. Mom was born and raised in Waterville Maine, she transitioned into heaven at 92 years old on March 1, 2019. Thank you, Maman, for the French language that is at the heart of my life.



— ❤️ Ginny

Albertine (Tina) Albert-Pimperal



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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