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Maine’s French Communities: http://www.francomaine.org/English/Pres/Pres_intro.html francoamericanarchives.org

other pertinent websites to check out -

Les Français d’Amérique / French In America
Calendar Photos and Texts from 1985 to 2002
http://www.johnfishersr.net/french_in_america_calendar.html
Franco-American Women’s Institute:
http://www.fawi.net

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Le FORUM

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Finding a Larger Canvas:
Franco-Americans’ Enduring Significance

by Patrick Lacroix

How knowledgeable are you of Franco-American history? That you are reading Le Forum suggests an awareness of at least its basic outline. But what about your fellow Americans, or your fellow Canadians—how conversant are they? Unfortunately, many Americans of French descent know little about their heritage; it is even more problematic that a great proportion of historians and history teachers on both sides of the border overlook Franco-Americans. This suggests that now, perhaps more than ever, it is imperative that we elicit general interest in this topic.1 Thus, even if we recognize that scholarship on Franco-Americans has lost vigor since the now-fabled Institut français colloquia of the 1980s and 1990s, the field still has its specialists who are pushing the bounds of research. The latest biennial conference of the American Council for Quebec Studies, held last fall, makes this plain. If Franco-Americans remain on the margins of our historical consciousness as a society, the issue may be one of communication. A cursory look at this ethnic group in the context of American and Canadian history will underscore the magnitude of the challenge still ahead.

Those of us who have taught U.S. history at the high school or college level are woefully aware of Franco-Americans’ invisibility in standard, commercially available textbooks. But insofar as textbooks reflect the broader landscape of research, this should come as no surprise. Whereas the Irish, Germans, Italians, and other ethnic groups are favored examples, Franco-Americans are regularly omitted from survey works on immigration, acculturation, and related matters. The rare book on New England, or on a specific state’s history, will often make passing but unsatisfactory references to the French-Canadian migrants and their descendants.

(Continued on page 4)
larger cultural universe. Recent events show that New England’s Franco-American heritage has become the basis for closer relations between Northeastern states and Quebec.6

Alas, few histories of Quebec are so thorough as to describe the fate of the expatriates as they navigated their American setting—their circumstances once settled in the United States. Franco-American studies are, by their very nature, partly Quebec history, but historians of Quebec have in this respect offered Franco-Americans limited attention. It is hardly surprising. Even as scholars have analyzed the province’s américanité, they have recognized that these expatriates and their descendants became Franco-Americans.

The question of whether Franco-American history properly belongs to Canadian or American national history may be unfair, for Franco-Americans very often fell under both designations. It was, after all, the assertion of community leaders in Little Canadas across New England, at the dawn of the twentieth century, that the immigrants could be proud and loyal American citizens while remaining faithful to the culture of their ancestors. Appropriately, transnational history has sought to do justice to these distinct but overlapping identities and to the porosity of political boundaries. This conceptual approach helps us explore linkages and phenomena that can easily remain hidden in the “either/or” of national history.

We can and should develop this transnational perspective to its fullest extent, as some historians have recently sought to do.5 As teachers, however, we must still place our field within the bounds of national history, which remains the framework for most high school and college curricula. As scholars, we must still be attentive to the way we engage with other researchers—which sometimes means accepting their paradigms—when asserting the significance of Franco-American history. In this respect, two points deserve special mention.

I would first suggest that we take care not to overemphasize the uniqueness of Franco-Americans’ experience. Their story is connected, for instance, to the realities of European immigration that John Bodnar has ably described. The French-Canadian diaspora fits neatly within a pattern of economic upheaval, tied to new capitalist practices and agricultural consolidation, that affected much of the Western world through the nineteenth century.7 At the same time, their story is relevant in the context of a larger continental history whose boundaries have been contested down to the present. Scholars of Franco-American history have ample opportunity to relate their findings to the transnational experience of Mexicans and other Hispanic peoples in the American Southwest.8 In short, we can assert the relevance of our field by engaging more deeply in comparative history.

Second, Franco-Americans matter on a larger tableau. It often appears as though the late nineteenth-century ethnic ghetto has been replicated in research—scholars insulating themselves and addressing only fellow Francos or those working in the same field. But this perspective tends to take it as an essential premise that French-Canadian immigrants were invisible and on the margins of society, as though the points of intersection with the American mainstream (however defined) were long negligible. But the immigrants and their descendants were never invisible. They disturbed the existing order of Quebec by leaving and that of New England by settling. And they engaged. They altered the landscape of culture, labor, politics, and religion in the U.S. Northeast, not to mention its urban geography. They were noticed and at times resented by other groups.9 Having focused intently on mill life, family structures, the ethnic parish, the French-language newspaper, and mutual benefit societies, the scholarly community still has much to do to fully represent larger patterns of engagement with the host society.

No doubt, by addressing Le Forum, I am singing to the choir. In fact, there are superb teachers and scholars throughout New England and beyond—many of whom will read this—who understand the importance of bringing Franco-American studies into the classroom and engaging with non-academics. But I would insist particularly on the need to engage differently with other scholars in our research endeavors—or engage with different scholars. How often do we reach out to those who do not specialize in Franco-American history? Do we encourage comparative work, participate in more ecumenical conferences, or submit to publications where Franco-Americans would otherwise seldom appear? Here, “publish or perish” takes on new meaning. If we don’t publish in these wider forums, our field and our historical subjects will disappear from view entirely—relegated to historical obscurity.
From Maine to Thailand

The making of a Peace Corps Volunteer

by Roger Parent

ED. NOTE: This is the fourteenth in a series of excerpts from a memoir written by Lille, Maine, native Roger Parent in 2004, tracing the first 24 years of his life, from his childhood in Acadian French-speaking northern Maine to the end of his service as a member of the first group of Peace Corps volunteers in Thailand. This article first appeared in “Echoes”, No. 100 pages 38-39.

The lines were long and the customs officers in their uniforms were taking their good old time, rummaging in suitcases, digging in carry-ons, and looking in handbags at the Honolulu airport. Maybe it was the slow tropical rhythm of the islands in 1963 – a rhythm I had grown to enjoy in Thailand – or maybe the officers were serious about nabbing people trying to avoid the tariff on jewelry bought cheap in Asia.

I had waited in many lines in Udorn: I had waited in a line to purchase rice; I had waited in another line to pay for the rice and I had waited in still another line for the rice to be bagged. I had waited for friends late for coffee and for students late for appointments. In America, time is not to be wasted; in Thailand time is to be lived. I had learned to live time. I had learned to think about nothing; I had learned to be more intimate with my surroundings; I had learned to be patient; and when my patience had been overcome by my American desire to not waste time, I had given in and I had read many interesting books while waiting.

Still, I was antsy and fidgety. I was thinking about the diamond ring and wedding band in the watch pocket of my pants for which I didn’t have the tariff money. I had bought the rings in Hong Kong for Rolande, an intelligent, warm, and sensual woman, for whom I had reconsidered more than once during the summer of 1961, my decision to join Peace Corps. We had met in a bar in Van Buren, Maine, between college graduation and Peace Corps, and we had fallen for each other immediately. By summer’s end we were in love and didn’t

(Finding a Larger Canvas: Franco-Americans' Enduring Significance continued from page 4)

For more than a century, there has been ceaseless hand-wringing over the fate of Franco-Americans, especially with regard to the survival of their culture and language. Underlying this fear has been a sense of French-Canadian exceptionalism—that this group was not destined to be melted into the great American pot as the Irish, Germans, Italians were. I would not suggest that historiographical hand-wringing is necessary. But I would underscore the need to normalize Franco-Americans, eagerly placing them alongside other immigrant groups and asserting their equal significance in the arc of modern American history.

Patrick Lacroix, Ph.D., a native of Cowansville, Quebec, is a graduate of the University of New Hampshire and an instructor at Phillips Exeter Academy. He has authored numerous articles, including studies on Franco-Americans published in the Catholic Historical Review and the Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era. His latest article, appearing in the American Review of Canadian Studies, analyzes Henry David Thoreau’s writings on colonial-era Canada.

(Endnotes)
1. This survey was Yves Roby’s magisterial Franco-Americans of New England: Dreams and Realities, the translation of a French-language study published in Quebec in 2000. At least eight scholarly articles appeared in 2016; half of those appeared in Quebec Studies, which has become one of the preferred forums for specialists.
2. I leave the matter of Acadian history and scholarship to those who may more expertly write on the subject. I also hasten to add that English Canada experienced a wave of emigration to the United States similar in size to Quebec’s francophone exodus between 1870 and 1930. See Randy William Widdis, With Scarcely a Ripple: Anglo-Canadian Migration into the United States and Western Canada, 1880-1920 (1998).
3. The large-scale expatriation of French Canadians is noted in every major survey of Quebec history, not least as evidence of a long-term, structural economic transformation, but also for the domestic social and political consequences it entailed. This migratory movement is mentioned in the Quebec government’s pedagogical guidelines for the province’s high school curriculum. See Ministère de l’éducation et de l’enseignement supérieur du Québec, “Programme de formation de l’école québécoise: Histoire du Québec et du Canada, troisième et quatrième secondaire,” http://www1.education.gouv.qc.ca/sections/programmeFormation/secondaire2/medias/histoireQuebecCanada.pdf (2017), 40, 42, 45-46.
6. In regard to Franco-Americans, one of the most prominent examples is Yukari Takai’s Gendered Passages: French-Canadian Migration to Lowell, Massachusetts, 1900-1920 (2008).
want to part, but the adventure of Peace Corps had pulled me to Thailand, and she had understood. Our love for each other, nurtured by a two-year flurry of letters between Van Buren and Udorn, had deepened and I was ready to ask her to marry me.

This was October 1963. Hawaii was my destination. I was on my way to help train volunteers at the Peace Corps Training Center in Hilo on the Big Island, and I would not be returning to Rolande in Maine until Christmas time. Going to Hawaii had not been my first idea of what to do after two years in Peace Corps. I had wanted to motorcycle with my friend, Art, across Asia to the Middle East African coast to Madagascar to visit Sister Abela—my mother’s mississionary cousin—then up to Europe for a ship to New York. I had also considered graduate studies, but when I was offered a job by the University of Hawaii to help train volunteers for Thailand, the Philippines, Malaysia and other countries in Southeast Asia, I jumped at the opportunity.

Truth is I had very little money to buy a motorcycle and six months of travel. All I had was the money set aside by Peace Corps—about $60 for each month of service—so volunteers wouldn’t fall on welfare after their return to the United States, or as Peace Corps put it, “to help the volunteer transition to a job or studies.” I had already spent more than half the transition money on the rings and for stops in the Philippines, Hong Kong and Japan.

The line slowed down, and when it came to the tall blonde, early-30s lady in front of me, the officer seemed to get more meticulous about his work. He scrutinized everything inside her three suitcases and bag she’d carried on the plane, then he said “Please empty your handbag on the table and remove your jacket.”

“Why? You didn’t ask the man in front of me to take off his jacket?”

“It’s my job lady. I have to check everything.” He looked into the privates of her large handbag, then felt the lining of her jacket. A hint of a grin lit his face. His work paid off. He discovered a cache of fine jewelry in the lining of her jacket, and turned her over to his supervisor. He signaled me to move up. By then, I was barely maintaining my composure. Not only was I nervous about the rings, I was nervous about my nervousness, thinking he might see through the nonchalance I was faking.

Not declaring the rings at customs was just a small jump from smuggling cigarettes across the border into New Brunswick, Canada, which I did as a teenager. I would buy cigarettes at Lawrence’s General Store in Lille where I worked (without Lawrence’s knowledge), put the cartons in boxes, tie the boxes to a sled, pull it across the St. John river on two-foot ice, and sell them for a profit at a small store in Thibodeau. I would have a snack, drink a coke, and return home a little richer. When my parents got suspicious about my spending and I wouldn’t tell them about my smuggling, my brother Richard, told them. They must have speculated I was stealing money because when they learned the source of my extra cash, they were relieved.

I handed the officer my passport that had been stamped by authorities in Thailand, Hong Kong, the Philippines and Japan.

“What were you doing in Southeast Asia?”

“I was a Peace Corps Volunteer teacher in Thailand.”

He looked me over carefully and smiled. “Good Work.” He waved me on. No rummaging in my suitcases, no checking the lining of my jacket, no emptying of my watch pocket. The magic aura of Peace Corps had protected my small smuggling crime.

Roger Parent lives in South Bend, Indiana, where he served as city councilor and mayor in the 1970’s and ’80’s. He is trustee of the South Bend Community School Corporation and found of World Dignity, a non-profit organization focused on educational programs in Thailand, India and South Bend. In 2005 he assisted victims of the Dec. 26, 2004 tsunami as deputy director of the Tsunami Volunteer Center in Khao Lak, Thailand. He and his wife, Rolande (Ouellette), have four children and six grandchildren.

LA PIE BAVARDE

Turkey, football, shopping! Marie-Anne Gauvin mentions them all in this not-always adulatory view of the Thanksgiving holiday.

À la prochaine…

Jacqueline Chamberland
Blesso, Jline59@earthlink.net

(Continued on page 7)
Mots du jour

Être dindon de la farce = être la victime, la dupe
En sorcerer = captiver entièrement
Vider ses poches = dépenser tout son argent
Balourd(e) = personne maladroite sans délicatesse
(French= a loser!)
Facultatif = avoir le choix, sans être obligatoire

A tous et à chacun:

Quand on pense! On est déjà rendu au mois de novembre! C'est le mois qui emmène la grande fête américaine "Thanksgiving Day" ou le jour de l.ACTION de Grâces. Plusieurs semblent avoir oublié le vrai but de ce jour car ils l'appellent "Turkey Day". Ce sont eux les "Turkeys", non? Si vous voulez traduire ce sens de "Turkey" en français c'est balourd. Vous l'avez déjà entendu ce mot? Moi non plus. Alors je vais continuer ma petite rédaction en employant le mot dindon comme on le fait en anglais. D'accord?

Ce ne fut qu'en quittant la Vallée pour aller travailler chez les Yankees que j'ai commencé à comprendre l'importance de cette fête nationale pour les Américains. C'est encore plus important que Noël. D'abord, toute la grande fin de semaine y est impliquée.

La toute commence le mercredi. Ceux qui ne sont pas sur la route pour se rendre au lieu de la réunion de famille sont à se préparer à recevoir les autres qui vont bientôt arriver. En ce qui concerne ce "Turkey Day", eh bien tous les dindons ont deux pattes mais il y en a qui ont des plumes. Puis d'une façon ou d'une autre ils se retrouveront tous, dindons ou non, à table au grand repas de jeudi.

Avant ou après le grand dîner il y a l'affaire très sérieuse du match de football, qu'il soit professionnel, universitaire ou d'une école secondaire. A part celles (ceux?) qui sont à se noyer dans la cuisine les autres qui ne peuvent pas aller au match s'installent devant la télévision pour participer passivement aux grands matchs télévisés tout le long de la journée. La majorité de ces téléspectateurs avec un scotch ou une canette de bière trinquent quand un joueur réussit à l'objet qui ressemble un peu à longtemps dans le four!

Pendant toute cette longue fin de semaine les autobus, les trains et les avions débordent de passagers. La circulation sur les routes est incroyable. S'y aventurer est un peu devenir le dindon de la farce. Je m'y suis fait prendre une fois en route à partir de Hartford pour aller à Nashua au New Hampshire. Embouteillage après embouteillage, nous étions pare-choc contre pare-choc presque tout le long de la route. Un vrai jeu de touche-touche avec une voiture!

Le vendredi et le samedi on dirait que toute la population se rend aux centres d'achats. Là, c'est Noël qui règne plusieurs semaines avant son temps. Vous n'avez jamais vu autant de monde se lancer vers un seul endroit avec le même but de vider leurs poches. Si leur porte feuille est mince ils relèguent la marchandise en attendant les soldes. Les foules se bousculent. Remarquez bien qu'il y a le mot fou dans foules!

Une seule expérience d'un vendredi dans un centre commercial après "Thanksgiving" m'a guéri pour toujours. Oh, la, la! Moi qui n'aime pas les foules. Depuis, je m'arrange pour esquiver cette population folle. Mais chacun à son goût. Si vous aimez les foules vous ne pourrez pas trouver mieux dans ces centres que le vendredi qui suit le jeudi des dindons.

Votre pie bavarde,

Marie-Anne
In the early 1970’s, when I was a student at UMA studying History and Political Science, I had a work-study job at the Maine State Museum where I was assigned the task of writing a descriptive sales handout for a child’s cardboard cutout & assembly toy of Fort Western being sold in the State Museum gift shop. Despite the fact that I was a native of Augusta, no doubt the reason I was chosen for this task, I knew very little about Fort Western at that time. The assignment forced me to read everything I could quickly get my hands on to bring myself up to speed on the subject. One book that I found, March to Quebec, Journals of the Members of Arnold’s Expedition, was a compilation by Kenneth Roberts of the journals written by several men who had been on the Arnold Expedition, which had used Fort Western as its staging area. It was in one of these journals that I ran across the name of “Charles Burget,” who was the only man to sign up for the Arnold Expedition at Fort Western, but I didn’t have time to dwell on it because I had an assignment to complete. I finished writing the descriptive piece, but the quick study process left me wondering who Charles Burget was. I instinctively knew that this was not the way to spell the last name of a native of Canada because I, too, came from the same Franco-American heritage. I promised myself that one day I would look into who this Charles “Burget” actually was. Forty-five years passed, and when I retired from my employment I finally got around to fulfilling that promise. Here is what I found….

As often happened throughout American history to Franco-Americans as well as to other immigrants, we were sometimes asked to spell our last names phonetically by the English-speaking person who was taking down our information for any number of reasons. When not asked to spell it, there was the inevitable task of making a correction later on. Imagine if you were illiterate and unable to write your own name; who would correct the misspelled name then? How many times has this happened in the U.S. Census, as the countless examples that have been documented show what happened when a census taker in Maine’s St. John Valley in the 1800’s wrote down a family name phonetically by the way that it sounded to him? It was definitely possible to have the name spelled as Bushey instead of the correct Boucher, or Sear instead of Cyr, and so on. Many times, the person being recorded was illiterate and couldn’t make the correction needed, and very soon after that the family had a new last name. Sometimes the French person would voluntarily Anglicize their name to remove any potential reason for prejudice if they were engaged in some commercial activity with people who were not French, such as Bélanger becoming Baker, Bonenfant becoming Goodchild, or Beaudoin becoming Bowdoin, to name a few.

Now imagine going back to the 1700’s, when America consisted of separate French and English colonies ruled by competing European royal families who were constantly at war with one another. Early on, the need for correctly spelling names from different cultures was rare because of the political separation between the two countries and their colonies, that is, until after the end of the French and Indian War in 1763, when Great Britain became the primary ruling power in North America. The French colonists had been thoroughly defeated in this war that saw a forced eviction of the Acadians in 1755 by the British Army from what had been their homeland in Acadia for nearly 150 years. The British followed this by burning down many of the French families’ original homesteads along the shores of the St. Lawrence River as they worked their way up the river until the day when the British were ultimately victorious over the French after the fall of Quebec City in 1759. The Treaty of Paris ended the hostilities in 1763. The French Canadians then became the subjects of the English Monarch, and the new British government had the task of overcoming the animosity they had created during the many wars that had been fought between the two nations.

It should be no surprise that the French inhabitants held some resentment toward their new ruling authority after the forced eviction of the Acadians and because the campaign of destruction had inflicted so much distress from the burning of so many family dwellings along the St. Lawrence River and in other rural areas of Canada. This path of destruction might have personally affected most of the French Canadians because the homes that were destroyed were in the areas of the earliest permanent settlements and most likely had been built by one of their ancestors in the 1600’s. The new masters from Great Britain attempted to overcome these prejudices by maintaining the French form of land title ownership and management, called “Seigneurly.” In the Quebec Act of 1774, the British authorized the old form of French civil justice as well as granted the right to the French Canadians to continue to practice their Catholic religion. This concession did much to enlist the cooperation of the influential Catholic clergy into the fold. The British then proceeded to enlist their new citizens into local militias throughout the Province and among the rural French population to help defend the frontier. It was in this new English regime that was created after 1759 that Charles Bourget grew up in Quebec City, where he was born in March of 1753. It is also not surprising that this young man would later travel down the traditional Indian route by first going up the Chaudière (Continued on page 9)
River and then down the Kennebec River to get to Central Maine at the age of 22 in order to escape from his conquerors to find a new life in the lower colonies, since he was now capable of speaking passable English after living under British rule for 16 years. This was where I picked up the story of this young French Canadian man who, in September 1775, enlisted at Fort Western into the Colonial Army led by Colonel Benedict Arnold to return with the Bostonians to attack his hometown of Quebec City.

As I looked into Charles Bourget’s military service, I expanded the search beyond the way that his name Charles Burget had been recorded in the 3rd New Hampshire (NH) Regiment rolls to include other phonetic spelling combinations as well as the correct spelling. The 3rd NH Regiment’s service record pointed me to the Danbury Historical Society in Danbury, Connecticut, where I asked if they could find out anything about a Charles Bourget, Burget, Burgette, or any other phonetic spellings of that last name, to go along with the 3rd NH Regiment rolls because this unit had wintered in Danbury, and if they could also find any references to Fort Western in their search. Within a day, the researcher provided me with a copy of the U.S. Military Pension Application filed in 1818 by a Charles Burzet. This 18-page Pension Application proved without a doubt that this was the same man because it contained three facts: (1) it identified Fort Western as the place of his initial enlistment; (2) it stated that he was illiterate and his signature was an “X” below his name that had been written by the clerk who processed the application; and (3) his age was noted to be 65 in 1818. This single document proved: (A) the time and place of his initial enlistment; (B) that he couldn’t have corrected the misspelling of his name because he was illiterate; and (C) that his age on the application agreed with a birth record I had found, which confirmed that Charles Bourget was born in 1753 in Quebec City, and therefore his age would have been calculated to be 65 in 1818.

“…*a French Lad, Inlisted, at Fort Western,*…”

Captain Henry Dearborn1 penned these words into his journal regarding events that had occurred in the region called Sartigan, along the Chaudière River in Quebec to describe Charles “Burget,” a member of his company in the Arnold Expedition that left Fort Western on September 27, 1775, to travel north up the Kennebec River and through the Maine wilderness to attack Quebec City. Captain Dearborn was 24 years old during the March to Quebec. He had been trained as a physician before he enlisted in the army in April 1775, immediately after the Battles of Concord and Lexington. It is my theory that Henry Dearborn was extremely fortunate to have Charles Bourget, the “French Lad,” as he called him, assigned to his unit at Fort Western because it was Bourget’s relationship to the native French population in the village of St. Joseph (now known as St. Joseph-de-Beauce) on the Chaudière River that most likely contributed to saving Dearborn’s life after he came down with pneumonia while crossing the Height of Land. Dearborn and the two men named Charles, Bourget and Hilton, from his company were permitted to stay at St. Joseph for nearly four weeks while he recuperated from his illness until they finally left to rejoin their unit at Quebec City in the first week of December.

The text of Dearborn’s reconstructed “official” journal entry from Sartigan reads (beginning Nov. 5):

“…at evening Charles Hilton, and Charles Burget, a French Lad, Inlisted, at Fort Western, who was a native of Canada, Came back for me with Two Horses, we Stay’d here all night.

“6 I hir’d an Indian to Carry me down the River, 9 Miles to one Sonsossees, a Frenchmans, one of Charles Burgets relations, where I hir’d Lodgings and took my Bed Immediately, I was this time in a High fever…”

The inclusion of the names of the soldiers was highly unusual for a contemporary military journal that was being kept during the time the event was unfolding because it could have fallen into the hands of the enemy and placed those people named at great risk of being discovered. Therefore, it can be concluded that the “official” journal entry was not written at the time the events happened. According to the accounts of the day, it is a fact that Henry Dearborn needed to reconstruct his entire journal for the March to Quebec later in his life in order to complete his official papers that were going to be deposited with the Massachusetts Historical Society Archives for posterity because the original document was missing. Since the journal was being reconstructed many years after the event, Dearborn took the liberty of giving credit to those men whose efforts led to saving his life during the time he spent at St. Joseph. He accurately listed the names of the two men from his own unit, but I was unable to find a relative of Charles Burget by the name of Sonsossees (Sансoucie?) living in St. Joseph at that time. I believe that Dearborn either forgot the person’s name or he was still protecting the real person against further retribution for colluding with the enemy.

One fact that I found helps to explain my theory. In the summer of 1776, several men in the Canadian militia along the Chaudière River were removed from their posts for their failure to defend their villages against the invading American Army2. One such man was the captain of the militia in the village of St. Joseph. His name was François Malo Lessard. The removal also included his son François, who had served as a lieutenant under his father’s command. The act of removal from command in the militia was a public affair followed by the townspeople being once again required to recite the loyalty oath to the English King as they had done in 1760. I believe that François Malo Lessard may have provided the help that Dearborn required, either directly or indirectly, because he was the second cousin of Charles Bourget. According to his birth record, Charles Bourget’s mother was a Lessard and François Malo Lessard may have been “one of Charles Burgets relations” that Dearborn referred to in his journal entry. I suspect that François Malo Lessard’s passivity toward defending his post from the invasion may have been motivated by the fact that his boyhood home at Ste. Anne-de-Beaupré on the St. Lawrence River had been burned to the ground by the British in 1759. He would have therefore volunteered to find or to provide lodgings to Dearborn when he was asked to do so by his cousin. In the book *Voices from a Wilderness Expedition*, The Journals and Men of Benedict Arnold’s Expedition to Quebec in 1775, author Stephen Darley cites what he calls the original missing journal written by a Captain Durben -- note how closely the name resembles Dearborn -- that was found in a historical collection of the library at the University of Glasgow in Scotland. This jour-

(Continued on page 10)
Charles Bourget, a Franco-American Revolutionary War Patriot continued from page 9

nal’s daily entries closely correspond to the ones in the “official” reconstructed Dearborn journal, but this original journal does not include names as found in the later version. Also discovered among these documents was a prisoner roll that identifies a prisoner called Charles Burzett, age 23. This is yet another misspelling of the Bourget name by a different person who this time was a Scottish guard. The age, however, correctly coincides with Bourget’s age in 1776 and early 1777. The U.S. Military Pension records correctly calculate that Charles Burzett (Bourget) would have been 22 years old when he enlisted in the Continental Army at Fort Western on the Kennebec River in the Province of Maine in September 1775 to join the Arnold Expedition. After four weeks at St. Joseph, Dearborn writes that he, Charles Bourget, and Charles Hilton continued down the Chaudière River to Quebec City in the first week of December. Bourget then participated in the unsuccessful Battle of Quebec on December 31, 1775, where he and 30 other soldiers from his unit were captured, including Dearborn. Nearly all of the 3723 who were taken prisoner that day, from the approximately 600 men who had successfully reached Quebec out of the 1,100 who had originally set out on the expedition from Fort Western, were eventually released by mid-1777. Three men had escaped and retraced their path back down the Kennebec River to Fort Western. After Bourget’s prisoner exchange in 1777, he was returned to Albany where he re-enlisted for three more years to continue to serve with the 3rd NH Regiment under then Lieutenant Colonel Henry Dearborn.

During the time when Charles Burget, as his name was spelled in their roles, remained a member of the 3rd NH Regiment, he was among those who spent the bitter winter of 1777-1778 at Valley Forge, where the Colonials drilled for six months to finally become a professional military force. He then fought in the Battle of Monmouth in New Jersey in June 1778. His regiment endured another grueling winter in 1778-1779 at Redding and at Danbury in Connecticut. He was again at Danbury in the winter of 1779-1780 with the 3rd NH Regiment. It was here that Bourget reenlisted for another three years on January 31, 1780. This time he re-enlisted with the elite 2nd Continental Light Dragoons (2LD) based in Wethersfield, Connecticut. The 2LD was the first cavalry regiment to be commissioned by the Continental Congress under the command of Colonel Elisha Sheldon.

Under Major Benjamin Tallmadge, a portion of the 2LD became General George Washington’s bodyguards and also operated a network of spies that transmitted secret messages for General Washington in and around New York City. In September and October of 1780, another group from the 2LD guarded Major John André, the British spy who was captured shortly after he had colluded with General Benedict Arnold, in their attempt to compromise the fort at West Point by purchasing the plans for the fort from Arnold. The 2LD guarded Major André from his capture on September 23, 1780, throughout his court-martial trial and up to the day of his execution on October 2, 1780. Later a contingent from the 2LD was at the Battle of Yorktown, where the British surrender eventually led to the end of the war, culminating in the Treaty of Paris.

Unfortunately, it is difficult to know exactly where Charles Burzett, as his name was written by this time, served because most of the records for the highly secretive 2LD unit were quickly destroyed shortly after the action they described was completed in order to protect the identities of the parties who were involved. After serving in the Continental Army for nearly eight years, Bourget was honorably discharged at the end of the war, in July 1783.

Charles Bourget never rose above the rank of private, probably due to his lack of education, but he enlisted three different times and served honorably for nearly the entire duration of the Revolutionary War. He served with the 3rd NH Regiment in the Battle of Quebec in 1775, the Battle of Saratoga in 1777, and the Battle of Monmouth in 1778, among others, as well as being present at Valley Forge in 1777-1778; and he also served with the elite 2nd Continental Light Dragoons between 1780 and 1783. In addition to his service record, being held as a prisoner-of-Pvt. war for more than a year after his capture in the Battle of Quebec may not have made him famous, but it certainly does make him a true American Patriot. His anonymity for all these years was in part the result of the loss of his true name because it had been misspelled so many different times and ways, as found on his military pension application, on the prisoner-of-war roll, and on the muster rolls of all the different units in which he served. The best proof of his value as a soldier came when Major Benjamin Tallmadge, a noted member of General George Washington’s inner circle of officers, submitted a handwritten affidavit for the pension application to attest to Charles Burzett’s military service with the 2nd Continental Light Dragoons. According to the current Commander of the 2nd Continental Light Dragoons reenactment company, Sal Tarantino, Major Tallmadge rarely provided such a document, and when he did it was only for a man he knew well and with whom he had a personal connection. After the war, Charles Burzett settled down on a farm in the town of German, New York. He was married in 1803 to his wife, Eunice, and he passed away in 1825.

1 After the war, Dearborn settled in Gardiner, Maine, a few miles downstream from Fort Western. He was elected to two terms in the U.S. House of Representatives from Massachusetts. He rose to the rank of General in the Army and was appointed Secretary of War by President Thomas Jefferson, a position he held for the entire War of 1812. President James Madison named him Minister to Portugal.

2 Quebec During the American Invasion, 1775-1776. The Journal of Francois Bab, Gabriel Taschereau & Jenkin Williams.

3 From Journal of Captain Simeon Thayer: 383 prisoners are listed by name in Voices from a Wilderness Expedition, The Journals and Men of Benedict Arnold’s Expedition to Quebec in 1775 by Stephen Darley.

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LA BELLE CHEVELURE DE LAURA

[Cette histoire qui fait partie de mes souvenances à propos de ma grand-mère, Laura Simard Beaupré, est tirée de ma dernière œuvre pas encore publiée. J’ai élabordé les faits actuels pour donner à cette histoire une tournure tant soit peu imaginée. Je dois dire que ma grand-mère a actuellement eu une coupe de ses longs cheveux vers la soixantaine.]

Elle était assise dans un gros vieux fauteuil de cuir marron au Salon de Beauté Chez Claudette sur la rue Simard, et puis elle commença à penser en elle-même qu’est-ce qu’elle faisait là. Pourquoi était-elle dans un salon de beauté? Pourquoi se laissait-elle faire, elle et sa belle et longue chevelure qu’elle avait tant aimée et conservée pendant des années? Se laisser faire par une étrangère par-dessus le marché. Celle-ci allait lui couper sa belle chevelure. «Mon Dieu!»

La jeune femme portait un sarrau vert pâle, et elle était en frais de déférer la toque de Laura. Il en sortit une longue et belle chevelure grise couleur d’acier. Laura ne s’était jamais fait couper les cheveux depuis sa tendre enfance. Jamais! Peut-être elle s’était fait rafraîchir les cheveux par sa mère, mais jamais coupé par quelqu’un d’autre. Jamais de sa vie, et Laura venait d’avoir soixante-sept ans. La belle chevelure de Laura fut de longue date sa marque de femme, sa marque de distinction, pour ainsi dire. Sa sœur, Louise, tout en grandissant avait les cheveux roux, et puis elle avait retenu la douce couleur d’une rousse jusqu’à ses années de vieillesse. Quant à la couleur des cheveux de Laura, elle fut d’un châtain obscur, une couleur pas aussi vive que celle des cheveux de Louise, mais une couleur remarquable pour une jeune fille devenue femme. On sait bien, les cheveux de Laura étaient toujours de mère et de pourvoyeuse, elle paraissait plus propre et plus convenable à sa beauté. Elle portait ses cheveux en une toque parce que c’était plus propre et plus convenable à sa tâche de mère et de pourvoyeuse, elle paraissait belle femme. Et puis, Laura aimait bien se regarder dans la glace de sa chambre lorsqu’elle se préparait pour se mettre au lit, car elle aimait sa belle chevelure longue qui lui tombait jusqu’aux fesses. Combien de fois ses petits-enfants lui avaient demandé de défaire sa toque juste pour examiner ses longs cheveux de femme, les cheveux de mémère doute, que les autres écoliers ne rient d’elle, Laura, surtout lorsqu’elle paraissait un peu échevelée. Les cheveux châtain de Laura ressemblaient à la brunante d’automne alors que le ciel luit encore de ses vestiges de couleurs resplendissantes, rosâtre tirant sur le rouge mêlé d’éclisses orange. Plus tard, elle commença à porter de jolis peignes dans une chevelure rehaussée afin de se trouver plus présenteable pour une occasion tout à fait spéciale telle un anniversaire ou une fête en famille. Puis, elle s’était acheté de très beaux peignes en écaillée-de-tortue pour son mariage avec Georges. Maintenant avec cinq enfants et diverses tâches quotidiennes, Laura avait commencé à porter ses cheveux en toque derrière sa tête. Elle n’avait donc pas le temps de se bâbérer[se déranger] avec sa chevelure comme elle l’avait jadis fait, mais elle jouissait bien d’une chevelure longue, sa marque de femme, s’était-elle

Mes grands-parents, George et Laura

B. Ils avaient toujours admiré les longs et beaux cheveux de grand-mère lorsqu’ils tombaient derrière elle comme une boule de laine qu’on laisse tomber par terre. « Oh, mémère » avaient-ils beau dire à la vue d’une telle cascade de chevelure déferlant dans son dos. Laura avait toujours porté ses cheveux longs, et sa mère avait-elle passé des heures à les broser, car elle ne voulait, sans aucun doute, que les autres écoliers ne rient d’elle, Laura, surtout lorsqu’elle paraissait un peu échevelée. Les cheveux châtain de Laura ressemblaient à la brunante d’automne alors que le ciel luit encore de ses vestiges de couleurs resplendissantes, rosâtre tirant sur le rouge mêlé d’éclisses orange. Plus tard, elle commença à porter de jolis peignes dans une chevelure rehaussée afin de se trouver plus présenteable pour une occasion tout à fait spéciale telle un anniversaire ou une fête en famille. Puis, elle s’était acheté de très beaux peignes en écaillée-de-tortue pour son mariage avec Georges. Maintenant avec cinq enfants et diverses tâches quotidiennes, Laura avait commencé à porter ses cheveux en toque derrière sa tête. Elle n’avait donc pas le temps de se bâbérer[se déranger] avec sa chevelure comme elle l’avait jadis fait, mais elle jouissait bien d’une chevelure longue, sa marque de femme, s’était-elle
(LA BELLE CHEVELURE DE LAURA suite de page 11)

de Laura assise dans le vieux fauteuil. « Je sais bien, » dit-elle en elle-même, « qu’une personne doit s’adapter aux changements, et je ne suis pas stupide à ce sujet. Je ne tomberai pas en mille morceaux à cause de ça. C’est pour cela que les choses vraiment importantes dans la vie nous aident à tolérer mieux les changements qui viennent subrepticement nous frapper. Ce sont ces choses-là, les choses importantes, et pour moi c’est ma longue et précieuse chevelure, qui font ce que je suis, moi, Laura. À mon avis, ces choses-là ne peuvent jamais changer, car ce serait comme me dire qu’un oiseau doit changer son chant ou qu’une branche de lilas doit changer de couleur juste pour plaire aux déboires du temps et des changements. »

En attendant la coiffeuse, Laura toucha de ses doigts la frange de ses longs cheveux tombés sur ses genoux. Ses pensées retournèrent en arrière où elle découvrit la chute du temps qui avait emporté à la dérive ses souvenirs tout comme la marée montante avait emporté les épaves. Laura se remémora des sorties à la plage où le sable fin et doux avait resté collé entre ses orteils, et elle l’avait balayé de sa main droite. Une fois chaussée, elle était partie pour sa demeure sur la rue Simard. Combien de fois avait-elle fait ces sorties souvent accompagnée de son amie, Félicité Marcoux. Elle se souvint le temps de sa jeunesse, un temps de joie et de travail assidu alors qu’il y avait des moments de fainéantise. Elle entrevoyait parmi ces souvenances le beau verger de pommes de son grand-père Simard. Nom de fille, Simard. Nom de pionnier, de la communauté francophone. Ce fut son nom de fille, Simard. Nom de pionnier, nom foncièrement québécois. Oui, elle était de souche de la patrie des ancêtres venus de la Normandie en France et maintenant transplantée aux États-Unis. Son père fut un tailleur de pierre et il s’était écarté de la filature où travaillaient la plupart des immigrants en Nouvelle-Angleterre. La mère de Laura dont les descendants furent les Cadorette de Roberval, était mère de famille, pourvoyeuse, cuisinière d’une excellente réputation, parfois renommée pour ses œuvres de charité, et modiste de chapeaux de femme. Laura était fière de ses parents, fière de ses ancêtres dont l’histoire fut propagée en famille lors de les veillées où les gens, amis et parents, échangeaient chacun des bouts de souvenances de famille. Toute cette histoire de son héritage recueillie ici et là et répétée et les curés de paroisses, osèrent prévenir les jeunes filles de ne pas s’attacher trop aux airs mondiaux et surtout à la beauté frivole des apparences physiques du corps. Cependant, Laura ne portait pas respect à leur manière de voir les choses car elle s’était souvent dite que la beauté est le don de Dieu et non des hommes dont la pensée est trop souvent rétrécie. Ses cheveux, cette belle et longue chevelure, avec volume et ondes lui était devenus le garanti de sa beauté en tant que fille. Elle pouvait faire n’importe quoi avec ses cheveux si souples et si faciles à coiffer que ce soit une coiffure à la mode d’une jeune mannequin dans un magazine qu’elle avait découverte chez son amie, Gérard, où tout simplement la chevelure bien peignée et tirée par en arrière. Ses cheveux châtains étaient épais, riches en couleur, et laissant comme la crinière d’une jument. Cette chevelure fut la marque frappante dont plusieurs gens, surtout son père, remarquaient avec sollicitude. Son père l’avait appelée depuis qu’elle était toute jeune, sa belle jument. Même sa soeur, Louise, l’appelait ainsi car elle aimait la taquiner. Laura avait interprété ce sobriquet pour dire qu’elle, Laura, était aussi libre qu’une jument sauvage dans un champ ouvert, et aussi frappante par la crinière luisante et châtain d’une jument caracolant dans la splendeur ensoleillée de la journée naissante. Laura aimait ses cheveux, et puis elle s’était acheté un beau peigne en écaillu rutilante à la clarté du jour pour enjoliver sa chevelure que sa maman trouvait une perte d’argent, du gaspillage, avait-elle dit. À l’âge de quinze ans lors d’une séance de pose avec le photographe, Lémiere, elle avait choisi de peigner ses cheveux à l’arrière fermement mais pas trop serrés pour amoindrir ses belles ondes souples et la résilience naturelle de ses cheveux. Elle avait attaché un ruban mince bleu marin avec une fine bordure de bleu ciel en forme de noeud à boucles, et elle l’avait épingle modestement derrière ses cheveux afin de mettre en valeur son costume qui ressemblait à celui d’un marin à large col. Suspendue par un ruban étroit autour de son cou, une montre en or, Elgin, sur laquelle il y avait une gravure, en quelque sorte un cor de chasse avec des enjolivements de petites spirales sur chaque côté. C’était une montre de femme et de demoiselle que les jolies créatures portaient tout près de leur sein. Attachée à un anneau tout près du bouton de remontre, était divulguée une chaînette au bout de laquelle tombait un tout petit sifflet tout comme un petit cor en miniature [J’ai la belle montre de ma grand-mère que tante Lena m’a confiée comme souvenirs]. Laura aimait sa montre parce qu’elle lui convenait bien, jeune grandette qu’elle était devenue. Elle se voyait comme une demoiselle qui méritait d’être estimée par les autres, déjà sûr de soi et confiante d’elle-même. La mère de Laura s’était vite aperçue la lueur de fierté de soi dans l’œil de sa fille, et se rendit compte que sa fille avait soudain grandi sans qu’elle ne s’en aperçoive.

Laura avait trois frères et une soeur. Elle s’appelait Louise. Les jeunes frères, Henry, George, et William avaient les cheveux assez communs pour des jeunes hommes, mais pas du tout semblables aux cheveux de leur sœur, Laura. Quant à Louise, elle avait les cheveux roux clairs mais très, très fins et difficiles à coiffer. Louise disait qu’avec cette chevelure, elle paraissait comme une poupée bon marché. Elle enviait tant la chevelure de Laura. Aussi, la mère et le père avaient des cheveux sans grand éclat, tout à fait mats, plats et absolument ternes. Alors, d’où venaient les cheveux de Laura se demandaient la parenté et les gens qui la connaissaient. Personne ne pouvait
Laura aimait entendre parler de sa grand-mère, de ses tantes et ses oncles, de ses cousins et cousines de Saint-Hyacinthe au Canada,
Laura se souvint lorsque sa chevelure avait la touche de la soie et du satin lisse.
Les Souvenances du Moulin de Maurice Mercier et de Rose Coté

[À la fin du dernier volet des souvenances des moulins et des shoe shops, j’avais demandé aux lecteurs etlectrices de me contacter si ils voulaient partager leurs expériences de travail avec les lecteurs du Courier. Et bien, en voici deux, Maurice Mercier et la mère de Rose Hill. Celle-ci m’a contacté afin de me raconter les expériences de sa mère au moulin, la Pepperell de Biddeford. Madame Rose Coté, maintenant défunte.]

Je me suis assis avec Maurice Mercier il y a quelque temps et j’ai pris des notes à propos de ses expériences de travail dont la plupart se passèrent au moulin, la Pepperell de Biddeford. Maurice est né à Biddeford 1926 de parents américains. La mère est d’origine québécoise alors que le père venait du Massachusetts. Le jeune Maurice a passé quelques années à l’école Saint-André de Biddeford et ensuite à l’école Notre-Dame de Lourdes à Saco. Puisque la mère tomba gravement malade, on fit sortir Maurice au moulin, de temps en temps, de sa vie à la maison. Il n’avait que 16 ans lorsqu’il entra à la Pepperell Mfg. Co. où il devint rovin’ boy [une opération de filature avant les bobines et les fileuses]. Il travaillait dans le 15-3, me dit-il, et il rencontrera plusieurs personnes et se fit des amis. Il y passa 15 ans comme rovin’ boy avant d’être transféré au département d’expédition , au début comme auxiliaire à tout faire et ensuite comme contremaître. Il l’a fait pour deux ans et demi. Ensuite, Maurice est allé chez Morningstar à Kenne-bunk où il continua la tâche de contremaître d’expédition pour cinq ans. En général, on trouva Maurice un bon travaillant, vaillant, conscientieux et fidèle à son travail.


Maurice fut toute sa vie un débrouill-

[lard et se trouva plusieurs travaux à temps perdu telle, la cueillette de pommes chez Snell’s à Bar Mills, la surveillance des enfants d’école aux croisères, agent de police, et entraîneur pour la ligue de Babe Ruth. Lorsque je lui ai demandé si lui et sa femme avaient déjà voyagé, il me répondit, une fois seulement en Floride pour visiter leurs fils, Ralph. Maurice et Thérèse sont bien attachés à leur demeure sur la rue Douglas à Saco. Quoique les deux se servent d’une marchette, ils paraissent en bonne forme et maintiennent une lucidité d’esprit assez rare pour leur âge. Avant de quitter mon interlocuteur, il me dit de sa femme. “C’est une sainte, vous savez.” Je le crois bien car elle m’apparait comme une femme bien patiente, fidèle à son devoir d’épouse et mère, et bonne travailleuse toute sa vie. Tous deux sont de fiers citoyens franco-américains que les années n’ont pas terni l’éclat de leur appartenance à une tradition de bon labeur et de fidélité à leur foi en Dieu et en eux-mêmes.

Quant à Mme Coté, née Rose Soucy, c’est sa fille, Rose Hill, qui m’a écrit pour me donner des précisions à propos de sa mère. Sa mère venait de Saco; elle fut née en 1917. Son père est mort lorsqu’elle était encore tout jeune. Sa mère eut une crise de nerfs et c’est alors que les cinq enfants furent mis aux dépens de l’État. Rose Soucy Coté, paraît-il, a toujours connu du temps dur dans sa vie. Elle se maria et eut deux enfants. Son mari travailla au moulin dans le département de la carde. Rose suivit son mari au moulin et devint tisserande[jeune “weaveuse”]en 1945. Voici les mots de sa fille, Rose, et je vous les donne en traduction: Elle travailla pendant la grève au moulin et c’était un temps difficile pour la famille. Comme enfant, je me souviens d’aller à la salle du syndicat pour prendre un repas. Nous avons été heureux lorsque la grève se termina parce que les fèves qu’on nous servait n’étaient pas trop bonnes. En ce temps-là, les familles vivaient de paie en paie et c’était difficile pour tous et chacun d’épargner un seul sou. Si jamais il y avait une femme sur la terre ce fut ma mère. La seule raison pour laquelle elle travaillait au moulin ce fut pour nous créer une meilleure vie, nous ses enfants. Elle travaillait le troisième poste et dormait très peu. En été, elle fut accablée par la chaleur. Les amis avaient raison d’appeler le moulin une usine d’exploités. Elle aimait bien ses amis-tisserandes mais elle fut vexée lorsque les arrangeurs de métiers n’arrangeaient pas les métiers à temps. Aussi fort qu’elle ne travailla, les “boss” exigeaient toujours plus d’elle. Les navettes furent un danger constant accepté par les travailleuses et c’était une chose terrifiante que d’apercevoir une chose terrifiante que d’apercevoir une d’elle laisser le métier et voler en l’air. Un soir, une navette partit du métier et frappa ma mère sur la tempe droite. Il n’y avait pas d’hôpital pour lui venir en aide. Elle alla à la station des garde-malades où on la conseilla d’aller chez elle après la relève et de ne pas dormir pour un jour entier de peur d’une
dormir pour un jour entier de peur d’une

(Suite page 16)

(LES SOUVENANCES DU MOULIN DE MARGUERITE MERCIER ET DE ROSE COTÉ SUITE DE PAGE 15)


One of my professors at the University of Maine happened to have been our neighbor in the “South Apartments.” These were rentals reserved for married staff and students.

The South Apartments were recognizable to veterans as barrack type housing, nothing fancy. There were two types of buildings. One type was a one-floor barracks, consisting of sixteen apartments, eight on each side, for a total of sixteen apartments. There were two of these.

The other type was a double decker unit with 8 apartments per building. There were 2 front doors per unit, with a doorway on each side of the entrance landing and a stairway to the second floor with two doors, one on each side of the second floor landing. The units on each side had a common back entrance and exit with each first floor apartment having back door access to a landing and stairs that led outdoors to the yard running between barracks, each row of the barracks fronted a street and another set of barracks opposite each other. Each yard had T posts from which hung clotheslines (Continued on page 18)
**LA VACHE A MAILLOTTE**  
*(Originally Published in the St. John Valley Times, October 11, 1995)*

**JACQUELINE CHAMBERLAND BLESSO**

Mike: Good morning, Madame Francine. I hope I’m not late for my Valley French Lesson.

Francine: Ah, bonjour Michel. Tu es juste à temps. J’ai pensé qu’aujourd’hui il serait intéressant d’étudier une chansonnette que tous les jeunes enfants de la Vallée entonnaient autrefois quand ils parlaient français.

- What’s it about?

   - Ça veut dire pleurer. Brailler est le verbe utiliser dans la Vallée pour tous les pleurs. En langue standard on l’utilise pour les pleurs d’enfants ou les pleurs bruyants.

- Il s’agit d’une vache -

**La Vache à Maillotte**

**Elle est morte, la vache à Maillotte;**  
**Elle est morte, la tête dans le potte;**  
**Son service était pas très long;**  
**Ça braillaient comme des cochons.**

- It sounds like a nursery rhyme.

- C’est exactement ça.

- What did the cow have her head in? What’s a potte?

   - Un pot en français standard, et prononcé potte dans la Vallée, est un récipient pour les liquides, soit une marmite pour faire de la soupe ou bien, surtout dans la Vallée, un pot de chambre qu’autrefois on mettait sous le lit pendant la nuit avant l’invention de la toilette.

- You mean the cow died with her head in a chamber pot?

- On peut l’interpréter comme ça. Si elle est morte avec la tête dans une marmite, on pourrait en faire une soupe; si dans un pot de chambre, elle a eu une mauvaise fin, la pauvre.

   - Ça veut dire pleurer. Brailler est le verbe utiliser dans la Vallée pour tous les pleurs. En langue standard on l’utilise pour les pleurs d’enfants ou les pleurs bruyants.

- I see. It’s different from standard French. Although I can understand but I can’t speak French, I would not understand these words, and I certainly would not make much sense of this verse without your explication.

   - Le français de la Vallée n’est pas si différent de la langue métropolitaine. Après quelques temps tu n’auras pas de difficulté à comprendre parce que tu es de bon coeur. Je sais que tu ne commençerais pas la sottise de croire que les gens de la Vallée parlent un français inférieure, comme beaucoup de gens qui apprennent le français pour la première fois, et qu’on a soumis à ce lavage de cerveaux de supériorité de la langue standard. A part les anglicismes (et on doit dire que les métropolitains, eux, utilisent un bon nombre d’anglicismes), notre langue est bien fondée sur la langue apportée de la France au nouveau monde par nos ancêtres à partir de 1604, et transmis pour la plupart oralement jusqu’a nos jours à travers les quatre derniers siècles. Brailler sort du verbe braise du moyen français au 13e siècle, tandis que pleurer vient de plorer au 10e siècle qui a été extrait du latin plorarer. Tous les deux comprenaient l’idée de crier ou de se lamenter.

   - I see. Brailler and pleurer were both used; but while pleurer has become part of standard French, brailler has survived in the Valley to refer to all crying, and in France to refer only to noisy or childish crying. Here you have preserved the all-encompassing meaning of the verb “brailler.” What does the ça at the beginning of the first line mean? I thought ça was an abbreviation of the de-monstrative pronoun “cela.”

   - Ça veut dire pour désigner des personnes. Par exemple, ça mangeaient, ça couraient ou, comme dans notre chansonnette, ça braillaient.

   - I noticed that “était pas” was used without the “ne” instead of n’était pas.”

   - Le “ne” est superflu dans la Vallée. On l’utilise rarement dans la négation. Au lieu de “Je n’ai pas d’argent,” on dit “J’ai pas d’argent.” En France, c’est à la mode d’éviter le “ne” dans la langue parler. Après tout, les Français se dépêchent autant que nous, et le “ne” encombre et empêche la fluidité. Le “pas” suffit pour indiquer la négation. Tu vois que notre langue est en vogue depuis longtemps. Dans le développement de la langue, le “ne” a précédé le “pas.” Au 13e siècle, on utilisait le “pas” mais le “ne” dominait. Arrivé au 15e siècle, c’est le “pas” qui “a pris le dessus” comme on dit. Ici on a gardé le “pas” et on s’est débarassé du “ne.”

   - Madame Francine, you said, in referring to the children of the Valley, that they “used to speak French.” If they aren’t speaking French, what’s going to happen to Valley French?

   - Le français pourrait disparaître dans la prochaine génération si on ne prend pas de mesures draconiennes pour l’encourager et le rehausser.

   - But, the Valley has a unique culture very much attached to the language. What happens to the culture when the language is gone?

   - Comme tu peux voir par l’explication de notre leçon, si la langue est éteinte, (Suite page 18)
(A Franco-American Folktale continued from page 16)

for the wives to hang the laundry.

First and second floor outside apartment each had two bedrooms. The inside apartments each had one bedroom. We had the inside apartment, first floor, right, up the steps, inside, to the door on the left. It opened to the kitchen. My folklore professor, his wife and son had the first floor apartment adjoining ours. It was up the steps on the left, through the door on the right. Our bedrooms were, in a sense, adjoining bedrooms. Their bathroom and our bathroom were back to back.

Sandy Ives was my professor’s name. I do not know that he had taught anywhere else before coming to Maine. I do know that he was young, and he was not, probably, any older than I was when he started teaching, although I think he had taught somewhere else before coming to Maine. I was a veteran. His specialty was not specifically English, although he taught some. In the ensuing years he started teaching folklore because that was his strength and forte, and he was, at the time, long into collecting folk material, stories and songs, from lumberjacks working in Maine and the Maritime Provinces. Sandy [As neighbors, I had permission to call him Sandy.] had grants to go on field trips on summer breaks. He took along recording equipment to amass tales and songs from those woodsmen who had something to share.

Sandy’s folklore course might have been the first, truly, folklore course offered by the University. His course was one of my electives for my graduate program. Sandy had to have had an ulterior motive when he suggested to the chairman that he teach the course. He intended to continue his research by tapping the reservoir of folk tales known to students electing the course; as many in the class were familiar with the tales, most certainly, and had to have to have had parents, grandparents, relatives and friends with a sense of the folklore that was their heritage, having grown up at a time when folk ways and stories still had been central to their daily lives. Certainly they had to have heard first hand or had repeated, themselves, all those stories they had heard.

An on-going course assignment for the semester was to collect as many stories that we could gather from our neighbors, relatives, and parents to share. Of the stories that I collected from locals and neighbors, all in the Franco-American vain, most were told in French, or, as some people will say, the Canadian vernacular. They were stories about lumberjacks, flying canoes, churchyards, devils, and spirits—all things magical.

I cannot say that my entire hometown was French-Canadian because, I guessed, it was not. A majority seemed to me to be French speaking. If the high school athletic coach and History teacher was the only one who spoke only in English, English speaking folks had to be in a minority because that’s the way it felt to me. I had to search for new friends who spoke only English. I could not say that today. Hardly anyone speaks French, only, today, certainly among the relatives. The majority speak only English even as they come from parents who themselves spoke very little English prior to the 1950’s.

In the last sixty years, my sisters’ children, and mine, now, speak only English. Their children would not know that their parents spoke French at one time; although they knew that their mère and père still spoke French all the time when they were alone with each other. As I have stated before, the community we lived in conduct business in French even if the business owners were not French. The clerk in the hardware store spoke it. The butcher spoke it; the milkman spoke it; the priests spoke it; the funeral director spoke it; the lady who collected the rent spoke it; the fishmonger spoke it; the iceman spoke it; during the war, the junkman who bought cigarette foil, balls of string, cardboard, tin cans and other metals spoke it.

To fulfill my assignment, I visited with my parents, spoke to my mother and father, and to the neighbors I knew well to ask them to recall any stories from their childhood. And almost everyone had a tale for me that I could add to the collection I was amassing. In this way, having let loose some twenty or so members of the folklore class to collect folk stories known to their parents, relatives and their neighbors, Sandy Ives had sources other than the Maine woodsmen and those from the Maritime Provinces. His students were source collectors of materials to scrutinize, to categorize and classify. Invention and miracle cohabited the tales. One of my favorites has to do with the notions of disobedience, dancing, and the devil. A folktale has one or all of the following characteristics: reluctance: the teller will tell you that, for one reason or another, he really does not like or want to tell the story. Truthfulness:

The teller will say, whether you believe him/her or not, the story is true, as it was told to him/her. At the conclusion of the story, there are admonitions of one kind or another and a confirming admonition from the storyteller following an honest retelling. A folktale, other than those that contain fantasy, has to have verisimilitude or irrefutable attribution—as in: “my grandmother told me. I heard it first from my mother.

“What I am going to tell you is true. I heard it from my mom who before the telling admonished me to retell it just as I had heard it in her own words; otherwise, I will be telling a lie punishable by Satan himself. My mother told it to me, and I never forgot (Continued on page 19)

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(LA VACHE A MAILLOTTE suite de page 17)

qui pourra comprendre le sens, le charme et la signification de notre chanson? Quelques sociologues soutiennent l’idée qu’une culture peut survivre sans sa langue. Mais, c’est une question de qualité. Pensers-tu que dans une autre génération, si la langue disparaît, on pourra vraiment comprendre “La Vache à Maillotte” et nos poèmes, chansons, complaintes, histoires et écrits si on ne connaît pas la langue de la Vallée?

- A lot of meaning and significance will be lost. I can see that it’s crucial to try to preserve the language. Otherwise, it’s loss will have a very big effect on Valley culture. I suspect that it will also have an economic impact. People who have left consider the Valley the cradle of their culture and language. If this unique language fades away, and then eventually the culture disappears, what then is going to attract people to the Valley.

- Exactement. Les gens pourront chanter les chansons, réciter les poèmes et raconter les histoires, mais la plupart du sens sera perdu. Ce phénomène a déjà commencé.

- So, it’s important not only to preserve the culture, but its especially important to try to preserve the language.

- Tu as appris une très bonne leçon aujourd’hui Michel. Au revoir. A la prochaine.

- See you next week, Madame Françoise.
it just as I am telling you.

“Two sisters who lived on a farm with their elderly parents outside of Warwick, Province of Québec, very much wanted to go dancing. Their parents recognizing the sinfulness of dancing at any place other than at a soirée sponsored by the local parish, absolutely forbade their daughters to attend. So the two girls, in their late teens, worked very hard to set aside the temptation surrounding the announcement of a very special Harvest Dance at a country barn in the neighboring parish. But the two were overwhelmed by the need to attend, but prayerfully used supplication for help from their guardian angels to overcome them or to put aside the terrible urges. But prayer and even demand proved fruitless and, over time, overwhelming. They were going to go dancing.

On the night that the dance was to take place, the sisters executed their plan as best they could. It would not be easy. They would tell their parents that they were going to bed early. They would don their best dresses and shoes, and wait until their parents had gone to bed; this being farming country, neighbors lived far apart, and there was little to do by lamplight because of the darkness coming early in the season. They even climbed into bed and pulled the covers over their heads.

The girls left through their second floor bedroom window and quickly walked to the to the end of their farm road and started walking down the dirt road to the next town, doing their best to use the moonlight to save themselves from tripping because of holes in the rutted road, preferring to walk in the middle, grassy portion.

As they walked along, they realized how probably stupid the plan was, being that they had a long way to go, but as suspected, someone came along the only main road in a cabriolet drawn by a grey, spirited horse.

The young man holding the reins stopped his horse at a short distance, probably having spied the two young ladies on the side of the road, by moonlight, they were quite visible. He asked, politely, where they were going, and they told him that they were going to the next parish to attend the dance at the barn that served as a dance hall on many celebratory occasions.

“Well,” said the young man all dressed in black with a freshly pressed white shirt shinning in the moonlight. “You girls are in luck. Get aboard; I happen to be going to the shinning in the moonlight. “You girls are in black with a freshly pressed white shirt in celebratory occasions.

...the two girls, in their late teens, worked very hard to set aside the temptation surrounding the announcement of a very special Harvest Dance...

barn fencing.

The girls sashayed inside enjoying the music and the chance to dance, as the men, young and old, spied the new girls and promenaded around hoping to seize the opportunity to engage in a quadrille with one or both of the girls. Soon, the handsome young man dressed in black and still wearing his black gloves joined the group where older ladies and gents sat or stood clapping hands and swaying or tapping their feet to the tempo of the fiddle, accordion, spoons or washboard. When asked, the girls took turns dancing along to the sound of the music in jig time, the pace moving faster and faster. It occurred to the girls that their young man’s hands were very hot, a good thing he wore gloves one thought as she let go his hand and allowed him to hold her waist as he helped her to lift and jump and swing around in the crook of an arm, left and right.

One of the old grand ‘meres holding a wailing baby in her arms struggled to make him happy by bouncing up and down on one foot and then another; as she stomped her feet and swayed from side to side, the baby only cried the louder. Fiercely, the old woman danced shaking the infant to and fro. It occurred to her that the problem was one she well knew. The devil was present somewhere among the merry makers, stomping to the music, clapping to the beat of the spoonman who was chortling like a vanguard of a hundred roosters presaging the rise of dawn.

She hurried to the barn door where the local vieux garcon stood alert for the sign of trouble and told him that she feared the devil himself was among the revelers and he should hurry up to the vestry to summon the prêtre. Sensing that it was time to go if they were to get home before their parents awoke to find them missing, the girls left the dance and made their way to the country road intent upon returning home in good time. Suddenly, they heard the trot of a horse fast approaching them. It was the young man in black who offered them a ride home. It would help them by getting them home faster than they could walk, the girls took advantage of the young man’s good offer and help to board the buggy. They sat down and grabbed the bench seat to hold on, the young man whipped at his horse and they took off at a fast canter before he got it to move at a gallop through the still night air.

The girls sensed a danger. The grey horse’s speed frightened them. One sister slid her hand inside her frock’s pocket to get hold of her rosary beads, and prayed one Hail Mary after another as fast as she felt the pace of the horse go. It seemed to the two of them that if the horse moved faster, the buggy would take flight they were going so fast.

And as they held on to that thought, they found themselves bouncing out of the buggy to hit the ground almost as if nothing had happened. The cart, the young man in black, and the grey horse had disappeared.

The girls, speechless, made their way back home, climbed up the ladder and through the window. And soon their mother was banging at the door and telling them it was time to get up if they were going to church. Their father would not wait very long and would leave without them. When the parents and later the community of worshippers saw the girls all were astonished because the girls’ hair had turned white. Altogether the parents and girls hurried to church not only to attend the service but also to enquire of the priest, what punishment had befallen their daughters.

This is a true story. The two girls continued to attend church. For many years, parishioners could attest to the veracity of this story. The children of God are attended by personal guardian angels. The children of Satan are attended by personal devils that lead us into temptation.
To Kerouac, With Regret

You could have been a saint, Jack.
You grasped too eagerly, too
Indiscriminately at all
The powers of infinity
Raging in your soul.

You longed for oneness with the world —
For ecstasy, enlightenment,
Experience of what creation
Holds and has the power to
Impart to hungry souls.

Aspiring Catholic mystic, you clung
Fiercely to Christ even as
You sought for Buddhist light to
Shine on what was given you
In Lowell's French churches:

Saint Jeanne d'Arc, Louis de France,
Saint Jean Baptiste, the grotto on
The river — yes, the grotto of Lourdes,
With Mary promising Bernadette
A happiness not of earth.

But you snatched heedlessly
At quick routes to bliss: nirvana
Drawn from drink, the hazy glow
Or fierce charge of pills or weed,
Untethered, random sex

Entrapping, dulling your eager heart
Even as you prayed — depressed,
Confused, despairing — to live what you
So fervently desired: a kindness
World-embracing and hard.

But oneness with divinity
Exact a price: long years of
Choice, restraint, self-sacrifice —
No circumventions from the bottle,
Easy coupling, drugs.

You couldn't have it all, Jack.
You knew that — and still you tried.
And in the end your life stalled
And foundered as you grimly, sadly
Drank yourself to death.

You could have been a saint, Jack —
And still may be as God works
With you throughout eternity
To purify the heart that longed
To see and taste and touch.

’Ti Jean, Lowell’s child, grandson of
Québec, American yet French,
Divided and in conflict with
Yourself, rest now in peace —
Toujours reste-toi en paix.

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Homecoming

Heaven is where the heart is; Yvette goes home

She’s striding through the pasture towards the farmhouse.
She sees smoke curling from the chimney.
Her brother’s driving cows to the barn for milking.
Two horses, tails switching, are drinking from the trough.
A tangle of cars is parked along the road.

Now, she spots pickups, an old station wagon, cars.
Over there, that’s Roland’s— the one he courted her in.
Friends from the New England Box Company and Fowler’s Nursing Home drove the two next to it.
She doesn’t recognize the snazzy red convertible.
She’d love to take that one out for a spin.

Are there pies cooling on the window sill?
Does she smell pork roasts, corn, and bouilli? *
She sees her old skis made from cast-off tires.
Someone’s tied a big red ribbon ‘round them
and leaned them against the back steps.
She loved skiing when the first snows came.

Through the half-open door, she hears laughter, jokes,
and story-telling. Someone’s tuning a fiddle.
“What’s all this? “She wonders. Smiling,
she rushes up the stairs like a young girl.
As she bursts into the house, everyone shouts
“Surprise! Everybody’s here!” She’s home.

— Margaret Langford

Homecoming after a life well lived

Yvette Daneault (October 26, 1921-December 25, 2015) grew up on a farm in Hardwick, Vermont. Life wasn’t easy, but “Many hands make the work go light.” She and her thirteen brothers and sisters all pitched in. Yvette remembered those times fondly. What if, as she left us, she found herself walking towards the old farmhouse where relatives, friends, and acquaintances from all the decades of her life had gathered for her homecoming party?

*Here, a summer stew made with beef and vegetables. Some use just green beans and a little onion.

La Mort Pathétique

Il était grand chez-nous
Et aussi partout
Un homme tout jeune encore
Tout pareil comme l’aurore.

Aujourd’hui mon coeur pleure
Car il y a quelques heures
Mon Président est mort.

Je ne vois que son image
Tout seul comme un grand mage
Ses rêves et ses demains
Voler par un assassin.

— Ronald G. Héroux
These Thoughts

Getting of age these thoughts we get, can be scary.
Making decisions about these thoughts, can be scary.
What do we think we can actually accomplish, by these Thoughts?

Not much, except to be in control of one’s self
Not much except to figure a way out
A way out of this life.

This life some of us endure can be heartless
Can be painful, pretty shaky at times.
When these thoughts come into our minds
And make us want to do things that are not right.

These thoughts are mighty scary at times
The respect of the other is not there
Not there when their is more then two in present
There when there is but the two in presence.

These thoughts we ask, of the sudden change
This life of no respect in depth
Closure of these thoughts can be mindful

These thoughts tell us something is not right
Wake up everyone, before these thoughts
Lead to Suicide!

— Linda Ouellette Michaud

I’m Austin West’s Aunt. I am a published Poet. This Poem was Published in the book of The International Who’s Who in Poetry. In hopes this poem will benefit all whom are in suicidal thoughts!

Bella's Fall Coat

by Lynn Plourde (Author), Susan Gal (Illustrator)

Hardcover
$9.44

Bella loves the sights and sounds of fall—the crinkle-crackle of fallen leaves, the crunch of crisp, red apples, the honking and flapping of migrating geese. She wants the season to last forever. She also wants her fall coat—the one her Grams made especially for her—to last forever. But the coat is worn-out and too small. . . . With a snip and a whirl, Grams makes sure Bella will be warm when the first snowflakes fall. And Bella finds a perfect use for her old favorite coat—on the first snowman of the season.

https://www.amazon.com/Bellas-Fall-Coat-Lynn-Plourde/dp/1484726979/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1507229109&sr=1-1&keywords=Plourde
The Sweet Life
Ida LeClair's Guide to Love and Marriage
Written by Susan Poulin
Softcover, 200 pages, Humor, Fiction
ISBN: 978-1-939017-95-6
$16.95

About this Book:
Susan Poulin, the "funniest woman in Maine," is back from Finding Your Inner Moose to show us all how to keep all our relationships sweet, simple, and easy. In The Sweet Life, Poulin (through her popular alter-ego and stage character Ida LeClair) offers a fresh view on love, marriage, and dating through a combination of sassy stories and serious advice. Whip-smart yet down-to-earth, the book strikes the perfect balance between humorous and heartfelt. Reading The Sweet Life feels like talking to an old friend—one with great advice, plenty of experience, and a few great recipes to boot.

About this Author: Susan Poulin
Writer and performer Susan Poulin is the author of The Sweet Life and Finding Your Inner Moose: Ida LeClair's Guide to Livin' the Good Life, as well as ten plays, five of which feature her alter ego, LeClair. The first of these, 1997's "Ida: Woman Who Runs With the Moose" was awarded the Seacoast Media Group's Spotlight on the Arts Award for Best Play and Best Actress. Moose was followed in 2005 by "Ida's Havin' a Yard Sale!," for which Susan received SMG's Best Original Script and Best Actress award, and "A Very Ida Christmas" in 2008 (nominated for SMG's Best Original Script). Susan also writes the popular Maine humor blog and podcast, "Just Ask Ida." Since her debut, Ida has entertained thousands of people from Maine to Minneapolis with her unique brand of wit and wisdom. Her sense of humor simply knows no bounds.

https://www.islandportpress.com

Frog Town
Portrait of a French Canadian Parish in New England
by Laurence Armand French

Frog Town describes in detail a French Canadian parish that was unique due to the high density of both Acadian and Quebeccois settlers that were situated in a Yankee stronghold of Puritan stock. This demography provided for a volatile history that accentuated the inter-ethnic/sectarian conflicts of the time.

In this book, Laurence Armand French discusses the work, language, and social activities of the working-class French Canadians during the changing times that transformed them from French Canadians to Franco Americans. French also articulates the current double-standard of justice within New Hampshire with details of actual cases, presented alongside their circumstances and judicial outcomes, to offer a thorough depiction of the community of Frog Town.

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310 pages; ISBN 9780761863847
Read online, or download in secure EPUB or secure PDF format
Title: Frog Town
Author: Laurence Armand French
https://www.ebooks.com/1734038/frog-town/french-laurence-armand/
Growing Up Franco-American:
(with no black patent-leather shoes)
Paperback – March 1, 2017
by Lorraine Dutile Masure (Author)

Intended for all, Growing Up Franco-American (with no black patent leather shoes) is the intriguing story of courageous grandparent and parent immigrants who, at once, heartily embraced their new country, the United States, yet remained inherently true to many of their cherished Old World cultural traditions -- all as transmitted to, an perceived by -- one of their first-generation American children, author Lorraine Dutile Masure. Acting as a cultural tour guide, she here tells stories of what it was really like growing up with a rich Franco herit

See all 2 formats and editions
Kindle $3.99
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Lisa,
Thank you so much for providing me with this piece. I must say that I am somewhat flabbergasted to see my work formatted in such a professional manner. Your layout does nothing but add credibility to my words and I thank you for that. I never expected to ever have anything that I did published in such a fine way. Hopefully the story of Charles Bourget will do justice to the service he provided to our country. I only wish that I could have found more information about his service while he was with the Second Light Dragoons. I'll have to settle for the fact that the current leader of the reenactment group was impressed when I told him that Major Benjamin Tallmadge provided an affidavit for Bourget's pension application.

In response to your question, my presentation at the Arnold Historical Society went very well and they also accepted my research to be able to add Charles Bourget's name to their Wall of Honor as a participant during the winter of 1777-1778.

I'm very happy with the way you have handled my submission. Maybe it will inspire another person like me to do some research to uncover yet another forgotten Franco-American Patriot whose name may have slipped through the cracks of time. Now that I know where to look I may yet continue to see what else I might learn about my distant relative. I just heard back from the Valley Forge Society and my evidence has been accepted to add Charles Bourget's name to their Wall of Honor as a participant during the winter of 1777-1778.

I couldn't be more pleased with the way your layout looks and the way everything has turned out. When will the Fall issue of "Le Forum" be released?

Paul Lessard
Belgrade, ME
plessard@roadrunner.com
We Were Not Spoiled:

A Franco-American Memoir

by Lucille Verreault Ledoux (Author)

We Were Not Spoiled chronicles the life of Lucille Verreault Ledoux, a Mainer born in 1921. Born and raised in Lewiston, her life is typical of many Franco-Americans of her generation and, as such, is an important addition to our understanding of Maine's ethnically diverse communities in the last century.

This is a book of often overlooked details, of information thought to be marginal and so too frequently lost to students of history. A basic function of memoir is to give witness to a time and a way of life gone by and this book succeeds well at this function. We Were Not Spoiled is full of period photos drawn from family collections and is generously endowed with endnotes to enhance the significance of the text for historical reference.

https://www.amazon.com/We-Were-Not-Spoiled-Franco-American/dp/1493772465

A Tale of Two Migrations:

A French Canadian Odyssey

by Patrice Demers Kaneda (Author)

A French Canadian Odyssey...Between 1840 and 1930 millions of people passed through Ellis Island to New York from the countries of Europe, but what do we know of the descendants of the 10,000 original settlers of Nouvelle France, French Canada, who walked, came on horseback, or train and made their way to New England and to a new life during the same period? In this adventurous tale, Pat Demers Kaneda finds her family, real and imagined, in 17th century France and brings them across the sea to North America where they face hardship and unimagined challenges and leaves them in New England in the 1950's to face a new decade. If you are one of the descendants of the Quebecois, this is your story. It is one more piece of the American mosaic.


Field Trip Day

by Lynn Plourde

Illustrated by Thor Wickstrom

It was Field Trip Day.
Everyone in Mrs. Shepherd’s class was anxious
to visit a farm, especially . . .
Juan Dore-Nomad.
Juan knew that some of his best learning
didn’t always happen at school,
but during adventures out in the real world.

Farmer Fandangle’s Organic Environmentally Friendly Farm is a grand adventure for Mrs. Shepherd’s class. The only problem is the chaperones keep doing headcounts and coming up with the number 22, but there are TWENTY-THREE students in Mrs. Shepherd’s class! Who’s missing? You guessed it—Juan! He just can’t help himself as he wanders off to see what the cows eat so they can give organic milk and to find the source of power for the henhouse contraptions (windmills!). At the end of the farm field trip, it’s not Juan who’s missing, but two of Farmer Fandangle’s calves! Where could they be? Can anyone find them?

A Father’s Blessing on New Year’s Day

by

Gérard Coulombe

Fairfield, CT

While some people just love New Year’s Day, I never did. I did not enjoy Christmas any better. By “Christmas,” I mean the secular meaning of “Christmas,” as in a holiday celebrating our ability in this country to reward those who have been good, particularly, the children. Although, to a greater or inversely lesser degree, the gift of giving largely depends on who you are and the likely possibility of getting, in your Christmas stocking, a piece of coal or a deluxe sampler of drugstore chocolates.

At that moment, I thought that what one got was a measure of affordability. I recalled much later, as a first year teacher, one of my students who came to the house on Long Island to say to me that if I were to give her and “A” she would be forever grateful because she would get a new convertible from her dad for the effort she had put into her classwork. It was both shocking to me and educational for me to learn from a student about what mattered to her.

Christmas for me was never the happy event anticipated by so many, and, as I recall, less anticipated by those who expected that Santa would bring the gift that one always wanted but never got. The depression, the fact of it, and the psychological aspect of it that weighed on me, because of the disappointment that attended us, as it became internalized and lasted for many years of false expectations when the gift was never the one to satisfy, or the one that was to last and last. Growing up is supposed to correct the loss and remedy the supposed everlasting pain of having been denied while so many others in the neighborhood were so richly rewarded, or so I thought, with the gift they had always wanted. The truth is that their expectations were never any more rewarded than mine. We were miserably unhappy with our status in life.

So, I mentally skipped over Christmas. It would never be what I had originally expected, that involved a certain satisfaction, that my parents had known and remembered what I always wanted but never got me at Christmas; My mother gave me hugs and kisses for my knowing that they could never afford to give me what they could not afford to give, for the weekly paycheck earned barely covered their weekly expenses. At one point in my childhood, I knew the difference between those who received and those who did not. I was comfortable knowing that because of who we were, God would not only give us, but also everybody else like us, the love he distributed to those whose families could not afford that which only money could buy. So, as I always managed a job as a youth, I looked in the four one after the other. Then, he put each in a pail of boiling water, pulled them out, hung them up with a ready wire by the legs and we joined him, if we wanted to, in plucking the feathers.

New Year’s Day, or Le Jour de L’An, quickly followed an always-disappointing Christmas. We would again go to our aunt and uncle’s house in the country, but first there was to be a ceremony all of our own that we all had to experience. That was to kneel to receive our father’s blessing. [Father, to me, was never dad. He was always father. I recall why dad was never dad. Father had been an actor and I think he had chosen a part that he always played, that of the aloof principal in a family who was distant and officious, as if he were forever playing the part in one of his many roles as an actor, that of the stern father and husband who always kept his distance by remaining in character all of his life.

Most of the time, “notre Père,” true to his work and sleep habits, was up later than we were on Sunday mornings. So we waited for him to get up, and for him to dress himself for Church. We were waiting; we were attending together, but more than likely, I was serving mass as one of the altar boys at the eleven o’clock service on this day of obligation. Before we could leave, we had to wait on father on the holy day morning of New Year’s Day.

New Year’s Day has lost its cachet in the Church. It has lost all of its religious and familial relationship with the Holy Family. In those earlier days, we were already dressed, and we waited in feverish anticipation for our father to decide it was time to officiate, ceremoniously in giving us his blessings. Our father’s benediction, individually, began with my mother, but not ritually so. It could not wait. We were all anxious to get it done with.

It might have happened earlier in the day had he gotten up, but as a man who worked the second shift all of his life, he had to sleep late on a day off. For my father, it was obligatory, just as much as going to church on a Sunday or on a Holy Day of Obligation. Only when he had gotten out of bed, dressed, had had his breakfast be-

(Continued on page 27)
fore leaving the house to attend church “en famille,” as a family, did he think we were due to be anointed for another year. I don’t believe for one minute that his little drama was anything but a little drama in which he played the major role.

We might have left for Mass on New Year’s Day before he had had us kneel before him, each of us had to take a turn at what I thought was a punitive exercise. To kneel before him was the dutiful thing to do. We were scarred, reluctant, but dutiful. We took our turn to ask for his blessing. He received each one of us individually. As the oldest, I went first; he gave each one of us his blessing, or not. We could not have foretold or bet on the outcome. It was possible that he might withhold his blessing. It happened.

Father’s benediction was old Canadian tradition. In turn, and as the eldest, I followed mother, and knelt at my father’s feet, whereupon, he would raise his cupped hands overhead to bring them down on my head in benediction. But first came an accounting of our plusses, heavy with minuses, from the past year.

He focused on the negative. I disliked, probably, “hated” is the better choice of words. During the whole process, one that felt very long, but, actually, the whole interviews or blessing was very short.

The whole process, principally because I felt he played the person he was all year long, he who held the accounts, and he who did not hesitate to recall the long list of negatives, did proceed in a plodding but serious and officious voice. Perhaps my sisters would have recalled these experiences differently had I asked them some years later. But, I never did, speak of this to them or to my mother, who, I think, suffered, privately, through this traditional review of one’s sins. I never asked my friends if they experienced anything like it or something similar.

All I know is that following Mass we walked crosstown to visit my grandfather, before whom we knelt, in turn, unprompted, to ask for his blessing. Grandpa, without ever hesitating, freely gave us his blessing, there was no review, just a simple and heartfelt blessing upon us all principally because he was never the actor; he was just true to a joyous heart. He had outlived his blind wife, and the two of them had buried four of their children.

I never knew my paternal grandparents. I only remember seeing the older men in their long white beards standing in front of what might have been my grandfather’s shoe shop.

- New Year’s Day like Christmas Day was a holy day of obligation of the Catholic Church, which meant that attending mass, was obligatory. Attending “le Réveillon” was an old tradition of French Catholics. It took place following mass on Christmas Eve and/or New Year’s Eve and involved a feast of eating delicacies of all sorts after midnight mass; it also involved serving Pork Pie or “Paté en Croûte” or “tourtière,” as we Franco Americans called the pork pie that my wife still makes, as she learned to make it from her mother with some modifications.

Some years into a job, we had all been invited to contribute to the librarian who joined a French teacher in making a dish to celebrate the Christmas holidays. I asked my wife to make a traditional pork pie or tourtière that I took to school. The principal had many laudatory comments meant for those who had contributed, with one exception. He wondered aloud, “What’s that shit meat pie? Some snickering and giggling later, I promised myself that from then on, he would be treated as an enemy who would never know sabotage like that which he would experience.

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

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

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Though she often entertained at family gatherings, she began singing publicly with the support of the Franco-American Center at the University of Maine, where she discovered others who shared her rich heritage. After receiving her BA in Romance Languages in 1984, she continued to perform, quickly gaining recognition as a new Franco-American voice through early performances at state festivals in Maine and at schools and parish soirées.

In 1999 she received the National Culture through the Arts Award from NYSAFLT, the New York State Association of Foreign Language Teachers, and was inducted into the French-Canadian Hall of Fame Class of 2007 for the American-French Genealogical Society.

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The Bangor Knights of Columbus, with generous support from the University of Maine Franco-American Centre, held their second annual Acadian Soirée on Saturday, September 23rd, from 5:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. at the Anah Shrine Temple.

La Famille LeBlanc, a high-energy band from Livermore Falls, performed at the event. The family has played at Franco American festivals in Augusta, Biddeford, Madawaska, Waterville and many other areas of Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont and Canada for nearly 25 years. They played traditional French music and one could not help but head to the dance floor!

One can’t have a soirée without food! There was plenty of it! Traditional Acadian dishes were served, including patates fricassées, tourtières, Chicken Stew, Pot-En-Pot, ployes, molasses cookies, whoopie pies and more!

Delicious food coupled with lively music and a room filled with wonderful people made for an enjoyable evening! Quelle joie de vivre!

Accolades to the Bangor Knights of Columbus, Michael Soucy, Patricia Marquis (decorator) and the many others who helped make the evening a success!

Proceeds from the event provided a scholarship to All Saints Catholic School in Bangor and to benefit Knights of Columbus charitable efforts.
FALL AUTOMNE 2017

FRANCO-AMERICAN LITTERATURE: PAST TO PRESENT

Lecture by
Sr. Mary Carmel Therriault,
Author of La Littérature Française de la Nouvelle Angleterre
First appeared in Le PAROG FORUM, April, page 9, 1976

by Claire Boulduc

Sister Mary Carmel (Alma) was born on March 19, 1904. Sister was the daughter of Patrick Therriault (an Aroostook County Commissioner) and Zelie Morneault. She had one brother, Edmond.

From 1954-1956, Sister Mary Carmel Therriault was Dean of St. Joseph's College; she was president from 1956-1967. In the late 1960s, she helped begin the religious retirement program in Maine. For Love of Mercy by Mary Raymond Higgins RSM (1995). Sister Mary passed away on Nov. 15, 1979.

The Sister Mary Carmel Scholarship Fund

Help us in honoring the memory of an extraordinary woman, a Sister of Mercy who had a great impact upon our lives as students at Saint Joseph’s College — Sister Mary Carmel Therriault. Sr. Mary Carmel served as the College’s first President when it moved to the Sebago Lake property. Without her determined and pioneering spirit, the now vibrant 105-year-old St. Joseph’s College quite probably would not exist.

From long ago conversations with Sister Mary Carmel, I recall how proud she was to have been a daughter of Aroostook County, in her parlance, “The County”, one of Maine’s most beautiful but economically distressed regions. As a native of Grand Isle, Maine, she had profound feelings for the young and aging in the regions of Aroostook and Central Maine, people that she served as principal of John Bapst High School in Bangor and Superior of Our Lady of Mercy Convent in Eagle Lake.

To celebrate the 50th Reunion of the Class of 1967 and to honor Sister Mary Carmel’s legacy, a scholarship has been endowed in her name. The Sister Mary Carmel Scholarship Fund will benefit the very best of St. Joseph’s College students - young women and men who demonstrate academic merit, financial need, and public service to the people and institutions of Maine, especially those from “The County.”

To participate please contact Joanne Bean, VP and Chief Advancement Officer at jbean@sjcme.edu — 207-893-7891 or give online at https://kappa/sjcme.edu/cc_Forms/IAOF/iaogift
Eight years ago, a barren tongue of land of half a dozen acres or so...today peopled with from 1,200 to 2,000 people, according to how you estimate, with almost 200 tenement houses... And yet they talk of Western booms.

The growth of Lewiston’s “Little Canada” district was as rapid and astounding to those who witnessed it, as it seems to us today. In 1891, the Lewiston Saturday Journal took its readers through a tour of the newest section of Maine’s leading manufacturing city. In the matter of just a few years, the part of the city known as “the island” had been transformed. In the words of the Journal, the neighborhood now being referred to as “Little Canada” represented

The most remarkable settlement of a people that is to be found in the same space of time in any city in New England... Very little English is spoken among the families; customs differ; the residents live by themselves and are growing rich by prudence and foresight.

“The Island” took its name from the way that it was enclosed by the Androscoggin River and the canals that powered the city’s textile mills. From 1874, it was also the terminus of the Grand Trunk Railway spur to Lewiston. The proximity of the neighborhood to the mills, where most French-Canadian immigrants worked, and the railroad, by which most arrived in the city, made the Island a convenient place for French Canadians to settle. It was also, how-

The Journal noted that the French Canadians shared more than just proximity with the Irish of a generation before. Just as the Irish had established “a fair sample of peasant life in Ireland” (complete with turf-walled houses, pigs, and

French Canadian women are “excellent cooks,” and all the newcomers are described as “quite fine musicians.” The article’s author describes supper with a Franco family, followed by a kitchen party – a scene that would be familiar to many Franco-Americans of today. The windows of the apartment “shake to the tune of something like the Virginia Reel” – a nod to the common Celtic roots and influences of traditional French-Canadian and Appalachian country music.

The older Franco Americans have a “head for business;” the young women are pretty and the young men, if “not all handsome,” have “a kind of manly look to them,” being “tall,” “strong,” and “square-jawed.” Aside from these romantic pictures of the new arrivals, the Journal offers some

(Continued on page 33)
Confronting the Klan in 1920s Maine

August 14, 2017
Biddeford, Biddeford-Saco, Fairfield, Greenville, Jewish Americans, Ku Klux Klan, Lewiston-Auburn, Maine, Organized Labor, Police, Politics, Waterville

The history of Maine’s brief, but intense, association with the Ku Klux Klan is becoming increasingly well-known. Along with a large portion of the country in the early 1920’s, Maine was home to a Klan chapter with a significant membership, which held significant sway over local politics. While the Klan had its beginnings with former Confederate army officers in the South, and initially targeted African Americans in former Confederate States, by the 1920’s, the “second Klan” had broadened its agenda of hate to include Jews, Catholics, and almost any immigrant. In Maine, from 1923-25, the KKK whipped up animosity against the state’s significant Irish- and Franco-American populations, in particular.

What’s less well covered is the resistance to the Klan and their divisive brand of politics by the groups they attacked. While the group had successes in eliminating Portland’s directly-elected mayor, and a number of other local races, they never completely captured state politics, and their influence diminished rapidly after 1924. US Senator Owen Brewster, who was elected governor in that year, was often accused of courting the Klan vote, but this association has never been proven. Brewster certainly had a record of contesting the right of immigrants to vote, and the KKK itself endorsed his candidacy, but Brewster himself consistently denied being a Klansman, or supporting the group. That the KKK were not able to capitalize on their initial successes is credit to the efforts of Franco-Americans and others to stop them.

Francos were able to stymie Klan ambitions in several ways. In a limited number of communities, Franco-Americans actually had enough political clout to crack down on the organization from above. In Lewiston, for example, the KKK were denied use of the city hall for their meetings. That stood in stark contrast to the situation in majority-Yankee communities, where the group found a warmer reception. Just across the Androscoggin River in Auburn, the Klan met at city hall, to audiences that included members of the police

(A Trip Through “The Little World They Call Little Canada” continued from page 32)

interesting insights into daily life in Little Canada, such as the practice of boating on the Androscoggin by night, or the nugget that “very many of the younger generation speak English fluently, and read and write as well as the American boy or girl.”

Parade of the Ku Klux Klan in Milo Maine, September 3rd, 1923. Said to be the “first daylight parade in USA” – a sign of the group's confidence. Image: Island Falls Historical Society/Maine Memory Network.
force, and which included sermons by local protestant clergy. When the Saco chapter of the KKK organized a Labor Day march in 1924, it was prevented from entering Biddeford by members of the city’s police force and fire department. Again, the difference between the two communities could not be more stark. While Biddeford’s city government stood firmly against the Klan, the Biddeford Weekly Journal reported that the several leading Klansmen were bold enough to march without masks, and that

“Well-known Saco citizens on horseback rode along the streets ahead of the parade and kept the crowds in line and special [constables] paraded through the crowd with drawn clubs.”

The Saco event very nearly ended in violence. One Biddeford police officer drew his revolver, but no shots were fired. In a surreal twist that demonstrates the Maine Klan’s fusion of bigotry and polite society, the parade culminated in an anti-Semitic and racist speech by a speaker from New Hampshire, after which, the Journal reported, “a fiery cross blazed forth and later the Klansmen returned to city hall and had more light refreshments.”

Labor unions also fought back against the KKK, and sought to organize the very immigrant workers the Klan demonized. On February 2, the KKK tried to evict an organizing group of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) in Greenville. About forty Klansmen went to the boarding house where IWW delegates were staying, and tried to intimidate them into leaving town. In response, the IWW called in its local members – who were mostly woodsmen – for a show of support. On the sub-zero night of February 4, nearly 175 union members, many of whom were Franco-Americans, marched in Greenville to oppose the KKK. IWW leader Bob Pease accused the Klan of working with the lumber companies, town selectmen, and the local YMCA to try to oppose the unionization of lumber workers.

Sometimes, however, Franco-Americans did not have the protection of local governments or the strength of labor unions to help them. A July 1st gathering of Klansmen in Fairfield (just south of the Franco-American stronghold of Waterville) was disrupted by unnamed local “youth” who threw stones at the Klansmen’s cars. The brief gathering was broken up by about 200 locals, who far outnumbered the fifteen or so Klansmen. No-one was injured, but a sign of the KKK’s prominence in the town can be found in the account of the incident found in the Waterville Morning Sentinel of July 3rd, 1924. The injured Klansmen included “a local businessman” and at least one individual known to the police chief.

Franco-Americans and other minority groups are often depicted solely as victims of racism and discrimination. Not to acknowledge the steps these groups took to oppose bigotry is a mistake that undervalues their agency, and contributions to their own struggles. One of the lessons of the rise and fall of the KKK in Maine is that racism and hatred can be opposed when we stand up together and fight back.

A Photo Tour of the Former St-Jean-Baptiste Church in Lowell, Massachusetts

By Albert J. Marceau
Newington, Conn.

On Wednesday, June 21, 2017, the fourth day of Franco-American Week 2017 in Lowell, Massachusetts, the former St-Jean-Baptiste Church was open to the public from 3:00 to 7:30PM. The schedule for Franco-American Week published a description of the day’s events: “Rediscover St. Jean-Baptiste Church, 741 Merrimack Street, Lowell, MA. No elevator. Tour the Romanesque Revival St. Jean-Baptiste Church built in 1890 as the first French-Canadian Church in Lowell. While the Archdiocese [of Boston] removed its pews, [and] many of the stained-glass windows, and other religious items when it closed in 2004, (Continued on page 35)
Current Monthly Venue for the Mass in French at St. Augustine’s Church in Hartford

By Albert J. Marceau, Newington, Conn.

The Pastor of St. Augustine Church in Hartford, Rev. Thomas J. Walsh, celebrated the Mass in French on Sunday, October 1, 2017, beginning at 7:45 AM. The Mass was attended by thirteen people, all of whom were former parishioners of Ste-Anne/Immaculate Conception Church in Hartford, which has its last Mass in French on Sunday, June 29, 2017. The people who were at the French Mass were: Lorena Dutelle, the lector, Patrick Labrie, Jean Agba (who brought his three sons to the Mass), Ghislain Larochelle and his wife, and Aline Maras and her daughter. Your reporter, Albert Marceau, has known the cited parishioners at Ste-Anne’s Church in Hartford since he officially became a member of the parish in August 1996, except the two men from Togo – Jean Folley and Jean Agba – both of whom came to the parish with their families sometime after 2006.

The readings for the day were for the 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A, which are Ezekiel 18:25-28, Psalm 24: 4-9, Philippians 2:1-11, and Matthew 21:28-32. The readings were printed on 8 ½ by 11 inch paper, and were taken from the website of the Association Épiscopale Liturgique pour les pays Francophones, www.aelf.org. The petitions, la prière universelle, were taken from the website Vie liturgique, www.vieliturgique.ca.

Near the end of the French Mass, Fr. Walsh announced that there would be two more Masses in French, on the first Sunday of the following two months. Lorena Dutelle and your reporter was surprised by the announcement, because your reporter overheard Fr. Walsh say to a longtime parishioner of St. Augustine’s Church, Mrs. Aline Wysocki, during the parish breakfast after the 9AM English Mass on Sunday, September 24, 2017, that the target number of attendees at the French Mass should be 50 people. Although your reporter realized that the number was more than double the number of attendees at the French Mass at Ste-Anne’s in Hartford, which ranged from 18 to 23 for years, the target number spoken by Fr. Walsh is one-half the target number that Archbishop Blair cited during a talk that he gave at St. Thomas Seminary in Bloomfield on Tuesday, October 20, 2015, where he said that every Sunday Mass in Archdiocese should have 100 people in attendance. After the French Mass, Fr. Walsh said that it will take time to build a regular community at the French Mass, and so, he will allow it to continue for two more monthly Masses.

The next two Masses in French will be held on Sunday, November 5, which is the 31st Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A, and Sunday, December 3, which is the First Sunday of Advent, Year B. The time of each of the French Masses will start at 7:45 AM, at St. Augustine Church on 10 Campfield Avenue in Hartford, Connecticut.

The website for St. Augustine Church in Hartford is http://www.staugustinehtfd.org/, and the telephone number for the church is (860)-522-7128.

(A Photo Tour of the Former St-Jean-Baptiste Church in Lowell, Massachusetts continued from page 34)

The circular, elaborately designed stained-glass window still towers over a third-level balcony with [the] organ pipes still in place. Come see this beautiful church.” It should be noted that the common architectural term for the: “the circular, elaborately designed stained-glass window” is the rose window.

The former Church of St. Jean Baptiste in Lowell is now the property of TMI Property Management and Development, and one can read on its website about the former church, which it mislabels as a “cathedral” that: “TMI Property Management & Development provides high quality residential and commercial properties. Our former St. Jean Baptiste Church property is one of our newest commercial venues. We are currently assessing community interest in restoring this magnificent historic landmark and converting it into Lowell’s most majestic cathedral for all functions.” The exact meaning of the word “cathedral” is a church where a bishop has his chair, which is a sign of his authority within the Catholic Church, and can be found in the sanctuary of a given cathedral. The same is true for Orthodox Christian cathedrals. The word “cathedral” is from the Greek word for “chair,” which has the connotation of a seat of authority. The website that TMI Property Management and Development maintains for the former church is: www.lowellshistoriccathedral.com/.

The following photographs were taken by John Kobuszewski of Lynn, Mass., and Susy Carnevale of Lowell, Mass., with their cellphones, and the images were sent by e-mail to your reporter. The photos and the captions should give the reader a sense of the size of once beautiful interior of the former St. Jean Baptiste Church in Lowell.
John Kobuszewski captured an image that truly shows that all the large stained-glass windows were removed from the church, and that the rose window has remained in the church. In the photo on the right are some people, where there were tables that had a photo display of the former parish, as well as information about Franco-American Week, and travel brochures for the Province of Quebec. One table had information about St. Joseph’s Shrine in Lowell, which is linked historically to the Parish of St. Jean Baptiste in Lowell, and copies of a DVD were sold at the table, entitled St. Joseph the Worker Shrine 1956-2016 produced by the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate.

Although the schedule for Franco-American Week gave the impression that there were formal, guided tours of the former church, the tours were self-guided. So, D. Michel Michaud, Roger Lacerte, John Kobuszewski, and your reporter decided to go to the choir loft, and examine the organ, an idea that originated with Michel Michaud. On the spur of the moment, John Kobuszewski decided to take a photo, and told Michel sit at the organ. Hence, he pretended to play the organ, which was not connected to the pipes, and there was no electricity connected to the organ. Roger Lacerte is seen in the blue jacket, and your reporter is standing on the right, in an olive drab shirt, and khaki shorts.

A few minutes later, John Kobuszewski decided to take another photo, but further away from the organ. In the later photo, the viewer gets a sense of how large the organ truly is, for your reporter is five feet, eleven inches, yet dwarfed by the organ pipes. The seating capacity of the choir loft was greater than 150 persons, for on Sun. Feb. 28, 1915, when the church was rededicated, the organist Louis Napoleon Guilbault sat at the very same organ, and conducted the parish choir of 150 voices for the Mass of St. Cecilia that was composed by Charles Gounod in 1855. Rev. Richard Santerre wrote about the event on pages 177-8 in his parish history, entitled: Saint Jean Baptiste Parish and the Franco-Americans of Lowell, Massachusetts 1868-1968: With an epilogue “From the Centennial to the Present,” (2013).

Soon, a friend of Roger Lacerte joined the party in the choir loft, Susy Carnevale, and she took the next photo with her cellphone, where the backs of the heads of John Kobuszewski and Michel Michaud can be seen on the left, which also gives a sense of the length of the pipes. Notice the ornamental paint on the pipes, and beautiful woodwork. Michel Michaud, who is the organist at St. Joseph Church in Lynn, Mass., told your reporter that the pipes are simply operated by wind, and if one were to remove a pipe from the hooks on the wall, and blow through it, it would make the same pitch as if it were blown by the organ system.

(Continued on page 43)
A Preliminary Study Toward Determining the Utility of Reentry Programming for the Maine Department of Corrections

by Jeffrey LaGasse

The Council of State Governments Justice Center recently observed that “today, there is widespread agreement that [state] government has a responsibility to ensure that when people are released to the community from jail or prison, they are less likely to reoffend than they were at the start of their sentence” (“Making People’s Transition,” 2017). The National Reentry Resource Center (NRCC) of the U.S. Department of Justice’s Bureau of Justice Assistance notes that efforts to reduce recidivism need to be grounded in the ability to accurately and consistently collect and analyze corrections data (“Reducing Recidivism,” 2017), so that states are well-positioned to respond quickly and effectively to recidivism trends.

But, according to staff at Maine’s Muskie School of Public Service, the Maine Statistical Analysis Center (MSAC) has never done comprehensive research on recidivism in the Maine Department of Corrections’ (DOC’s) adult offender population. According to MSAC’s Senior Research Associate George Shaler, “Future research is contingent on DOC’s interest and funding ability” (Shaler, 2017). The purpose of this study is to survey and evaluate various sources of reentry data to determine the efficacy of reentry in reducing recidivism, improving public safety, and saving taxpayer dollars by preparing offenders to be productive members of society. Preliminary reentry data gathered in this study may also help persuade the Maine DOC of (1) The urgent need for reliable baseline data and tracking of the recidivism rate in Maine, among several key outcomes metrics; and (2) The need for a feasibility study to determine whether reentry investments in Maine might yield significant benefits like those reported in other states.

Description of Current Situation & Identification of Need

The vast majority of offenders sentenced in Maine will eventually undergo the process of reentry into society. The central issue is whether or not they will be prepared to do so successfully. Many citizens believe that incarceration is a vital tool to support public safety. But when incarceration is used mostly to warehouse offenders, public safety will ultimately be deleteriously affected, because many of these offenders leave prison ill-prepared and impoverished. Criminal behavior often results, as suggested in a 2014 Bangor Daily News article in which Maine Coastal Regional Reentry Center (MCRRC) Program Manager Jerome Weiner stated that 70 percent of released prisoners from Maine’s prisons return to prison within three years (Curtis, 2014). A 2015 MCRRC study notes that two-thirds of recidivists fail within their first year of release (Story and Gallant, 2015).

To date, all states that have implemented reentry programs have succeeded to various degrees in improving public safety through reduced recidivism.

Gallant, 2015). Maine Department of Corrections (MDOC) Associate Commissioner Ryan Thornell has stated that the MDOC releases approximately 1200 prisoners per year (Thornell, 2017). Using these figures, we can expect that within three years, about 840 of the individuals released from prison across the state will re-offend—creating victims, burdening the court system and costing Maine taxpayers an average of $45,000 per year for every year of incarceration (Curtis, 2014). And of those 840 recidivists, about 560 of them reoffended within the first year. The benefits of improved reentry are clear, but what reentry programming and services work?

To date, all states that have implemented reentry programs have succeeded to various degrees in improving public safety through reduced recidivism. Nationally, reentry programs are achieving favorable results in providing preparation for successful reintegration to the benefit of offenders and their communities. For instance:

• The Texas Department of Corrections recently implemented a large-scale reentry program in 2011. The department’s current director, Bryan Collier, recently described how “[r]ather than build[ing] new prisons,” the “state chose to invest in treatment and diversion alternatives.” To date, “These investments have helped to reduce technical revocations from parole and probation and have provided additional treatment capacity, resulting in a reduction of our prison population by 10,000 people. These approaches – along with others – continue to pay dividends: We have closed four prisons since 2011 and plan to close four more this summer [2017]” (“Reducing Recidivism,” 2017).

• In Georgia, the violent crime rate has declined by 21 percent in the past 12 years. Georgia’s Supreme Court Justice Michael Boggs says, “Georgia’s approach to running its criminal justice system is becoming more driven by where the data and research points us. We’re focused on tracking and driving down our recidivism rate. The results have been a safer state, fewer people in prison, and reduced costs to taxpayers” (Reducing Recidivism, 2017).

• Michigan now enjoys a 20 percent decline in its three year recidivism rate. Heidi Washington, the Director of Corrections, says, “Thanks to our focus on offender success, we improved and expanded job training and education programs for people in prison while giving them the support services they need in the community to ensure a safe transition and long-term self-sufficiency” (Reducing Recidivism, 2017).

(Continued on page 38)
Currently, the Virginia DOC enjoys the second lowest recidivism rate in the nation among 38 states that measure recidivism similarly. Thousands of corrections professionals have been trained to support positive and compassionate change for those in their care. The Virginia DOC believes that it is only through successful reentry that true public safety is realized (Richeson, 2014). The utility of such programs is clear, not only for improving public safety, but also in assisting Departments of Corrections meet fiscal obligations to taxpayers. Evidence continues to build that well-structured reentry programs are effective tools in reducing recidivism, improving public safety and reducing victimization, while freeing up taxpayer dollars.

Within Maine, several promising small-scale reentry programs have been piloted. The Cumberland County Sheriff’s Department’s “Project Reentry” was a two-year pilot program launched in 2014 with grant funding through the Department of Justice Second Chance Act. Project Reentry assisted adult offenders with co-occurring substance abuse and mental health disorders (Project Reentry, 2014). The goal of the program was to reduce recidivism rates in offenders with co-occurring disorders by offering integrated and need-matched treatment. The two-year project provided programming at the jail, enrolling participants in evidence-based programs, such as peer support and mentoring services. Project Reentry’s unique design provided case management targeted to individual offenders. It also included a multi-provider, in-jail treatment program to create continuity of services, to ease reentry shock. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy began at the jail and continued when offenders were released. Participants experienced up to 300 hours of CBT and were supported by a wealth of community services, including substance abuse and mental health treatment, domestic violence support, NA and AA, vocational services and pharmacological medication services. The Sheriff’s Department collaborated with no fewer than seven community organizations in effectively providing necessary services (Project Reentry, 2014).

A second pilot reentry program of note is the Maine Coastal Regional Reentry Center (MCRRC).

In January of 2010, the MCRRC opened its doors in Belfast to accept prisoners for reentry programming who were deemed “high risk” for recidivism (Restorative Justice Project, Community Reentry Program, 2015). In 2015 Scott Story and Cheryl Gallant of the Waldo County Sheriff’s Office published Breaking the Cycle: Reducing Recidivism through Risk Reduction,” a five-year study to determine MCRRC’s program effectiveness. While noting that the MCRRC sample is small (only 32 slots for residents are available for this program and over the range of the five-year study, just 126 participants contributed data to the recidivism analysis), the study concluded that the overall recidivism rate for residents who successfully completed the program is 31 percent, and that “the beneficial impact of providing treatments, services, and interventions within a correctional setting actually extends beyond the correctional environment and into the communities that are served, contributing to increased public safety and reduced recidivism, which outweighs the associated costs” (Story and Gallant, 2015).

Within Maine, several promising small-scale reentry programs have been piloted.

Being the only adult (male) reentry program in Maine with over seven years of operation, MCRRC is a model for studying the utility of expanding reentry services throughout the Maine Department of Corrections (DOC). The Maine DOC is in the enviable position of having the resources and experience to provide reentry services for an individual’s entire period of incarceration, and to potentially offer support services for years post-release through its Probation and Parole Department. If the Maine DOC successfully scaled and implemented a reentry programming on the MCRRC model, then, realizing comparable results, only approximately 375 offenders released annually would likely reoffend over a three-year period, as compared to the current 840. At $45,000 per person per year, initial savings to taxpayers would tally $21 million dollars.

Significantly, whether a crime is committed or a technical probation violation occurs, victims are often created in the offender’s own family. The absence of a loved one to prison imposes unimaginable burdens on the people who rely on them. So, for every prisoner that the DOC successfully reintegrates into society through effective reentry programming, there is at least one less victim.

Furthermore, the 2015 study of the MCRRC estimates that a comprehensive reentry program might reduce overall recidivism in adult male prisoners in Maine by 55 percent (Story and Gallant, 2015). Dropping the current estimated rate of recidivism of 70% by more than half would free up additional millions of dollars that could be reallocated to implement a reentry program, which in turn would compound savings. Conceivably, in the long term, well-structured, comprehensive reentry programs could reverse the 25 percent increase in prison population that Maine experienced in the past 25 years. Like Texas, Maine could eventually close instead of build prisons. This scenario supports the proposed utility of well-structured reentry programming and lends urgency to the need to determine to what degree expanding reentry statewide is warranted.

Reentry Defined & Described in Detail

The United States Congressional Research Service (CRS), a division of the Library of Congress, provides research services for the U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives. In a 2015 abstract prepared for members of Congress, the CRS defines reentry as “all activities and programming conducted to prepare offenders to return safely to the community and to live as law abiding citizens” (James, 2015). The CRS further defines reentry as three-phase programming that ideally begins as soon as an offender is sentenced to a Department of Corrections (James, 2015). The first phase occurs in the prison setting and, to be most effective, should include elements that lay a foundation upon which community reentry programs can build. The second phase begins when participants transition to the community, and the third phase provides support services and aftercare once the program is completed, reducing the likelihood of failure. In detail:

Phase One Reentry Programs

Impact of Crime Program: These classes are important to laying a foundation to reentry because they educate offenders to understand the impact of crime on victims,
Mental Health Issues and Remediation: The National Reentry Resource Center (NRRC) reports that 17 percent of people admitted to jails and prisons in the United States are diagnosed as mentally ill, and that the incidence of serious mental illness is two to four times higher among prisoners than it is in the free world. Research tabulated in 2010 by the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University (CASA Columbia) found that nearly one-third of U.S. offenders have a mental health disorder. A quarter of offenders with mental health problems have had three or more prior incarcerations, a substantially higher recidivism rate than that of offenders without mental health issues (Behind Bars II, p.26). Over 70 percent of offenders with serious mental illness have a substance abuse disorder, increasing the likelihood of reentry failures (NRRC, 2016). Co-occurrence of mental health and substance abuse disorders suggests that DOC resources should be concentrated in this area to resolve this prevalent problem—just how prevalent is to be determined by future research, to provide quantitative metrics for evaluating a well-structured reentry program.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT): CBT programs should be available in all phases of reentry. Unprepared offenders are the ones who routinely recidivate, and are typically victims of their own thinking. CBT can lead offenders out of the trap of self-defeating criminal thinking, to change the way they perceive themselves and others. Jack Bush, a co-developer of the CBT program, Thinking for a Change, describes how, five years after the Red Onion Supermax in Virginia, a place reserved for the most difficult offenders first turned to CBT and began providing an array of cognitive treatment programs, Red Onion’s administration saw a 78 percent reduction in incidence reports, a 91 percent reduction in offender grievances and a 68 percent reduction in the use of solitary confinement, strong evidence that even a Supermax can successfully lead offenders toward reentry and a law-abiding life in the community. Also, Canadian researchers have recently established that cognitive behavioral therapy programs, when administered professionally at high standards, can reduce recidivism by 25 to 35 percent (Bush, 2016). The Maine State Prison currently provides Thinking for a Change classes. These CBT classes are taught by caseworkers, for offenders. The courses are about 30 hours long. By comparison, at the Cumberland County Jail, offenders with co-occurring mental and substance abuse disorders participating in Project Reentry were exposed to 300 hours of CBT (Project Reentry, 2014). Since offenders at Maine State Prison are usually sentenced to more time than county jail prisoners, longer exposure to CBT programs could yield even better results.

Substance Abuse Issues and Remediation: In 2010, after analyzing data from 11 federal sources and after having reviewed nearly 650 articles and publications regarding substance abuse in America’s prison population, CASA Columbia reported that more than 80 percent of crimes committed by offenders involved either alcohol or illicit drugs, or both; that only 11 percent of offenders receive any substance abuse treatment during their incarceration; and that over a five-year period about 80 percent of offenders recidivate. The CASA Columbia report concluded that if all eligible offenders received comprehensive substance abuse treatment and aftercare, the investment would break even in a year if just over ten percent of treated offenders, when released, remained substance free, crime free and employed (Behind Bars II, 2010). The State of Maine has been hit particularly hard by the nation’s opioid epidemic. Anecdotal evidence suggests that residential treatment centers simply cannot cope with the increase in demand for substance abuse treatment. Bed space is at a premium and waiting lists are long. Maine’s prisons do not have that problem, as there is a bunk for every addict—what is needed is the treatment.

Vocational Training: According to a National Reentry Resource Center fact sheet, a large three-state recidivism study found that less than half of released offenders secured a job upon release (NRRC, 2016). In 2015 Governor Rick Snyder of Michigan specifically called for better vocational training in prisons to target the needs of Michigan employers (“A Special Message,” 2015), recognizing that quality vocational training is a vital element in preparing offenders for successful reentry. Models for successful vocational training during incarceration exist. In Washington State, the DOC established an Offender Workforce Development program, dedicated solely to preparing offenders for post-release employment by partnering with the business community to prepare offenders to meet the specific needs of employers, and where offenders work toward earning Certificates of Proficiency, documenting skills acquisition and helping career centers place certificate holders in appropriate jobs upon release (Banning, 2016). California has sanctioned the state’s vocational institutes to partner with DOC administrators to provide training to offenders.

Gainful Employment While Incarcerated: The National Reentry Resource Center, in collaboration with the Urban Institute, after collating research from many sources, reports that “a majority of the research found that offenders who participated in prison industries have lower rates of recidivism” (James, 2016). When offenders can collect regular checks, they can assist their families financially, pay for the phone calls to help maintain strong family contacts and most importantly, save sufficient funds to purchase or secure what they need upon release, such as a reliable vehicle, an apartment or the resources and support to obtain a job. From the time the new Maine State Prison in Warren opened in February of 2002, it has maintained an unemployment rate of around 75 percent. Under current management, gainful employment is slowly increasing.

Hi-Set Program: These programs provide the degree needed for transitioning (Continued on page 40)
Certificates of Employability: Over one-third of states across the country have instituted Certificates of Employability (COA) to assist offenders in securing employment upon release.

Certificates of Employability: Over one-third of states across the country have instituted Certificates of Employability (COA) to assist offenders in securing employment upon release. The purpose of a COA is to provide the offender the documentation needed to show employers that he or she successfully participated in rehabilitation programs. In some states, Superior Courts issue COAs after evaluating an applicant’s rehabilitative efforts; in other states, the DOC itself issues the certificates, subject to conditions such as the prisoner successfully completing a career and technical education course, receiving no major write-ups for misconduct in the same period prior to release or no more than three minor write-ups in the same time period, and scoring well in a national network readiness certification program or alternative job skills assessment (e.g., Michigan Act 359 of 2014).

Housing: Housing is a fundamental necessity for ex-offenders reentering society. But the stigma of a criminal record often interferes with an ex-offender’s ability to secure a place to live. E.g., in a 2007 survey of over 600 rental property owners in Akron, Ohio, two-thirds said they would not rent to a person with a criminal record (Clark, L.M., 2007). Such obstacles for ex-offenders reveal the need for community transitional housing.

Mentoring Programs: Mentoring Programs are crucial in assisting ex-offenders with reentry challenges. Experienced citizens can help individuals lacking job experience shape their attitudes and workplace behaviors to increase their chances in getting and keeping a job. They can also help ex-offenders with job applications and interviews, while providing tips on how to dress and communicate in the work environment. Well established community members can also be a link to a broad array of support services, including child care referrals, legal assistance, housing placement, substance abuse treatment, medical and mental health services, domestic violence counseling, parenting skills and other services. Mentors can be particularly useful in helping ex-offenders adjust to the many technological challenges that pervade modern society. A caring citizen can assist an ex-offender to successfully reintegrate into society or simply be available to listen with a sympathetic ear. Most importantly, mentor support can have a positive impact on reentry, by providing an ex-offender someone to turn to for help, instead of possibly turning to crime.

Family Support Programs: In November 2013, the New York Housing Authority launched the Family Pilot Reentry Program with the goal of reuniting formerly incarcerated individuals with their families. The Vera Institute of Justice, working with the Housing Authority to analyze results, found that reuniting ex-offenders with family provided stability in securing housing and employment, yielding lower recidivism rates than in cohorts who did not participate in family reunification programs (“Coming Home,” 2016).

Life Skills Program: This program prepares offenders to tap into community resources in Phases Two and Three. Program components include setting and achieving reasonable goals, identifying social boundaries, nurturing family relationships, and communicating effectively. Life skills programs teach offenders how to fill out job applications, create resumes, cover letters, thank-you notes, etc., and concomitant job interview skills, appropriate work dress and behavior and how to achieve good employment results with a felony record. Life skills programs also teach participants how to avail themselves of community resources, including mastering banking services, establishing credit, dealing with probation, shopping, taxes, transportation and even volunteerism. Life skills provides basic knowledge to offenders in an effort to reduce recidivism by helping with successful reentry.

Phase Three Reentry Programs:

Phase Three programs provide support and aftercare designed to assist ex-offenders permanently reintegrate into their communities. To avoid or reduce the chances of relapse, Phase Three programming includes attendance at Alcoholics or Narcotics Anonymous meetings, and/or out-patient CBT therapy, if deemed necessary for successful reentry. Other ongoing mental health counseling services are to be provided, with an emphasis on pharmacological services, when necessary. Assistance to ex-offenders for obtaining medical insurance is crucial, either through employers or Medicaid, to dramatically help address healthcare issues compounded by the prison experience. Opportunities for continued volunteerism should be provided and encouraged, to help ex-offenders become valued and integral members of their communities. Phase Three aftercare also includes continuing relationships with mentors. Mentors can help ex-offenders find and secure permanent housing, connect with other existing com-
Impact of Crime programs create dialogue which offenders can build. By identifying and integrating processes, initial reentry programs help offenders manage substance abuse. Recognizing that therapeutic programs are often best suited to help others, offenders can meet the challenges raised by substance abuse treatment. They now serve as recovery coaches, good effect. Men who have experienced addiction are often best suited to help other addicts meet the challenges raised by substance abuse. Recognizing that therapeutic communities provide the best results for recovering addicts, these recovery coaches have proposed to the DOC that MSP offenders could provide guidance. Assist in providing or participate in evening vocational training in such fields as electrical, culinary arts, plumbing, woodworking, carpentry, upholstery, welding, computer programming (coding), housing construction, landscaping, farming, recycling, masonry, etc. Also, the DOC might pursue partnership with the Department of Education’s Career and Technical Education program to provide increased vocational-technical training.

Assessment tools such as the Level of Service Inventory-Revised (LSI-R) identify the risk levels for recidivism in new arrivals.

Once an individual has met criteria to be a participant in reentry programming, the reintegration process begins. Participants transition to minimum-security status upon meeting eligibility requirements with a well-developed community reentry plan proposal. Reentry plan proposals require participants to provide a place of employment, housing, and other community resources based on need. Prior to reentry into the community, program participants are assigned a case manager through Probation and Parole. Working with the case manager, the participant meets with all relevant human resources, including family, potential employers and landlords. When a participant’s reentry plan proposal has been firmly established and all required support resources confirmed, he or she becomes eligible for reentry into the community. Participants are expected to attend support programs in the community to develop successful life skills and avoid criminal behavior. Participants are also expected to perform a minimum of five hours of community service per week, depending on age and medical factors, and maintain excellent work and behavior evaluations throughout the duration of program participation. Evaluation and supervision of participants are conducted by the DOC Probation and Parole until and possibly beyond completion of sentence.

Funding Sources for Start-Up Reentry Programs

In 2008, the federal Second Chance Act (PL. 100-199) was passed into law. This act provides grants in several areas that qualify as reentry programming, funding both DOC and community based programs within three-phase reentry as defined by the Congressional Research Service (Jams, 2015). The act requires corrections applicants to create a comprehensive reentry plan with the goal of reducing recidivism by 50 percent over a five year period, a challenge that our DOC is capable of meeting.

In 2015 the US Department of Justice announced 78 new Second Chance Act grantees. Among the new awards were five $3 million Statewide Recidivism grants awarded to Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota and Vermont (Dept. of Justice, 2015). As of 2017, 20 states are recipients of the grant program in which state corrections agencies develop strategic plans to reduce statewide recidivism rates. The states with the strongest plans are chosen to receive funding to execute those plans. Maine is fully capable to compete for Second Chance Act funding to establish a well-structured reentry program designed to improve public safety.

The Second Chance Act is not the only source of grant money available for reentry programs. The National Adult and Juvenile Offenders Reentry Resource Center provides grants to organizations that educate, train, and provide technical assistance to states to disseminate information and best practices in offender reentry (James, 2015). The Congressional Research Service lists numerous federal grant sources to assist reentry providers with substance abuse and mental health treatment, job training, education, mentoring programs, housing services and reentry research (James, 2015).

Recommendations for Next Steps

- The Criminal Justice and Public Safety (CJPS) Committee of the Maine Legislature should commission criminology experts at the Muskie School of Public Ser-
service’s Maine Statistical Analysis Center to work with the DOC to track recidivism rates in order to establish an accurate benchmark.

- The CJPS Committee and the Department of Corrections (DOC) should consider sanctioning a feasibility study by experts outside of the DOC to ascertain the merits and benefits of implementing a comprehensive statewide reentry program.

- Anticipating positive results of the feasibility study, the CJPS committee should create an independent Reentry Council with the purpose of harnessing federal, state and community resources to provide relevant research and support to assist the DOC in implementing reentry to make Maine communities safer. The Reentry Council would assist the DOC in realizing its obligation to Maine taxpayers by helping the department transform offenders into law-abiding, productive citizens.

- The Reentry Council should be authorized to assist prison administrators in continuing to transform prison culture, helping managers embrace and promote progressive changes that are yielding positive results across the country. Oversight by the Reentry Council would assist the DOC in initiating needed changes in institutional culture, to achieve the best possible reentry outcomes by developing a correctional workforce that understands, embraces, and applies the latest reentry research to improve public safety through reduced recidivism.

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Susy Carnevale took a photo of the smaller pipes in the choir loft, which also has an image of the rose window, and the carving in the woodwork “Ad Maiorem Dei Gloriam,” which is Latin for: “For the greater glory of God.” Notice in the rose window that there is a mixture of Classical and Christian symbols, the Greek lyre symbolizing music, with motifs of the Cross, and images of the fleur-de-lys.

Susy Carnevale found some graffiti written by Louis Napoleon Guilbault in 1914, on the woodwork among the organ pipes in a hidden area where only the organist and repairmen would go for maintenance on the organ system. Notice the first name appears as “Wilfrid Degiel, [unclear number] Merrimack St. Lowell, Mass.” Then there is a line, and the abbreviated name “L.N. Guilbault 1914.” Louis Napoleon Guilbault was the organist at St. Jean-Baptiste Church in Lowell from 1912 to 1920.

Susy Carnevale took a photo of Roger Lacerte on a ladder that leads to the upper reaches of the bell tower. He did not go any further than shown in the photo, but in the next photo, the viewer can see the network of ladders that truly leads to the upper reaches of the bell tower.

Susy Carnevale took the photo of the network of ladders in the bell tower. Michel Michaud joked that it looked like a scene from the classic film from 1939, The Hunchback of Notre-Dame, starring Charles Laughton as Quasimodo. 

(Continued on page 44)
Susy Carnevale took a photo of the former sanctuary of the church, from the second level of pews in the balcony, one floor below the choir loft and the organ. Where the six wooden benches are in the photo, was once the location of the freestanding altar, which came into use with the Novus Ordo Rite of the Mass. Notice there is a staircase railing at the back of the sanctuary, which was likely in back of the old, pre-Vatican Two altar. The said staircase leads to the sacristy, which is in the basement of the church.

After the former St. Jean-Baptiste Church was closed to the public for the day, Albert Marceau, Michel Michaud and Roger Lacerte ate at a nearby diner, Brothers Pizza on 688 Merrimack Street in Lowell. The diner has the most ordinary decorations, but good food. John Kobuszwski took the photo of the three, while they stood in the doorway of the diner, and so, closes the photo tour of the former St. Jean-Baptiste Church in Lowell.

Dick was born and brought up on a farm in Cyr Plantation, in Northern, Maine, and was the second youngest of 14 kids. When Dick was in high school, he decided he wanted to go to Barber School, because he had 3 older Brothers and it would be a while before he could get his own place. So when he graduated in 1958, he was 17 years old and went to barber school for 9 months in Lewiston. After Dick graduated from barber school he went to go work for this barber who was sick in our home town of Van Buren. Then he opened up his own Barber Shop in Lewiston where he was a barber for 15 years. Then in 1988 Dick moved down to Orono and bought a barbershop where he is currently barbering to this day, at the age of 77. Next May he will be celebrating 60 years of barbering! He finds pleasure in meeting people, being with people and satisfying people so that they will come back. His enjoyment is being with his family, traveling and working outdoors in his flower gardens.

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The Gélinas family: Pioneers of Yamachiche

by Robert Bérubé

For those of you interested in receiving my stories automatically, I encourage you to subscribe to my Facebook site at: https://www.facebook.com/groups/394084010943300/

When I was about 10 years old, my paternal grandmother, Lucienda Fréchette, talked to me about her ancestors who grew up on the shores of the Saint-Lawrence River. I listened to her stories and once she mentioned the village of Yamachiche. I had found that name very strange and that name remained in my memories. Imagine my surprise when several years later, I discovered that some of the pioneers were my grandmother’s ancestors.

Jean Gélinas son of Étienne Gélinas (Gelineau) and Huguette Robert was born around 1646, in Saint-Eutrope, in Charente-Maritime. He arrived in New France around 1658 with his father Étienne Gélinas.

On October 17, 1667, he married Françoise Charsmesnil, in Cap-de-la-Madeleine. She is the daughter of Robert Charsmesnil and Marie Denise.

Even if their lives deserve to be talked about, I do not want to talk about Jean, Françoise, or their parents, but rather about three of their sons!

Jean Gélinas and Françoise are the parents of the following children:

I speak of these three men and their wives because the six are my ancestors, the six are the first pioneers of Yamachiche and the six left descendants with different names!

The custom of this family and neighbors at that time was that the eldest son bore the surname of his father, and the other sons chose a different name, and added it to the surname. Over time these “dit-names” replaced the patronymic. The children of Étienne are Gelinas, those of Jean-Baptiste are Bellemare and those of Pierre are Lacourse! Families were numerous and this prevented confusion. Each son became the strain of a distinct and separate family. One must understand the rules regarding dispensations of marriage because the marriages between cousins become very complicated!

The wife of Étienne 2 Gélinas, Marguerite Benoît (Laforest) is the daughter of Gabriel Benoît and Marie Anne Guedon. She was born about 1679, in Cap-de-la-Madeleine. She is not the daughter of Pierre Benoît and Françoise Lamontagne as stated by some.
Jeanne Boissonneau dit St-Onge, the wife of Jean-Baptiste Gélinas (Bellemare) is the daughter of Vincent Boissonneau (St-Onge) and Anne Colin. She was born on January 23, 1672, at Sainte Famille de l’Île-d’Orléans.

The wife of Pierre Gélinas dit Lacourse, Madeleine Bourbeau, was born around 1686 and is the daughter of Pierre Bourbeau and Marie Anne Besnard Bourjoly. Madeleine is the granddaughter of René Besnard Bourjoly, the sorcerer of Montréal whom I spoke about in: https://robertberubeblog.wordpress.com/2017/03/23/1657-rene-besnard-dit-bourjoli-un-sorcier-dans-la-famille-a-sorcerer-in-the-family/

As for their two sons Jean and Jean-Baptiste, some historians say that Jean married Françoise Lesieur Désaulniers which is false. He died unmarried and it was his brother Jean-Baptiste who married Françoise.

Also, some say that Francoise and Marie are twins. In reality, there is only one person Marie Françoise.
It is suspected that Joseph and Françoise Gélinas dit Lacourse died at an early age. However, we have no evidence to attest to this. What is certain is that when Madeleine Bourbeau died, Madeleine, the oldest was only thirteen and the baby Josephe was only a year old. This means that she was survived by six young children (perhaps eight). When Pierre Gélinas dit Lacourse died, the ages of the orphans varied between 22 and 9 years. (Maybe 24 years old, if Joseph was alive).

In 1672, Jean Talon officially granted Pierre Boucher, the Seigneurie de Grosbois, by an act of sale. In 1693, Pierre Boucher separated his “fief” (land) by yielding Grosbois West to his son. On September 12, 1699, Pierre Boucher ceded the Gatineau land to his brother-in-law Nicolas Gatineau.

Pierre Gélinas dit Lacourse becomes an “engagé- ouest” on September 1, 1693. He had a second contract on May 25, 1695.

On August 4, 1701, the Treaty of the Great Peace of Montréal put an end to the wars between New France and 39 Amerindian nations. The establishment of new communities, trade and expeditions of discoveries could resume!

On July 8, 1702, Pierre Boucher sold to his nephews Charles Lesieur and Julien Lesieur the Grosbois Est property. According to N. Caron in his “Histoire de la Paroisse d’Yamachiche,” the dimensions were “three quarters of a league and seven arpents in front, two leagues deep, to be taken at seven arpents above the Grande Riviere, the sum of eight hundred pounds, current currency .”.  

1703: Arrival of Étienne Gélinas and Marguerite Benoît (Laforest), Jean-Baptiste Gélinas dit Bellemare and Jeanne Boissonneau (St-Onge) and their two babies Maurice and Pierre Bellemare and Pierre Gélinas! Pierre was still single. They are three brothers, two wives and two babies, who came from Cap-de-la-Madeleine. They are the first land clearers. Charles Lesieur arrived only a few months after them. Given that their brother Benjamin Gélinas died around 1681, he is not part of the group!

Some of the new settlers settled at two different locations, Petite Rivière and Grande Rivière. The Petite Rivière Range extends each side of the Petite Rivière Yamachiche. The first inhabitant of the Petite Rivière is Étienne Gélinas. He was far from the other inhabitants, and he had surrounded his house with a palisade of cedar piles, probably to protect himself against the Iroquois whom he still feared, according to some historians. According to Caron: “This first house was twenty-five feet long and seventeen wide, and was covered with planks.”

On October 8, 1704: Étienne, son of Étienne Gélinas and Marguerite Benoît, was the first child to be born at Yamachiche on October 8, 1704. Since there was neither parish priest nor chapel, he was “ondoyé” (given conditionnal baptism) and then baptized at home on October 19, by the missionary Récollet, Simeon Dupont. However, the information is written in the Trois-Rivières registers.

(Continued on page 48)
March 3, 1705: The second baby born at Yamachiche was the cousin of Étienne and his name was Jean-Baptiste. He was the son of Jean Baptiste Gélinas dit Bellemare and Jeanne Boissonneau. Jean-Baptiste had also been “ondoyé”. R. Bellemare in “Les bases de l'histoire d’Yamachiche 1703-1903” explains and proves that almost all children born before the construction of the chapel, therefore, between 1702 and 1711 and others born between 1711 and 1722, date of the creation of the parish of Sainte-Anne-de-Yamachiche were “ondoyé” at home, to be later baptized by a missionary from Trois-Rivières or Rivière-du-Loup (Louiseville). These baptisms ensured that the children were baptized before the official baptism. The documents say that the children were baptized at home and also gives us proof that the three Gélinas brothers, their wives and their children were in Yamachiche as early as 1703.
On July 13, 1717, Jean Gélinas, the father of the three brothers Gélinas gave all his possessions to his son Étienne and his daughter-in-law Marguerite Benoît, when he decided to finish his last days at Yamachiche. We assume that he died soon after. It would also appear that his wife Françoise de Charmenil also died around 1717.

On September 26, 1720, the pioneer of Yamachiche Étienne 2 Gélinas died.

In 1722, the parish of Sainte-Anne d’Yamachiche was created. Chérubin Deniau, Recollet, assumed responsibility between 1722 and 1728.

On July 14, 1722, Marie Madeleine Bourbeau died. She is survived by her husband Pierre Gélinas (Lacourse) and many young children.

Because of the statement of facts made by Louis Boucher, Sieur de Grandpré and Grosbois-ouest in 1723, we learn that Yamachiche comprised about 20 families and 100 people. This information can be found in “Bases de l’histoire de Yamachiche” by Raphael Bellemare. In addition, Bellemare created a document that reveals that the widow and heirs of Étienne Gélinas, Marguerite Benoît (Laforest), own a house, a barn, another building and 12 acres of land located in the western part of Grosbois.

Jean-Baptiste Gélinas (Bellemare) and Jeanne Boissonneau (St-Onge) live on the eastern part of the fief and they have a house, a barn, another building and 12 arpents of land.

We also learn that the sons of Étienne Gélinas and Marguerite Benoît (Laforest) named Pierre Gélinas and Étienne Gélinas also have lands and so do their cousins Maurice Bellemare and Pierre Bellemare.

In 1724 a stone church replaces the original chapel.

The public road linking the Yamachiche lands to those of Pointe-du-Lac and Louiseville was built in 1725. It was also the year of construction of the Gélinas Bridge to allow the crossing of the Petite Rivière Yamachiche.

Pierre Gélinas dit Bellemare becomes an “engagé ouest” from April 25, 1726 to June 26, 1728.

On May 11, 1731, the pioneer Pierre Gélinas dit Lacourse died.

On March 8, 1746, the death of Jean-Baptiste Gélinas dit Bellemare, Pioneer of Yamachiche occurs. The burial is the next day.

On 28 January 1750, Marguerite Benoît, widow of Étienne 2 Gélinas and pioneer in Yamachiche, dies.

I discovered a bizarre situation that I can not explain, concerning the family of Marie Gélinas daughter of Étienne 2 Gélinas and Marguerite Benoît (Laforest). Her son Alexis Carbonneau died on April 5, 1752, she (Marie Gélinas) on April 14, 1752 and her spouse Alexis Carbonneau, on April 29, 1752.

On August 9, 1754, aged 85 and widow of Jean-Baptiste Gélinas (Bellemare), Jeanne Marie Boissonneau dit St-Onge pioneer, had an agreement with her sons Maurice, Pierre, Étienne, and Jean-Baptiste, and her son-in-law Alexis Lacerte, who is married to Marie Charlotte Bellemare. On December 27, 1757, she died. Jeanne Marie is the last of the six pioneers who founded Yamachiche.

Here are my three branches of Gélinas: the Gélinas, the Bellemare and the Lacourse.
**Les Familles Daigle**

Welcome to my column. Over the years Le Forum has published numerous families. Copies of these may still be available by writing to the Franco-American Center. Listings such as this one are never complete. However, it does provide you with my most recent and complete file of marriages tied to the original French ancestor.

How to use the family listings: The left-hand column lists the first name (and middle name or initial, if any) of the direct descendants of the ancestor identified as number 1 (or A, in some cases). The next column gives the date of marriage, then the spouse (maiden name if female) followed by the town in which the marriage took place. There are two columns of numbers. The one on the left side of the page, e.g., #2, is the child of #2 in the right column of numbers. His parents are thus #1 in the left column of numbers. Also, it should be noted that all the persons in the first column of names under the same number are siblings (brothers & sisters). There may be other siblings, but only those who had descendants that married in Maine are listed in order to keep this listing limited in size. The listing can be used up or down - to find parents or descendants. The best way to see if your ancestors are listed here is to look for your mother’s or grandmother’s maiden name. Once you are sure you have the right couple, take note of the number in the left column under which their names appear. Then, find the same number in the right-most column above. For example, if it’s #57C, simply look for #57C on the right above. Repeat the process for each generation until you get back to the first family in the list. The numbers with alpha suffixes (e.g. 57C) are used mainly for couple who married in Maine. Marriages that took place in Canada normally have no suffixes with the rare exception of small letters, e.g., “13a.” If there are gross errors or missing families, my sincere apologies. I have taken utmost care to be as accurate as possible. Please write to the FORUM staff with your corrections and/or additions with your supporting data. I provide this column freely with the purpose of encouraging Franco-Americans to research their personal genealogy and to take pride in their rich heritage.

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**FAMILY #1**

Olivier Daigre (and Daigle), born in 1643 in France, died in Acadia, married circa 1666 at Port Royal (today, Annapolis Royal, Nova Scotia) to Marie Gaudet, daughter of Denis Gaudet and Martine Gauthier of France and Port Royal. Olivier arrived in Acadia around 1663. His ancestors are believed to have originated from d’Aigre in the ancient province of Saintonge, France.

Olive (b.1879 Fort Kent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jean-Baptiste</td>
<td>14 Apr</td>
<td>1891</td>
<td>Madawaska</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barthélémi</td>
<td>19 Sep</td>
<td>1904</td>
<td>Ft.Kent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rémi</td>
<td>10 Oct</td>
<td>1910</td>
<td>Wallagross</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Remmie&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Marcel Després &amp; Esther St.Germain)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aurôre</td>
<td>28 Apr</td>
<td>1903</td>
<td>Ft.Kent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marie</td>
<td>21 Nov</td>
<td>1910</td>
<td>Waterville(SFS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Ralph&quot;</td>
<td>3 Mar</td>
<td>1908</td>
<td>Myrtle Bishop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Mack&quot;</td>
<td>27 Dec</td>
<td>1920</td>
<td>Kingman 48P1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elie</td>
<td>25 Nov</td>
<td>1915</td>
<td>Kingman 48P2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hilaire</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Marcia-Ellen Gibb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ida</td>
<td>14 Jan</td>
<td>1934</td>
<td>Gewa (Maine)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joseph</td>
<td>29 May</td>
<td>1943</td>
<td>Biddeford(St.Jos.)</td>
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<td>Gertrude</td>
<td>12 Apr</td>
<td>1920</td>
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<td>Émilie</td>
<td>03 Nov</td>
<td>1921</td>
<td>Fort.Kent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yvonne</td>
<td>25 Feb</td>
<td>1922</td>
<td>Waterville(SFS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alvine</td>
<td>19__</td>
<td></td>
<td>NB!</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kytte-L.</td>
<td>18 Oct</td>
<td>1941</td>
<td>Eagle Lake</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;2m.&quot;</td>
<td>03 Aug</td>
<td>1966</td>
<td>ARCH 48R1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ida</td>
<td>14 Feb</td>
<td>1942</td>
<td>Daigle, Me.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Henri-T.</td>
<td>06 Apr</td>
<td>1942</td>
<td>Lewiston(SPP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edmond/Edouard</td>
<td>14 Jul</td>
<td>1940</td>
<td>Biddeford(St.Jos.)</td>
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<td>Alphena-J.</td>
<td>09 Apr</td>
<td>1934</td>
<td>Waterville(SFS)</td>
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<td>M.</td>
<td>28 Jan</td>
<td>1935</td>
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<tr>
<td>Louis-Valérien</td>
<td>08 Jun</td>
<td>1935</td>
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<tr>
<td>Edwin</td>
<td>30 Apr</td>
<td>1937</td>
<td>Waterville(SFS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aldéric-J.</td>
<td>14 Sep</td>
<td>1940</td>
<td>Waterville(SFS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thérèse</td>
<td>11 Apr</td>
<td>1953</td>
<td>Waterville(SFS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Edwidge</td>
<td>05 Apr</td>
<td>1937</td>
<td>Waterville(SFS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adrien</td>
<td>18 Jun</td>
<td>1947</td>
<td>Waterville(SFS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lilianne</td>
<td>20 May</td>
<td>1939</td>
<td>Waterville(SFS)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Continued on page 51)
(Daigle Family continued from page 50)

Robert
(b.1930)

48P2 Rose-Anne 13 Sep 1941 Arthur-J. Allain Madison(St.Seb.)
David 24 Dec 1946 Pauline Grenier Madison(St.Seb.)
Alfred-M. 07 Apr 1947 Phyllis Hébert Madison(St.Seb.)
Bennie-E. 26 Jun 1948 Loretta Leblanc Madison(St.Seb.)
Claude-W. 18 Aug 1951 Lena Thébargs Madison(St.Seb.)
Fletcher-John 23 Feb 1952 Helen May Gaffrey Madison(St.Seb.)
Valair-F. 17 Dec 1955 Janet Safford Madison(St.Seb.) 48S4

48P3 Edwin
(b.3-2-1919 Passadumkeag)
Thérèse 17 Aug 1948 Henry Chassé Ft.Kent(St.Ls.)
Maxine-M. __ Jun 1966 Lawrence-J. Bourgoin Maines
Jeanne 31 May 1948 Gérard Lamontagne Lewiston(SPP)
Éviangeline 14 Jul 1956 Edouard Chamberland Waterville(ND)
Jeanne-M. 28 Jul 1962 Wilfred-Ronald Rafuse Waterville(ND)
Rita-M. 03 Aug 1963 Paul-Émile Gagnon Waterville(ND)
Lillianne-M. 19 Feb 1966 Roger-Emery Care Waterville(ND)
Donald 17 Feb 1968 Susan-Hope Roy Waterville(ND)
Yvette 19 Oct 1973 Richard Lake Waterville(ND)
Alice 1972 Richard Carson Waterville(JOP)
Edwin-Donald 15 Jul 1961 Theresa-Agnes Poulin Waterville(ND)
Yvette-Edna 23 Feb 1963 Robert-Milton Leary Waterville(ND)
Raymond-Alb. 28 Aug 1970 Pearl-M. Alley Waterville(ND)
Lucille-M. 25 Jun 1966 Felix M. Zelenkewich Winslow(SJB)
Joseph-Roland 19__ Carole Ferrara MA
Ing 19__ Lenny Ferrara MA
Dim-Mary 25 Oct 1974 Peter-J. Willette(Ouellet) Skowhegan(NDL)
Laurie 07 Oct 1978 Joël Violette Skowhegan(NDL)
Elizabeth 19__ Edgar Perdomo California
Annette 01 Sep 1978 Mark Follansbee No.Vassalboro
Carolyn circa 1982 Timothy Reifer Hawaii
Hiare 17 May 1874 Anaïse LeBrun Frenchville 50C
Willie 11 Nov 1907 Alexina Daigle Frenchville 50D
Philméné 1m. 18__ Bouchard __________
* 2m. 06 Jul 1901 David Daigle (#48C) Winn, ME

Laura-M. 07 Jul 1901 Denis Daigle Frenchville
(b.198-1879 St.Hilaire)
Félix-Hilaire, 27 22 Apr 1919 Elizabeth Goben, 35 Caribou
Willie 08 Feb 1921 Céline Dumas Daigle, Me. 50E
Lse.-Augustine 02 Jul 1945 Phil.-Arthur Poulin Augusta(St.Aug.)
Roland-Élie 05 Sep 1949 Eugénie-Yvette Roux Lewiston(HF)
Onésime 09 Nov 1879 Léa Martin Lille 53C
Euphémi 02 Mar 1897 Vital Dumont Grand Isle
Théodule 13 Oct 1888 Catherine Cyr St.David, Me. 53D
Delphine 06 Nov 1889 Onésime Cyr St.David, Me.
Élise 25 Oct 1892 Denis Albert Madawaska
Rémi 18 Jun 1895 Exilia/Zithe Doucet Lille, Me.53E
Anne 14 Apr 1896 Alexis Beaulieu St.David, Me.
Sévérine 02 Oct 1899 Vital Beaulieu St.David, Me.
Modeste 01 Jul 1901 Ubald Cyr St.David, Me.

Raymond-Alb. 28 Aug 1970 Pearl-M. Alley Waterville(ND)
Joël Violette Skowhegan(NDL)
Robert-Milton Leary Waterville(ND)
Ferrara MA
Lenny Ferrara MA
Peter-J. Willette(Ouellet) Skowhegan(NDL)
Karoline Violette Skowhegan(NDL)
Edgar Perdomo California
Mark Follansbee No.Vassalboro
Timothy Reifer Hawaii
Anaïse LeBrun Frenchville 50C
Alexina Daigle Frenchville 50D
Bouchard __________
David Daigle (#48C) Winn, ME

(See next issue for more on the Daigle Family)
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.

**OBJECTIFS:**

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