

2010

A Self Guided Heritage Tour of the Franco-American Community in the South-End of the City of Waterville, Maine

Kennebec Valley Franco-American Heritage Society

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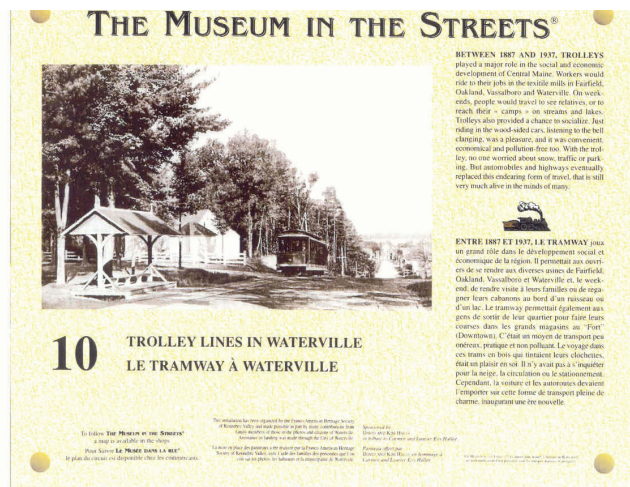


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The Museum in the Streets

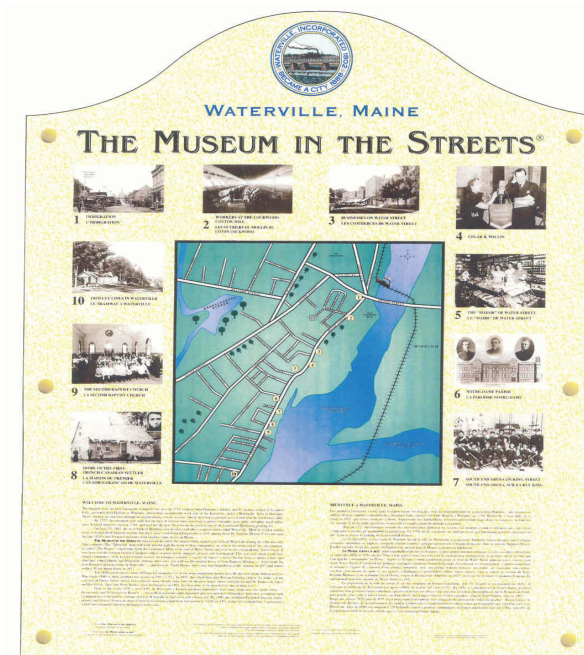
focuses on the French-Canadians, the largest ethnic minority to settle in Waterville during the 19th and early 20th centuries. The "Museum" tour will walk you through the heart of their community, an area in the south end of the City commonly called "The Plains," which runs from the Hathaway Center to the end of Water Street and west to, but not including, Silver Street. It was here that the earliest French-Canadians settlers worked, lived, shopped, played and worshipped. This was very much a self-contained community, with its own French dialect, its bilingual schools, a variety of stores, a movie theater, bars, a sports center and French churches, both Catholic and Protestant. Among other sites, you will see the original home of Jean Baptiste Mathieu presumably the first permanent French-Canadian settler in Waterville and his wife, Sarah Dostie, who came here from Beauceville, Quebec in 1827 and settled in their Water Street home in 1831. The 1830 census shows some 20 French-Canadians (1% of the town population) living here. By the time of the Civil War (early 1860's) their numbers had grown to 544 (12.5%). In 1851, they built their first Roman Catholic Church, St. John's at the east end of Grove Street, which was replaced some twenty years later by the new, larger, more centrally located St. Francis de Sales, on Elm Street. They saw Peter Bolduc open his business in 1862, the first store to be operated by one of their own. Prior to the early 1870's over 85% of Waterville's French-speaking population had come from just two small towns in Beauce County, Quebec, Beauceville and St Georges. With the expansion of the Lockwood Cotton Mills and new industries flourished, there was a veritable rush of immigrants from Quebec coming to Waterville to find work and a better life. By 1890 the combined French-Canadian (immigrants) and Franco-American (native born descendants) population had grown to 3,228 or 43% of the city's population, a percentage that has remained virtually unchanged to this day.

For Group Tours Call:

873-0358



*A self guided heritage tour of the
Franco-American Community in the
South-End of the
City of Waterville, Maine*



**Location: Castonguay Square
Main Street Downtown
Waterville, Maine**

**From here proceed to panel #1. Walk
south on Main street to Bridge
and Water Street**


Corner of Water & Grove Street

Early colonial history of Waterville, Maine

The English were the first Europeans to inhabit this area. In 1754 General John Winslow and his soldiers built Fort Halifax and 11 families settled at Taconnet Falls in Winslow, which at that time included the west side of the Kennebec River, today's Waterville. Prior to that time, Native American Indians migrated through the region during certain seasons. One of their burial grounds was located near the Hathaway Creative Center.

By 1777, development was such that the first of several dams was built to power sawmills, grist mills, and other small industries. A small shipyard built in 1794 operated for the next 56 years on the present site of the Hathaway Center parking lot. On June 23, 1802 the west bank of Winslow was incorporated into a separate town called Waterville. Most of its first settlers were of Scotch-Irish-English descent, but there were a few French Huguenots as well, among them Dr. Stephen Thayer. It was not until the late 1820s that French-Canadians from Quebec came to live in Maine.

Immigration



1 IMMIGRATION L'IMMIGRATION

THE FRANCO-AMERICANS who settled in the Central Maine area in the 19th and early 20th centuries came from the most part from Quebec, coming to Waterville, Maine, in the 1840s and 1850s. Eventually, other immigrants from France, Ireland and Italy, from Sicily, New Brunswick and other remote countries in Quebec, such as the area of the Gaspé Peninsula, came to settle. Although their reasons for coming were varied, most came to find work, which was available in the iron mines along Maine's principal rivers.

Most of those who came to Waterville lived in the neighborhoods called "the Plate" ("la Plaque") and "the Plate" ("la Plaque"), settling along the river close to their work place. Entire families or individuals came here on foot and in horse-drawn wagons. After the Civil War, the came in large numbers.

LA PLATE DES FRANCO-AMERICAINS qui ont immigré d'Amérique dans le centre du Maine au cours des XIX^e et XX^e siècles étaient originaires pour la plupart du Québec, de la Baie de la Nouvelle-France, d'Irlande, d'Italie, de Sicile, du Nouveau-Brunswick et de divers autres pays lointains. Bien qu'ils aient eu des raisons diverses, la plupart d'entre eux sont venus chercher du travail dans les mines de fer le long des principales rivières du Maine.

La plupart de ceux qui sont venus à Waterville vivaient dans les quartiers de "la Plaque" et de "la Plaque", dans des logements proches de la rivière. Des familles entières ou des individus venaient ici à pied ou dans des charrettes tirées par des chevaux. Après la Guerre de Sécession, certains d'entre eux sont venus en grand nombre.

To follow "The Mayor and the Settlers"
To see a copy of the book, please contact the Waterville Historical Society at 100 Main Street, Waterville, ME 04901. The book is available in French and English.

Pour savoir "Le Maire dans la Rue"
Le livre de ce livre est disponible chez les libraires.

Right side of the Street

Workers at Lockwood Cotton Mill



2 WORKERS AT THE LOCKWOOD COTTON MILL LES OUVIERS DU MOULIN DE COTON LOCKWOOD

TWO MILLS WERE BUILT in Waterville, Maine, in 1873, the second in 1880. They had a total of 100,000 spindles. In 1902, 100 people came to work in 5 years and worked in the mill for 10 years. In 1911, 100 people came to work in 5 years and worked in the mill for 10 years. The mill was built by John Lockwood, a French Canadian, who had come to Waterville in 1873. He had a vision of a cotton mill in Waterville, Maine, and he had the money to build it. He had a vision of a cotton mill in Waterville, Maine, and he had the money to build it. He had a vision of a cotton mill in Waterville, Maine, and he had the money to build it.


AMON LOCKWOOD FIT CONSTRUIRE deux moulins à Waterville, Maine, l'un en 1873, l'autre en 1880. Ils avaient ensemble 100 000 spindles. En 1902, 100 ouvriers, dont certains âgés de 10 ans, ont travaillé dans le moulin pendant 10 ans. En 1911, 100 ouvriers, dont certains âgés de 10 ans, ont travaillé dans le moulin pendant 10 ans. Le moulin a été construit par John Lockwood, un Canadien français, qui était venu à Waterville en 1873. Il avait une vision d'un moulin à coton à Waterville, Maine, et il avait l'argent pour le construire. Il avait une vision d'un moulin à coton à Waterville, Maine, et il avait l'argent pour le construire. Il avait une vision d'un moulin à coton à Waterville, Maine, et il avait l'argent pour le construire.

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Left side of the Street

Businesses of Water Street



3 BUSINESSES ON WATER STREET LES COMMERCES DE WATER STREET

WATER STREET was a bustling main city street prior to urban renewal in the 1960s. It was alive with many shops and stores. French-Americans could do all their shopping in French if they so desired, without ever leaving the South End. Grocery stores, pharmacies, butcher and meat markets, variety stores, hair and wig salons, clothing stores, a bakery with its own bread, "Buddy Bread", movie theater and even a soda-drink bottling plant are examples of the businesses that were in their neighborhood. The success of many of the shop owners allowed them to send their children to go into higher education and professional careers.


AVANT D'ÊTRE VICTIME de rénovations urbaines des années 1960, Water Street fut une rue très commerçante et dynamique, bordée de magasins de toutes sortes. Les Franco-Américains avaient la possibilité d'y faire toutes leurs courses en français, sans jamais sortir de leur quartier. On y trouvait épiceries, pharmacies, salons de coiffure et d'orthodontie, drogueries, bûches, restaurants, couturiers, une boulangerie fabriquant sa propre marque de "Buddy Bread", un cinéma et même une usine d'embouteillage de sodas. Le succès de bon nombre de ces commerçants leur a permis d'envoyer leurs enfants poursuivre des études supérieures et de faire des carrières professionnelles.

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Right side of the Street

Edgar R. Poulin



4 EDGAR R. POULIN

EDGAR POULIN was born in 1908 in Waterville, Maine, of parents who emigrated from St. George's de Beauce, Quebec. During his lifetime he was and would remain a devoted fan of both French and English. During the day he had a full-time job at the Lockwood Mill and in the evening devoted his spare time to show business. In the beginning he sang his plays at the Notre Dame Parish hall and donated the proceeds to church or local community causes. During that period he would sometimes sing English plays to French. Later on he sang musical productions by Rogers & Hammerstein at the Waterville Opera House.

He also created the French music radio program "Musique Française" that was aired Sunday on WTVE. More than one thousand programs were broadcast.

NE A WINSLOW EN 1908, de parents qui sont arrivés de St. Georges-de-Beauce, Edgar Poulin fut un fan de la musique en français et en anglais. Pendant la journée, il travaillait à temps plein au moulin de Lockwood. Le soir, il consacrait le reste de son temps à la musique. Au début de sa carrière, il faisait ses propres pièces dans la salle paroissiale de l'église Notre-Dame, reversant les recettes à l'église ou à des causes locales. Plus tard, il fut en scène des comédies musicales de Rogers & Hammerstein, à l'Opéra House de la ville.

Il créa également le radio-émission "Musique Française", qui était diffusée dimanche sur WTVE. Plus d'un millier de programmes furent diffusés.

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Left side of the Street

The "Mayor" of Water Street



5 THE "MAYOR" OF WATER STREET LE "MAIRE" DE WATER STREET

EUGENE BOLDUC (mort) immigré avec ses frères, Beaulieu, Québec, à 18 ans, en 1870, à venir travailler. Son premier emploi fut à la fabrique de chaussures. Avec l'argent qu'il gagnait, il se fit acheter une maison à Waterville, où il fit construire une maison pour sa famille et ses amis. Il fut élu maire de la ville de Waterville en 1911. Il fut élu maire de la ville de Waterville en 1911. Il fut élu maire de la ville de Waterville en 1911.

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Right side of the Street

Notre Dame Parish



6 NOTRE-DAME PARISH LA PAROISSE NOTRE-DAME

COMPLETED IN 1911, the church and its adjacent elementary school were built to serve the needs of the growing Franco-American population in the South End of Waterville. The church was built by the Sisters of the Holy Family. The church was built by the Sisters of the Holy Family. The church was built by the Sisters of the Holy Family.

EN 1911, ON FIT CONSTRUIRE Notre-Dame, la paroisse et son école élémentaire, pour servir la communauté croissante de Franco-Américains installée dans le quartier sud de Waterville. L'église fut construite par les Sœurs de la Sainte Famille. L'église fut construite par les Sœurs de la Sainte Famille. L'église fut construite par les Sœurs de la Sainte Famille.

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Right side of the Street

South End Arena King Street



7 SOUTH END ARENA ON KING STREET SOUTH END ARENA, SUR LA RUE KING

THE SOUTH END ARENA was a place for the young people of the South End of Waterville. It was a place where they could go to watch hockey, basketball, and other sports. It was a place where they could go to watch hockey, basketball, and other sports. It was a place where they could go to watch hockey, basketball, and other sports.


C'EST À LA SOUTH END ARENA qu'affluèrent les jeunes de quartier pour assister aux spectacles sportifs. C'était là qu'ils pouvaient aller voir du hockey, du basketball, et d'autres sports. C'était là qu'ils pouvaient aller voir du hockey, du basketball, et d'autres sports. C'était là qu'ils pouvaient aller voir du hockey, du basketball, et d'autres sports.

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Right side of the Street

Home of first French Canadian Settler



8 HOME OF THE FIRST FRENCH-CANADIAN SETTLER LA MAISON DU PREMIER CANADIEN-FRANCAIS DE WATERVILLE

STILL STANDING AT 14 WATER STREET is the home of the first French Canadian settler in Waterville. It was built by Jean-Baptiste Mathias, a French Canadian, who had come to Waterville in 1873. It was built by Jean-Baptiste Mathias, a French Canadian, who had come to Waterville in 1873. It was built by Jean-Baptiste Mathias, a French Canadian, who had come to Waterville in 1873.

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Left side of the Street

The Second Baptist Church



9 THE SECOND BAPTIST CHURCH LA SECONDE ÉGLISE MÉTHODISTE

BEFORE THE 1880s, many Franco-Americans in the Plate of Waterville were active without religious leadership. Some of them were active in the Plate of Waterville. Some of them were active in the Plate of Waterville. Some of them were active in the Plate of Waterville.

AVANT 1880, LES FRANCO-AMÉRICAINS installés dans la Plaque de Waterville n'avaient pas de leadership religieux. Certains d'entre eux étaient actifs dans la Plaque de Waterville. Certains d'entre eux étaient actifs dans la Plaque de Waterville. Certains d'entre eux étaient actifs dans la Plaque de Waterville.

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