



chez nous

Newsletter of

La société canadienne-française

NO. VOL.

Le président parle

Janvier 1984

My very best wishes are hereby extended to everyone for a most happy, healthy and prosperous New Year! I hope that 1984 will bring all of us closer together so that we may contribute to the growth of a stronger and evermore enjoyable Société. Thanks to the participation of so many and the aggressiveness of its organisers and helpers, our 1983 Christmas Party was quite a success, showing that with some involvement, we can all benefit from each other. We must all remember that each one of us is but a spoke in our big wheel, the Société Canadienne Française du Minnesota. I sincerely believe in the importance and value of each member and do hope that each member will contribute in any manner he or she may be able to. I am looking forward in working for and with you. May 1984 be your best year ever!

Chers amis,

C'est avec grand plaisir que je vous offre mes plus sincères souhaits à l'occasion de l'au nouveau! Que 1984 soit pour tous et chacun de vous rempli de bonheur, succès et bonne santé! J'espère que l'on aura le plaisir de se voir plus souvent pour cultiver d'avantage notre amitié. C'est vraiment magnifique de pouvoir parler notre langue maternelle ici au Minnesota avec des gens que deviennent de plus en plus chers, d'une rencontre à l'autre. Je prie Le Bon Dieu d'accorder Carmelle, Gilbert et leurs enfants, beaucoup de succès et de bonheur à Montréal. Nos pensées seront certainement souvent avec eux. Je vous aime bien tous et j'espère que 1984 sera la meilleure année de votre vie.

GASTON

Le calendrier

February 6, 7:30 General Membership meeting (St. Lukes)
Informative presentation of French/Indian culture - Ted and Pauline Drake

February 13, Historical Society (Little Canada City Hall)

February 21, MJC Sub. French speaking group-Nicole McGee
866-6478

March 5, 7:30 General Membership meeting (St. Lukes)
French songs and 000000

April 2, 7:30 General Membership meeting (St. Lukes)
International Institute
Festival of Nations movies

TIME for our new friends to **JOIN** and our old friends to
REJOIN La Societe for 1984.

We bet you know at least one (maybe two) french Canadians who are interested in their french heritage and have never heard of La Societe.

Make it a little "project" this year to invite these people into La Societe. Each of you find one new member and we will double in size and accomplishments. Make it another small project to get a LITTLE more active yourself. There are things that you can do - help with historical, cultural, finance, quilting, dancing, french speaking groups, singing, etc. Finally, give us one idea this year and help put the idea in motion....A movie that would deal with our culture, a speaker, maybe yourself. YOU ARE THE KEY TO OUR BECOMING A MORE INTERESTING AND ALIVE ORGANIZATION. Find one...pick one...give... That's all it takes! In doing this we will have a reservoir of experience and talent from which new leaders may be available for the success in accomplishing our goals and for the continuation of La Societe.

Everyone can not do everything....but...everyone can do something!!

Membership Rates for renewals and new members DUE NOW

Family.....\$10.00 Single.....\$7.00 Senior.....\$5.00
(62)
Senior family.....\$6.00

From January 1, 1984 to December 31, 1984 Make checks payable to:
La Societe Canadienne Francaise

All correspondence concerning membership, renewals, or change of address should be directed to: George LaBrosse 4895 Brent Ave., Inver Grove Hgts. MN. 55075

Membership dues are our only source of income. Membership rosters may be picked up at all meetings. The names of new members will be posted in all issues of the Chez Nous and you may add them to your roster. You may also check to see who lives in your area and possibly organize a car pool to the meetings. We need YOU.

NEW MEMBERS

Cormier, Harvey/Shirley	-1522 22nd Av. No. Mpls.	529-1769	55411
Downing, Lewis/Mrs.	4521 Colfax So. Mpls.	824-8901	55409
Eddie, Eugene	2112 East 33rd. Mpls.	721-8058	55407
Gendreau, H. Daniel	1717 121st Ave. Blaine MN.	757-4219	55434
Lambrecht, Barbara	4301 Queen Ave. No. Mpls.	588-4440	55412
La Vigne, Arthur	3300 Taylor St. NE Mpls.	789-2031	55418
La Vigne, James	3225 Fernbrook Ln. Plymouth	559-2536	55441
Riesch, Rosemary	1596 Watson Av. St. Paul MN.	698-5105	55119
Ritchot, Louis	2311 139 Av. NW Andover, MN.	755-1309	55303
Schwachtgen, Bob/Donna	2518 Meridan Drive. Mpls.	588-7419	55422
Thompson, Ken	7108 Quail Circle, Mpls.	561-8018	55429
Genereux, Mike	1565 St. Paul Av. St. Paul	699-6801	55116

Bouquets de fleurs

Christmas has come and gone. Our Christmas party was one of the best ever! There are many people to thank for this well organized event. Pat Stegbauer for her selection of ideal people to assist her as Chairperson of the party with help from Marie Bouley and Marie Trepanier. The people such as Madeline Roche and others who offered their help to arrange the tables; Marion Servio, kitchen chef, Helene Peltier in the kitchen along with Gloria St. Hilaire serving on the delicious food buffet; David Belair for taking on the sale of wine; Evelyn Lund and George LaBrosse for welcoming guests at the door; Pat Jacoby and his committee for his sales; Carmelle Pompepy for her wonderful arrangement of the entertainment by the children, such patience and such acceptance of the children to perform; our talented musicians; Santa Claus and Mrs. Claus (she was the background help) Gaston and Jan Rheume our new President; the Canadian Errents for their renditions of Christmas songs and of course, our contributing members and their guests for attending and making the joyous night a huge success.

Merci beaucoup to all SCF members who gave their precious time to sing in Our Lady of Lourdes choir on Christmas eve.



LA SOCIETE CANADIENNE FRANCAISE
TREASURER'S ANNUAL REPORT- 1983

Balance January 1, 1983 \$1,001.16

INCOME

Chapter Fees	\$ 35.00	
Donations	148.00	
Membership Dues	1,039.00	
Sortileges Performance	500.00	
Sales	17.00	
Miscellaneous	30.28	
	<u>TOTAL INCOME</u>	<u>1,759.28</u>
		2,770.44

EXPENSE

Association Dues	\$ 152.00	
Donation	25.00	
Meetings (hall rental	305.00	
Office	60.90	
Picnic	54.71	
Postage & Printing	544.66	
Special Events	294.14	
Travel (conferences)	200.00	
Merchandise	38.50	
Miscellaneous	108.76	
	<u>TOTAL EXPENSE</u>	<u>1,783.67</u>

Balance December 31, 1983.....\$ 986.77

Respectfully submitted, Margaret Charbonneau
Treasurer

potpourri

We invite you to join the Quilting Club. For information call:
Lucille Ingram.....533-0890

For French lessons information call: Jon Trombly...780-4547 and or
Sister Ella Germain...690-3695

Winter Carnival Parade/St. Paul January 28, 1984 call:
Sera Byrne.....224-2636

St. Boniface Festival du Voyageurs... February 19-26

Theatre et Poesie de France..St. Thomas College Auditorium Thursday
January 26th, 1984. Performances at 10:00 AM and 7:30 PM and Friday
January 27th at noon

Tourtiere Dinner at Our Lady of Lourdes(French) Church, 21 Prince St.
S.F. Mpls., 11:30 AM to 5:00 PM.

La SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE-FRANÇAISE meets regularly on the first
MONDAY of each month at 7:30 p.m. in the school cafeteria of
St. Luke's Church near Summit and Lexington in St. Paul. There
is nothing that together we cannot undertake. We need your
ideas. We need your talents. We need you!



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LA SOCIETE CANADIENNE-FRANCAISE
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From
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chez nous

Newsletter of

Février \ Mars 1984

La société canadienne-française

VOL. 5 NO. 3

FROM THE EDITOR

We are now well into 1984.....

as your new Editor, this will be my first attempt at putting together the Chez Nous, out side of the Christmas flyer. Our first Chez Nous of the new year of 1984 was put out by Evelyn Lund and Dorothy Landry, so at this point I wish to give credit where credit is due--Merçi.

Also, at this time, I think we need to extend our appreciation to Lucille Ingram, our past Editor of 2½ years. She has done a splendid job and has agreed to stay on as advisor. It is hard work and time consuming so to you Lucille, we say UN GRAND MERCI.

As we now all know, Carmelle Pommeupuy and family are now residing in Québec. Before she left we spoke about keeping in touch with the Société in some special way. She has agreed to write a short paragraph or two for the Chez Nous on human interests in Québec. It will be called "Carmelle's Corner". She has contributed much of herself while here in Minneapolis and I feel that in this way we may all keep in contact and at the same time utilize her many talents.

At our January 9 meeting, Med LaFond brought in a small supply of musical records named Open Horizons by the Northland College Voyageurs. They are now out of print so you may wish to purchase one at our next monthly meeting from Pat Jacoby for \$7.50.

***** *Lucy Jacoby*

WANTED: Good host families for young French people 18-25 years of age for the summer of 1984 with stays of 1 month or more. Living allowance is provided. Please address your replies to L. Ingram at 533-0890.

Rapports du comité

PROGRAM COMMITTEE

The program for the March Société meeting will be a presentation on the history of Québec by John Rivard. Those who have seen his presentation at previous society meetings and at the AFA Conference at Mackinac last summer know how enjoyable and informative they are. It will be an excellent preparation for the Festival of Nations since one of the problems encountered last year was that many of us were not familiar with the history of our own culture.

The April meeting program will include preparations for the Festival of Nations as well as the French-Canadian film, "Crac", which was unavailable for the January meeting.

The Festival of Nations will be held April 27, 28, and 29 at the St. Paul Civic Center. It is an opportunity where we can really promote our French-Canadian culture. We will have an exhibition and sales booth and our singing and our newly formed dance group will be performing. We will need everyone's help to make this a success.

On Saturday, March 17, our singing group, Les Canadiens Errants, will be performing at the Minnesota Zoo as part of their French week celebration. French-Canadian folk songs on St. Patrick's Day!

Also, we need more singers for the Festival of Nations. If you would like to take part please call me, Pat at 484-2384. We want to make a good showing. Thanks.

Submitted by, Pat Stegbauer

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

As of Feb 1, there are 100 memberships that have not been renewed for 1984. Please take a minute to write a check and mail or renew at the next monthly meeting.

For those that have not renewed, consider this Chez Nous a complimentary copy and your last until your dues are received. Address to 4895 Brent Ave., Inver Grove, MN 55075. Make checks payable to La Société Canadienne-Française. Merci

DUES ARE:

FAMILY	\$10.00
SINGLE	7.00
SENIOR	5.00
SENIOR COUPLE	6.00



*Grand-
Père*

Written by W. Henry Drummond/circa 1893

You little bad boy not much you care,
How busy you keep your poor old Grandpère,
Trying to stop you everyday, chasing the
hens around the hay, why don't you give
them a chance to lay, to lay, Little Baptiste.

Off and on the field you follow the plow,
Then when you are tired you scare the cow,
sicken the dogs til they jump the wall,
So the milk is good for nothing at all,
And you are only five and one half this fall,
Little Baptiste.

Too sleepy for saying your prayers tonite?
Never mind, I suppose it will be alright,
Say them tomorrow, ah, there he go,
Fast asleep in a minute or so,
And he'll grow like that til the rooster crows,
Little Baptiste.

Then in the morning he will wake us up ri
away, tout de suite, looking for somethi
more to eat. He makes me think of a long
legged crane, soon as they swallow, well,
they start up again.
I wonder your stomach don't get no pain,
Little Baptiste.

See him now lying there in the bed,
Look at the arm underneath his head,
If he grows like that til his 20 year,
I'll bet he'll be stronger than Louis Cyr.
And beat all the voyageurs living here,
Little Baptiste.

Just feel the muscle long his back,
Won't give him much bother to carry the pack,
On the long portage, any size canoe,
There is not many things that little boy
won't do.
For he's got double joints on his body too,
Little Baptiste

But little Baptiste, please don't forget
We rather you be a small boy yet,
So chase the chickens, make them scare,
Do what you like with your old Grandpère,
For when you are a big fellow, he won't be
there,
Little Baptiste.

LANGAGE

Hébreu ou Grec?

Quand un Français ne comprend rien à ce qu'il
lit ou entend, il dit: "C'est de l'hébreu" au
lieu de "C'est du grec" comme nous.

Translated: When a Frenchman doesn't under-
stand anything he's reading or hears, he says:
"It's Hebrew (to me)" instead of "It's Greek
to me" like us.

Submitted by Jean Tremblay

Anyone interested in a mini-course of 3-4
nights (consecutively), or one night a week
for 3-4 weeks) on BASIC PRONUNCIATION, call
Jean Tremblay at 780-4547. Also, I am curious
in finding out if there is anyone interested
in beginning ANOTHER French class within the
next 3 months or so. Our current class meets
on Wednesday nights and is 4 sessions in the
course (not really much to make up, still a bit
too late!)----- Intéressé? Call the above
mentioned number.

l'histoire...

(Extracts from the Minnesota Pioneer - Minnesota's first newspaper)
by Alfred J. Dahlquist, member Historical Committee

Vol. I No. 7 Thursday Jun 7, 1849

Annals of St. Paul. The following communication, from a valued correspondent, will be read with interest by hundreds of people in Saint Paul, whose residence here has been so brief, that it has never occurred to them how recently the site of our flourishing village, where town lots are now selling at from \$50 to \$500 each, was a mere valueless deer-range.

St. Paul, June 4, 1849.

Mr. Editor:-The land where the town of St. Paul now stands, with the surrounding country, on the East side of the Mississippi, as far up as Crow-Wing river, and so far down as to include the St. Croix, Chippewa and Black river country, was ceded to the United States by a deputation of Sioux Indians, accompanied by Hon. H.H. SIBLEY, in the summer of 1847, at Washington, D.C., which treaty was concluded during the session of the same year. There were some few settlers in the vicinity of Fort Snelling, tolerated by the commandant, principally Canadian voyageurs and Red River half-breeds. The first house that was built, or the first claim taken, near St. Paul was at the Cave, some two miles above it, by a Swiss family of the name PERRY, who had emigrated to this country by way of the Red River British possessions, north of St. Paul some seven hundred miles; they had resided some eight or ten years previous, near the Fort; but as soon as the news of the ratification of the Sioux treaty was known, he made that claim at the Cave, others also settled themselves near PERRY, with the intention of making themselves farms, among the rest a man of the name Benjamin GERVAIS, a French-Canadian by birth. They retained their possession until 1840, when by extension of the Military reserve they were driven from their claims, their houses torn down before their faces, and they were once more compelled to make for themselves new houses. Benj. GERVAIS, settled and claimed what is now known as St. Paul proper. A Canadian named PARENT, in the spring of 1836, established a small log cabin on the landing, 'what is now known as the River landing', for the sale of whiskey by the glass; which old claim was destroyed last winter by fire. Mr. H. JACKSON was the first man who established a store, 'it was during the summer of 1842.' He purchased a piece of land of GERVAIS and built him a house on the brow of the hill, just above the lower landing, where he still resides. Mr. J.W. SIMPSON built himself a small house in June, 1843, where he opened a small store on a piece of land also purchased from B. GERVAIS, where he still resides. Mr. SIMPSON is now building himself a two story stone house, among his other improvements. The third store which was established, was by Mr. L. ROBERT, in the old log house first erected by PARANT. In the course of the same summer, he, with Mr. McLEOD, purchased the remainder of GERVAIS' claim, for the enormous sum of \$850. Since then, some of Mr. ROBERTS' lots 50 x 100 feet have been sold for \$400. With the exception of the above named gentlemen, no trading had been done in the country until recently, except by the Fur Company, who had a large trading establishment under the supervision of H.H. SIBLEY, at Mendotah, some six miles above St. Paul at the junction of the Minnesota or St. Peters river with the Mississippi. On the East side of St. Peters and west of the Mississippi stand Fort Snelling-opposite, the Fur Company establishment, which was used then and is yet, for prosecuting an extensive trade with different tribes of Red men in the interior. W.H.F.

Vol. I No. 48 Wednesday March 20, 1850

It is convenient, in St. Paul, to know the french language, one of our merchants says he frequently fails of making a sale, by not knowing the French tongue. For instance, the merchant has several barrels of mess pork to sell. A Canadian customer wishing to buy, asks the merchant if the pork is "bon?" (good) The merchant replies "no; no bone at all, but clear middlings;" whereupon the Canadian leaves in disgust, thinking it an outrage to ask \$15.00 per barrel for damaged pork.

NEWS FROM ST CLOUD

What did the early settlers do during the hard and cold days from Epiphany to Ash Wednesday? The French Canadians knew how to beat the blahs. They feasted, danced, visited and sang their way culminating in an explosion of joy on Mardi Gras, the day before lent started.

The French-Canadian Society of St. Cloud will exhibit some of that "joie de vivre" at their Annual Membership Drive meeting Jan. 18 at the Whitney Center, announced John Langlais, President.

For background a special presentation of the history of French-Canadians will be shown by John T. Rivard, the Official Voyageur of the State of Minnesota, entitled: "From France to Québec to Minnesota". There are 303,600 people of French descent in Minnesota.

The Balladiers will regale the group with traditional songs of the voyageurs and the habitants from Québec.

Mr. John Langlais will serve the Acadian crêpes; Jerry and Barbara LaVoie will model the official society 18th century costumes.

Everyone of French descent or those interested are invited to the event starting at 7:30 PM.



Massicotte sketch portraying the joyous visit of neighbors during the early days of settlers. Wine and food would be served in each ho

Submitted by John T. Rivard

St Cloud news continues:

Several members of the St. Cloud Chapter of La Société attended a retirement party for Floyd Desmarais. Floyd has been our treasurer since the inception of the second chapter in Minnesota in 1981. Floyd retired recently from his position with the Minnesota State Troopers.



recette

FRENCH GOLDEN PARFAIT

- 4 egg yolks
- 1 cup of hot maple syrup
- 1 pt. whipping cream, whipped

Beat egg yolks slightly and pour over slowly the hot maple syrup. Stir over hot water until thick. Cool and add whipped cream. Turn into freezing trays and freeze for about 3 hours.



The following article was researched by John England. READ-DIGEST-ENJOY-HISTORY IS OUR HERITAGE.

Excerpts reprinted from OUR FRENCH-CANADIAN ANCESTORS by Thomas J. LaForest.

Mr. Guillaume Couture was born in 1617 in the Parish of St. Godard in Rouen, the capital of Normandy. In 1640 he found his vocation as a lay missionary, on staff with the Jesuit Fathers in the Huron Mission in New France.

After many years in the missionary field and many hardships, he was relieved of his vows in April of 1646 and was married to Anne Esmard.

On May 1647, Guillaume Couture was granted a concession, 5 arpents of river frontage by 40 arpents deep. He cleared and settled this land at Pointe Levy and it became his ancestral home, where he raised 6 boys and 4 girls.

We French-Canadians are like the Chinese; we hold our ancestors in high esteem, We have a restless desire to search out our ancestors--the habitants, the métis, the seigneurs, and the voyageurs who founded our enduring race.

Thomas La Forest, an educator and native of Detroit has helped us in this search by producing Our French-Canadian Ancestors Vol. 1. a translation of NOS ANCÊTRES by M. le Curé" Gérard Lebel, C.S.S.R.

This splendid English translation is well illustrated with maps of the old provinces of France, and the seigneuries of Québec. It contains drawings and glowing accounts of the early French-Canadians. It is well documented, and Mr. LaForest even includes an overview explaining the medieval nature of French-Canadian life--the very key to understanding the Québécois history: and our ancestors who gave us not only our names, but a lasting culture.

I highly recommend Our French-Canadian Ancestors, available from the L I S I Press, P.O. Box 1063, Palm Harbor, Florida 33557, for \$12.00.



THIS AND THAT

Of all the things you wear, your expression is the most important.

For anyone in the St. Paul area, Sister Ella Germain continues to give French lessons, call 690-3695 for time and place.

MINI HISTORY

Ontario is an old Iroquois word meaning "the shining waters" and this Canadian province offers you 68,490 square miles of it--one quarter of all the fresh water in the world.

La SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE-FRANÇAISE meets regularly on the first MONDAY of each month at 7:30 p.m. in the school cafeteria of St. Luke's Church near Summit and Lexington in St. Paul. There is nothing that together we cannot undertake. We need your ideas. We need your talents. We need you!



From
LA SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE-FRANÇAISE
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chez nous

Newsletter of Avril - Mai 1984

La société canadienne-française

VOL. 6. NO. 4

LES SORTILÈGES SELECTED FROM DETROIT SHOWCASE From Quebec Update 3/12/84

Les Sortilèges, Canada's only professional folkloric dance troupe, were chosen as one of the 16 companies to perform at the Sixth Annual Performing Arts for Young People, which was held at the Detroit Institute of Arts on March 16-17, 1984. The troupe, was selected from over 70 American and Canadian applicants. They presented a production of their own creation to nearly 400 sponsors from various Performing Art Centers, Colleges and Universities throughout North America. Les Sortilèges's production combined education with entertainment in a work-shop play called The Devil and Miss Rose. This is the dance group that performed with our Société last year at the Landmark Center on April 10/84.

Submitted by, H. Peltier

MINI HISTORY

Winter in Quebec means steadily cold weather and the thermometer often registering 30 below. Snow usually over 100 inches, lies on the ground from November until April. Summers are warm and pleasant with temperatures seldom rising above 91. Autumn lasts 6 to 8 weeks and is the most pleasant of the seasons.

In developing the snowmobile, Québecer Armand Bombardier's first aim was to create an individual form of transportation suitable to replace the dog sled. Bombardier dubbed the vehicle "Ski Dog", from which evolved the commercial name SKIDOO.

CARMELLE'S CORNER-Je reviens chez-moi

After driving 30 hours totalling 1313 miles (Minneapolis-Montreal), we arrived safely on French ground at the break of dawn, where Montreal appeared heavenly in the light fog with the sun appearing on the horizon. French music came on the radio, French names were everywhere...I could not help but shed a tear or two as I said to myself, it's a great feeling to be home. I was physically exhausted yet I felt light as a feather because I was over-joyed to find the city I left 10 years ago just as charming as before.

I must tell you that I am getting more and more settled in French Canada, and I am not at all disappointed with Montreal. It is a fascinating city with very sympathetic people, who are extremely fashionable. I have found a job in advertising which brought us in contact with a great French Canadian singer, Ginette Reno, herself. In fact I made her program "La Place des Arts". I have really turned over a new leaf in my life. I am sure that I am called to work for my people, which will bring me back to all of you somehow. I miss you and have not forgotten you!

Carmelle

THIS AND THAT

Each of us is part of all that surrounds us. Celebrate being alive.....



I found this article especially relevant since Lent is here and Easter is just around the corner.

MARDI GRAS

"Les Fêtes" was the start of "Le Carnaval", each family receiving their relatives, friends and neighbors in their homes, the round of festivities ending with Mardi Gras, which is the day before Lent begins. On the evening of Mardi Gras people would dress in masquerade and go calling on neighbors before gathering at some home to celebrate until midnight.

SIROP D'ÉRABLE

During Lent the visiting is practically stopped, but as spring rolls around another type of gayety begins, when the maple sap starts to run and the maple sugar and syrup harvest starts. Practically all of the farmers have several acres of maple trees on their land, called "the sugar bush" . . . Cabins are built near the sugar bush where practically the whole family stays during those few weeks. It takes 30 gallons of sap to make a gallon of syrup, so they have to work almost continuously at the boiling and filtering. Every member of the family helps and they are really kept very busy.

Maple sugar time, the city people made up sleighride parties to go to the maple woods for celebrations . . . When the boiled sap reaches a certain stage, spoons full of it are ladeled out and spread on the clean snow to harden, making a sort of maple taffy . . . Another delicacy was the poaching of a whole egg in the boiling syrup . . . Really delicious, the egg served floating in the syrup . . . Another tid-bit that was really enjoyed was the "beignets" — a rich egg dough was made and cooked by dropping by spoonful in the boiling maple sap — a sort of maple fritter.

CARÊME ET PÂQUES

Fast and abstaining of meat during Lent and Holy Week was really very strictly kept. My mother (who came from Trois Rivieres, Québec) often told me that when she was young no meat was eaten from Palm Sunday until Easter Sunday. Holy Saturday was a very busy day indeed — polishing all meat cooking utensils, many of them copper, in preparation for the feast on Easter Sunday.

For the Easter feast a tiny new spring lamb, called "Agneau de Pâques" was the pièce de résistance. It was roasted uncovered, with thick slices of onions giving it special flavor. The lamb was used because it is symbolical of The Lamb of God, Risen Savior.

In the latter part of May are the Rogation Days — 3 days set aside for special prayers for a successful harvest. Farmers brought their seeds to church to be blessed with special prayers by the parish priest . . . Because 95 percent of the French Canadians are Catholics, many customs observed are religious customs.

Excerpts/article written by Donalda LaGrandeur

Jerry Forchette



QUILTING GROUP

This project, that started out as just an idea last spring, is finally beginning to take shape. After several meetings involving discussion, research, and exchange of ideas, we are now at a tangible stage. The quilt, which will depict the story of the French in Minnesota, will consist of 20 embroidered blocks. If embroidery is your thing, and you think you would like to be a part of the project, please call us. We are 8 ladies meeting regularly, but we welcome your participation. Perhaps you're unable to make the meetings but you'd like to stitch at home!! Please call.

Lucille Ingram (533-0890) or Eva Nelson at (489-3915)

NEWS FROM HIBBING

The first meeting of the Iron Range Chapter of La Société, was an outstanding success according to meeting organizer Dick Bernard, Hibbing.

Twenty Eight people gathered at the Iron Range Interpretative Center, Chisholm, on March 6 to hear John Rivard's excellent presentation on the "VOYAGEUR". Thirteen expressed acting interest in a Chapter, and a meeting was scheduled for April 18 in the Chisholm and Hibbing area.

Readers knowing of French-Canadians in the Iron Range area are asked to contact them and Dick Bernard, at 2014 First Avenue #6 Hibbing, MN 55746. Plans are also under way to organize a Duluth Chapter.

Readers are asked also to note the upcoming events in the "North Country": May 20-27 is "Salute to Canada" week at the Interpretative Center, and August 9 is "French Day" at the same facility. Plan your vacation to see the Iron Range and celebrate your heritage on these dates.

Submitted by Dick Bernard

This article should be of interest to many as the name Belille is common to many of us along with several other French names mentioned further on in the article. It is too large for one edition of the newsletter so will conclude it in the following issue. You will find a Mr. Bill Milner mentioned. He was a childhood friend of my Father's and was responsible for much of the data printed in this article. He lives on the family farm in the summers and in the town of Radisson in the winter months.. His farm borders the Chippewa river and it is a little piece of heaven, so beautiful is the land and shore line. The Belille Cemetery which was a part of the Belille farm and donated to Frenchtown for a burial grounds is now an historical Site.

Submitted by Jerry Forchette

HISTORICAL VIGNETTES



CHARLES BELILLE

FRENCHTOWN ON THE CHIPPEWA

Our folklore world-wide is imbued with a spirit of romanticism when an adventurer or pioneer pushes far back into deep wilderness or visits a unique and remote culture or people. Perhaps that thought was in the minds of the many French Canadian men who ranged far to the fore in the settlement of the West and merged their Quebecois traditions with that of the Indians they visited — and married! These men were living among the Indians when the American Colonies were being settled and some of their métis-blood-children fought in the Revolution. Perhaps this spirit is what brought so many of these people to the banks of the Chippewa River. They were the first white settlers in Sawyer County.

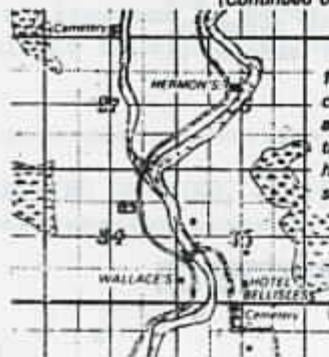
Charles Belille is generally recognized as the first permanent "settler" of what has become Sawyer County. Jean Baptiste Corbine had antedated him by forty years at Lac Courte Oreilles but he was a trader and agent for a fur-buying company. The most authentic information on Belille's source and early life was furnished by himself in an interview just before he died. It was published in *The Hayward School Journal*, dated November, 1899; Volume III, Number 4. The interviewer was probably that persistent recorder of the early days in Sawyer County, James G. Adams, whose book *History of Education in Sawyer County* was so remarkable in the content and thoroughness. We can do no better in telling of his life than to quote this interview.

"The oldest white man and the first white settler within the territory now included in Sawyer County, Wisconsin, was born in Berchier, Canada, Province of Quebec, nearly one hundred years ago. Both his parents were born and passed their lives in the same place. His father was a farmer and the subject of

sixteen years of age when he was employed by the Hudson Bay Fur Co. to come to Lake Superior to pack furs at the rate of one hundred twenty-five dollars per year. Mr. Belille with about two hundred others, made the trip up the St. Lawrence and through the lakes in two birch-bark canoes. These canoes were much larger than any of that kind in use at the present time. Their headquarters were at Le Pointe. He remained at that place three years. He says that all they had to eat was a pint of shelled corn given to them twice a day and a small piece of tallow to boil with the corn. When there was a shortage of corn they were given salt fish. We have been unable to learn how long Mr. Belille was in the employ of the Hudson Bay Fur. Co. and that is why we are unable to give his exact age. Married an Indian by the name of Esther Crane and at once moved to Wisconsin and settled at what is now the city of Chippewa Falls, Wis. Lived there three years when he moved on to his farm near the mouth of the Court Oreilles river on the Chippewa river. At this time and for many years, his supplies were secured from Chippewa Falls and taken to his home in a birch-bark canoe.

"Mr. Belille lives in a house which he claims to have built about sixty years ago. It was made of sawed lumber. In 1857 his wife died and in 1860 he married another Indian by the name of Maggie Amsiwesay. Mr. Belille has never been officially connected with the schools, but the first school in the county was known as the Belille school and at different times he has had two sons-in-law, one grand son, and the husbands of three of his grand daughters on the board of school directors.

(Continued on p. 13)



1902 map showing the confluence of the Couderey and Chippewa Rivers and the site of Charles Belille's home — about three miles south of Radisson.

L'HISTOIRE

"He is the father of nineteen children. The names of those by his first wife, now living, are: Esther (Mrs. Wm. Waite), Quawish (Mrs. Ondag) lives at Trading Post in this county; Alex lives at Trading Post, Manadis (Mrs. Peter Cornelia), and Maggie (Mrs. Joseph Vossler). Those by his second wife, now living, are: Josephine (Mrs. Geo. Willett), Frank lives with his father. Mr. Belille still lives on his homestead, sec. 2, twp. 37, range 7 w. Is in good health and able to do considerable work."

There are many and varied stories about Charles Belille's tenure on the banks of the Chippewa. Even the number of his wives and children is in doubt but he is listed in the 1850 census of Chippewa County, aged 35, born in Canada. His wife was Laura, born at Red River (probably near Winnipeg) and being from there she was probably Indian or métis. His children then were Rufus and Louisa. He probably had a son Charles then too. In 1860 his wife was Esther, born at Eagle Point (a French-Indian settlement farther down the Chippewa) and other children listed were Leonard, David, Sophia and Harriett. With his wife Margaret he also had Mary and Rosalie.

Belille was born c/a 1815 and died, according to Adams, August 3, 1900. Another biography of his life (which I have not been able to see), states he was born at Muscallunge, Lac St. Pierre (Quebec) in 1792 and died in 1902, aged 98 or 104 (?) years. His death is not listed in the county records. He is buried in the Belille cemetery according to William Milner, a descendant, who was caretaker at the cemetery for many years, but the exact grave location is not known.

Tales of Belille's life and eccentricities were passed down by his descendants and neighbors. He and his wife came to their future homesite on Easter Sunday. Since they had little food with them, he shot a crow and this made up their first meal there. Large parties of his wife's relatives assembled at their house for trading on occasion. At times he employed some of them to carry supplies around the falls near his place when he took contracts from loggers for this service. They also helped him grow potatoes and harvest hay which he sold to loggers at a good profit. In 1850 he had four young men (not Indians) staying with him - either working for him or staying at his place while they cut timber. Apparently his operation was profitable because the story is told that when he went to Chippewa Falls for supplies he would buy barrels of whiskey and have them set out in the street for passers-by, forcing the mills to shut down because of absenteeism!

The François Tétrault home, located at 224 Second Street, N.E., in Fairbault has been included in a brochure of historical buildings by the Fairbault Heritage Preservation Commission. Tétrault, a stonemason by trade, built the home in 1872. It's walls, two feet deep, are constructed out of native limestone.

François was born in Verchers, Quebec. He and his wife Marie Laporte, settled in Faribault in 1862. He was the son of Lord Tétrault de Gharmes who had fled the turmoil of France during the revolution for the safety of Quebec.

François's oldest son, François Xavier, inherited his father's abilities and became an excellent carpenter. He even built the first set of bobsleds used in Faribault. Many of the buildings he put up are in use today.

Decendents of the Tétrault family include Cela Ochs King, Noella Tétrault Casey, Mary Louise La Rose King, Gregory and Jerome Casey, John Golden and Mary Ann Golden Steinbronner.

Source: Thibodeau, S. and L. Rice County Families-Their History Our Heritage. Pub. by Walsworth Publishing, Marcelline, MO 1982 p.138

Submitted by, John England



ELECTIONS-1984

According to the rules of our constitution, this year 5 new board members will be elected.

The following names have been submitted by the nominating committee for positions on the Board of Directors.

Louis Richot, Born and raised in St. Boniface, Canada. He and his family moved to Minneapolis, MN in 1967. He is married and the father of 3 girls and 1 boy. French is his first language, both parents being French. He works in Minneapolis as an electrical contractor.

Jerry Forchette, Raised in northern Wisconsin of French Canadian parents. Have lived in Minneapolis for the past 9 years where I worked as secretary for the Credit Manager of Munsingwear. I am now employed as secretary for the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture. Sales Committee member, Editor of the Chez Nous.

Andre Dubé, was born and grew up in La Broquerie, Canada. French of course is his most fluent language but studied English in school so is very adept. He moved to Minneapolis 8 years ago and works as a Computer Programmer. He is married with a wife and children.

Jon Trombley, Born in St. Paul, MN but raised in the Forest Lake area. He has studied French for 10 years and teaches our French Class. He is a computer operator and works at West Publishing Company.

Dick "Pierre" Girard, was born in Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin. He has lived in Minneapolis about 15 years. He is a salesman for G.C. Peterson Machinery Co. He is a member of our singing group, and very active in our Society.

Maggie Charbonneau, Born and raised in Minneapolis. Retired as Administrative Officer after 38 years at the Farmers and Mechanics Savings Bank. Married to Alan Charbonneau of French-Canadian ancestry. She has enjoyed the service as Treasurer of La Société for the past 2 years.

Marie Bouley, Born and raised in Minneapolis; she has worked for Control Data for the past 15 years in their office. She is active in the singing group and is also a member of the Sales Committee.

Nominations will be invited from the floor, however, persons nominated should have been approached beforehand as to their willingness to serve. The remaining 6 board members will be replaced next year. This is done to give continuity to our organization.

ELECTIONS WILL BE HELD AT OUR MONTHLY MEETING OF JUNE, 4, 1984-COME PREPARED TO VOTE.

La Bonne Bouffe

Il y a une variété d'établissements dans les villes jumelles qui offrent de la nourriture, des repas, des produits culinaires et gastronomiques français. Nous en avons déjà cités quelques uns. En voici d'autres que vous pourrez explorer à votre guise.

1. Forepaugh's
276 South Exchange
St. Paul Tel. 224-5606
Offre un menu avec des plats français.

2. La Tortue
Butler Square Building
Tel. 332-3195
Plutôt cher mais succulent.

3. Le Café Nicollet
1350 Nicollet Mall
Tel. 874-8636
Avec des plats savoureux dans un décor intime.

4. L'Etoile, St. Paul Hotel
350 Market Street
St. Paul Tel. 292-9292
Offre dans un cadre élégant une fine cuisine continentale.

5. Taste of France, à Applebaum
Snelling & University
St. Paul
Le format cafeteria est abordable pour toutes les bourses. Une boulangerie-pâtisserie est bien achalandée.

Submitted by Sr. Ella Germain

NEWS FROM THE ST. CLOUD CHAPTER

Our monthly meeting on March 15 was especially interesting and informative. Ron Eustice of our St. Cloud chapter, gave an educational program on "Tracing Your Geneology". He availed himself of maps and handouts to illustrate the migration of our ancestors from the provinces of Old France to Quebec, then the migration of French-Canadians to the States, especially to Wisconsin and Minnesota in the 1800's.

Ron is an expert on genealogy, he has been consulted by the Minnesota Historical Society and the Minnesota Genealogical Society on tracing families.

Our next program will be equally interesting. On April 26, the 4th Thursday instead of the 3rd Thursday, we will have the honor of hearing Stanley J. Idzerda, Professor of History from the College of St. Benedict. His program is entitled: THE FRENCH IN AMERICA IN THE 18TH CENTURY. Mr. Idzerda is an outstanding historian, having written several books.

A nominating committee will be named as we have our elections for board members in June. We are also planning on taking part in the St. Cloud "Water, Wheels and Wings" celebration in July. We are trying to obtain a 25 foot canoe for our float in this and other parades. We want everyone to know that we were the first in Minnesota.

The April 26 meeting will be held in the Whitney Senior Center at 7:30 PM.

J.T. Rivard of St. Cloud, attended a "Constitutional Meeting" in Chicago. Representatives from 12 states were present to form an organization of Franco-Americans in the midwest. A constitution was adopted and the Alliance des Francaise d'Amerique was launched. The Alliance will be a service group to help form local groups within the midwest, and to aid in expanding the work within present Societies. Marie R. Mikesell, Chicago was elected President and J.T. Rivard, Treasurer. We will be hearing from this organization soon with ideas and projects.

Submitted by John Rivard

note de l'éditeur

George LaBrosse has had some positive feedback from some of our members along with their payment of dues. Ella Langevin of Little Canada wrote, "I really enjoyed the poem Grand Père". We also had a letter from Mary Lou Wolsey, Ph.D. from the College of St. Thomas in which she stated in part, "It was a great pleasure to have been able to participate in the Mackinac Island adventure of this past summer. Also enjoy reading your newsletter and we regularly announce events to our students, many of which are French or French Canadian.

It is very gratifying to receive this type of mail. We can be very proud of our Société.

Jerry Forchette

WELCOME-WELCOME-WELCOME

Greetings to all of our new members.

They are:

- Mary Hathaway, St. Paul, MN
- Ann St. Martin, Klueh, St. Paul, MN
- Leona Lundin, Coon Rapids, MN
- Mary L. Wolsey, St. Paul, MN

Those who need to renew their membership, please do so by mailing dues to Geo. LaBrosse, 4895 Brent Ave. Inver Grove Heights, MN 55075. We thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

LA SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE FRANÇAISE
FEBRUARY, 1984

Balance 2/1/84 \$789.11

INCOME

Membership Dues 179.00

959.11

EXPENSE

St. Luke's, Feb. Mtg. 35.00
Rapid Ptg., Chez Nous 34.87
Med LaFond, trimmings 18.23
L. Ingram, Quilt fabric 50.00
Med LaFond, MN flag 28.00
To Savings Acct. 1500.00

666.10

Balance 2/29/84 293.01

Savings Account Balance 500.00

\$793.01

St. Luke's Mar. Mtg. 35.00

Balance as of 3/5/84 \$758.01

Maggie Charbonneau-Treasurer

recette

RAGOUT

- 4 pork shanks
- 1 small chicken cut up
- 1 pound hamburger for meat balls
- 1 large onion
- 2 cups flour browned
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1/4 tsp. sage
- 3/4 tsp. allspice

Cover the pork with water and onion, salt and pepper and cook 1 hr. until tender. Add cut up chicken and cook until tender. Season hamburger and form into balls and add to the mixture and cook another 15 min. Brown flour and add allspice and sage. Add a little water to make a thin paste and add to the meat (well covered with meat stock) and stir until thickened. Serve with boiled potatoes. Years ago, ground wild meat was used in place of the hamburger.

Submitted by, Jerry Forchette

* Le calendrier *

Festival of Nations
April 27/28/29-84

Gen. Meeting-May 7/84
Ted Drake will give his
presentation on Indian
Culture and Folklore.

La SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE-FRANÇAISE meets regularly on the first MONDAY of each month at 7:30 p.m. in the school cafeteria of St. Luke's Church near Summit and Lexington in St. Paul. There is nothing that together we cannot undertake. We need your ideas. We need your talents. We need you!





chez nous

Newsletter of JUN — JUILLET 1984

Dick Bernard
P.O. Box 11
Hibbing, MN 55746

société canadienne-française

VOL. 5. NO. 5

note de l'éditeur

Multi Travel Systems in association with the 3M Club will be going to Canada August 18-26. It will consist of 9 days-8 nights. It will cost \$765.00 per person. For the itinerary of this CANADA EAST tour, you may call the tour coordinator, Bill Edwards at 484-6268.

Les Canadiens Errants will have a tentative date of August 8 for a singing engagement at Nicollet Island Park at approximately 7p.m.

REMINDER..there will be no general meeting in July and August. There will be a flyer in August for general information concerning our September 10 meeting. Because of Labor Day week-end our meeting will be postponed 1 week.

DANCE FEVER--evening of French-Canadian dancing, Friday June 29 at 7:30 p.m. at the Tapestry Folkdance Center at old Marshall-University High school, 5th and 15th Avenue, S.E., Minneapolis (Dinkytown). All dances will be taught at the beginning of the eve. The contact person from Tapestry is John Orrison at 224-0312. Let's have a good turnout, get some ideas and get going on our own dance group so that we may dance at the FESTIVAL OF NATIONS next year.

Jerry Forchette

FESTIVAL OF NATIONS 1984

The weekend of April 27-28-29 gave our French-Canadian Society an opportunity to join 55 other ethnic groups in celebrating the annual Festival of Nations. The festival was very successful and in spite of a two inch snow-fall with biting winds, tornadoes and massive remodeling in the St. Paul Civic Center, over 70 thousand found their way to the festivities.

La Société's participation was equally successful. Our thirty members who sang, also helped to operate the sales booth, and answer questions at our exhibit. They all presented a very good positive image and in general gave our group and our culture good exposure. We also made some money, \$685.00 after expenses. Most importantly we all had fun.

To all those who helped we say MERCI.

Festival of Nations Committee

Jerry Nerburn Gen. Chairman
John Rivard Exhibit Chairman
Pat Jacoby Sales Chairman
Pat Stegbauer Entertainment Director

Submitted by Pat Jacoby

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Delores Dickinson, St. Cloud, MN
Shirley and Gerald Kvistberg, Sartell, MN
Joe Belland, St. Paul, MN
James Babin, St. Paul, MN

Happy to have you aboard and we look forward to meeting all of you.

NEWS FROM LITTLE FALLS

Stella LeBlanc, a member of St. Cloud Chapter of La Société Canadienne-Française, organized a meeting of interested French-Canadians from the Little Falls and Belle Prairie territory. A preliminary meeting was held May 23 in the Morrison County Weyerhaeuser Museum in Little Falls. J.T. Rivard Official Voyageur, gave a program and conducted the first meeting. The following will form the nucleus of the Board of Directors of the Little Falls Chapter: Stella LeBlanc, Eva Becotte, Mr. and Mrs. Louis DesJardins, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Doucette, Mr. and Mrs. Robt. LeBlanc and Alice LaFond. The group will hold meetings this summer for the big membership drive this fall. Stella LeBlanc was appointed Temporary Chairperson.

The Twin Cities, St. Cloud and Hibbing Chapters extend their best wishes and aid to the Little Falls Chapter #4 in the State.

John Rivard

ST CLOUD CHAPTER TWO

On May 17 La Société Canadienne-Française du St. Cloud held it's annual meeting. Elections were conducted for the Board of Directors by President John Langlais. Elected to the Board were the following: Ron Eustice and Gloria Ebacher. The Board now comprises the following: John Langlais, Lloyd DesMarais, Judy Antil, Geo. LaDouceur, Ron Eustice, Irene Navis, Julian Plante, Diane Olson, Mona Nied and Merle Plante. The Board decided that John T. Rivard in his capacity as President Emeritus of the State Society be an Ex-Officio member of the Board.

The following officers were re-elected: President, John Langlais, Vice President, Geo. LaDouceur, Treasurer, Floyd DesMarais, Judy Antil, Secretary.

The Chapter plans on participating in the parade in St. Cloud during the Water, Wings and Wheels Days July 7.

The Chapter also plans on making a summer excursion to the newly discovered archeological site of Fort Duquesne on the Mississippi river. This exciting find was found last year just two miles north of Little Falls. It was built in 1728 by Joseph Marin as a fur trade post, and was lost for over two hundred years until the owner of

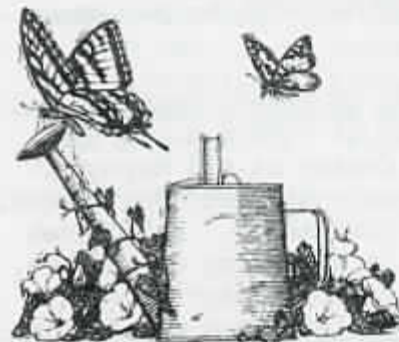
the land picked up several artifacts indicative of a trade post. A team of archeologists, led by Douglas Bird, made some diggings and unearthed the old French post. It is in the process of being readied for public view.

John T. Rivard

NEWS FROM CHIPPEWA FALLS, WISCONSIN

On Thursday evening, May 24, a meeting to form a chapter of La Société Canadienne-Française was held at the City Hall in Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin. The meeting was opened by Pierre Girard (former resident of Chippewa Falls). After a short address and question and answer period, Pierre introduced the OFFICIAL VOYAGEUR of Minnesota, John Rivard. John gave a very interesting one hour presentation to the 24 people in attendance on the life of the Voyageur. The group then volunteered from among themselves 11 people to serve as an interim board of directors, with Beverly Cherrier as chairperson. Other board members are: John Lea Vasseur, Lee Blanchard, Christine LaRonge, Elaine Gereaux Taylor, Leo Bibeau, Tom Hébert, Ted Govin, Adèle Dimock, Lorraine McFarland and Paul Hébert. This board will be having organizational meetings throughout the summer with a big membership drive scheduled for September. GOOD LUCK TO ANOTHER NEW CHAPTER OF LA SOCIÉTÉ!!!

Dick "Pierre" Girard



BOUQUETS
DE
FLEURS

To Mr. Downing, one of members who graciously lent me his book of poetry by Wm. Henry Drummond, author of French dialect poems and prose. We will be seeing them in future issues of the Chez Nous.

To LeRoy DuBois for volunteering to do the mailing of the Chez Nous, really appreciate it.

Cont. on page 7

L'HISTOIRE

Bon Anniversaire

St. Anne's parish, located in north Minneapolis, is celebrating its centennial this year.

The church, originally called St. Clotilde, was founded April 20, 1884 for francophone catholics on the west bank of the Mississippi who were too far from Notre Dame de Lourdes. St. Clotilde, by the way, was the daughter of King Chilperic of Burgundy. She was born in 474 at Lyons and was married to Clovis, ruler of the Salian Franks in 493. She succeeded in converting him to Christianity by her prayers and good works.

M. le curé Lucien Nougaret was St. Clotilde's first pastor. He purchased a protestant church for use until a permanent building was constructed on north Lyndale Avenue.

During these early times the parish was plagued with financial difficulties and it was eventually reorganized as the Church of St. Anne in 1898 under the pastorate of Father Joseph LeGardeur. Father Vandenheuvel followed him in 1901, and he is remembered for "fortement tendu les nerfs de ses paroissiens" (severely strained the nerves of his parishioners).

Father Damsus Richard, a native of New Brunswick, came to St. Annes in 1902. He studied at the St. Paul Seminary and was accepted into the Archdiocese because Archbishop Ireland was in need of French-speaking priests. Father Richard built a new parish hall on Queen Avenue North in 1922 which served as a church until the present structure was completed during the pastorate of Father Eichinger in 1949. Father Richard encouraged the use of English. St. Annes over the years lost many of it's French-Canadian people; and St. Annes became a territorial rather than a national parish.

Father Walter LeBeau, professor of theology at St. Thomas, was assigned to the parish on weekends from 1931 to 1971. He and Father Paul Bussard utilized the Canon of the Mass as the basis for the stained glass windows in 1958.

Sources:

Brady, Joyce. The Church of St. Anne-Minneapolis, MN.-Post Publishing, Minneapolis, 1984.

Delany, J.J. and Tobin, J.E. Dictionary of Catholic Bibliography-Doubleday, Garden City, NY 1961.

Reardon, James Michael. The Catholic Church in the Diocese of St. Paul. North Central Publishing, St. Paul, MN 1952.

Submitted by John England

HISTORICAL VIGNETTE

Continued

About this time two younger brothers arrived from Canada to work for him. Dionys (later called Denise and David) was listed as 21 in the 1860 census and Desiré (Moonshine Lake was originally named for him) as 17 years. They married cousins, Therissa and Filomena Corbine. Prosper Belille, son of Desiré, told me they called him "Grampa Canada."

The title on the land deeded to Belille by the government was dated November 1, 1858. He had probably entered a pre-emption application on this land many years before but could not get the title until it was surveyed so this does not date his settlement.

In their *Short History of Southern Sawyer County, W.N. and M.H. Clark* state that: "In 1835 or 1836, he (Belille) came south with a few Indians . . . and wintered at the juncture of the Court Oreilles and Chippewa Rivers, trading with the Indians." Most accounts date his settlement c/a 1840. One dated it at 1841 and since he was not listed in the 1840 census, that is probably correct. In 1890 a correspondent for the *Chippewa Times* stated that "Stephen McCann and team conveyed Mr. Belille and what effects he had to his new home, and since this is the first team of horses that ever went up the Chippewa River, I regret that I am unable to give the date when it occurred."

Charles Belille became the patron and patriarch of the stream of settlers from Quebec. The next Canadian to join the colony was William Waite who became his partner in logging operations, his close friend and his son-in-law when he married Esther Belille. Adams (who interviewed his son, Charles Waite, in 1899) reported that Waite came out in 1859. He acquired adjacent land on the north in 1875 and became a farmer. He had bought a forty across the river in 1863, apparently for logging, since the government surveyors mentioned "Belil's logging road" when they ran their lines through here.

Joseph Villiard was the next to join the colony. He came in 1863 and settled southeast of Belille and married Caroline Waite. His cousin, Alfred Villiard, followed ten years later and married Esther Waite.

In 1875 when George Warren carried the mail to "Lac Court O'Reilles," he stayed overnight at "Major Crow's" at the mouth of the Couderay River. He slept soundly but found that pine logs obstructed the river so he had to take the trail overland. Major Crow was Vincent Crow, a "half-breed," a veteran of the Civil War and generally known as Ondag — his Chippewa name which means Crow. He had married Quawish, a daughter of Charles Belille, so they would have to be considered as members of the French settlement. They later took allotments near Trading Post.

Pierre "French Pete" Lessard settled up the river a few miles in 1870 but neither he nor his brothers Paul and Adolph were considered members of the "settlement." They brought wives from Canada so did not "marry in."



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The Clarks interviewed Aristide "Joe" Galien and Joseph Russell when they wrote their "History." Both reported that they had come in 1875. Galien was a half-brother of William Waite. He married one of the younger daughters of old Charlie and took up the land just south of Belille and was still farming it at the time of the interview. He described to the Clarks how they lived in the early days.

Russell's place was just across the river and he made it his home until he died in 1925. He ran a stopping place there for a time, probably 1882 to 1884. Bill Milner loaned me a charge book for that period so that we could copy it. The names listed are all loggers up the Chippewa and the book probably was from this stopping place. An interesting fact in the well-written accounts is that when they were settled, "Payer" was scrawled across each — apparently French patios for "paid." Russell was from Quebec but he come by way of Maine and Michigan. Milner says that he spoke French so he was a member of the community. The census of 1880 and 1885 listed him as single — apparently he never married.

Peter "Polly" Cornelia settled along the river north of Belille in 1875 and married his daughter Manadis (Margaret). In later years he kept store at the bridge over the Chippewa.



John Raishe and Bruno DesRosiers

The eighties brought a flood of French-speaking settlers to the Belille community who married into the Belille bloodlines. George Willett (Ouilette) bought the Milton Harndon place at the crossing three miles south. He married Josephine Belille in 1886 and farmed there. John Baptiste Raishe married Sophia Waite and farmed just east of Belille. Meland Quersia married Mary Belille, Bruno DesRosiers married Mary Waite, Gus Waite married Rose Allard, and William Milner, Sr., married a daughter of William Waite. Also there was James Murphy and his wife Sophia, and Joseph Dupree and his wife Harriet. Others came by 1900: Jule Forgette, Olizum Barabeau and, across the river, Gideon Jacques and Leonard Beauchene.

125



Early Settler's Home ... The Jacques family homestead near Windfall Lake.

The Belille settlement built the first schoolhouse in the territory which was to become Sawyer County. From available records, it was presumed to have been built in 1877 beside the river between the homes of Belille and William Waite. It was later moved and used as home by Olizum Barabeau, then as a barn in 1916, and in 1954 the logs were moved to Hayward for an historical exhibit. However, they disappeared soon after that.



The Belille School - Sawyer County's First!

This French community also built a Catholic church which stood across the road from the Belille cemetery. The cemetery is the resting place of many of the pioneers and a plaque marking its uniqueness was installed in 1954 by the Sawyer County Historical Society.

End

Although the Vikings may have been Quebec's first European settlers, an Indian town, Stadacona, had long existed on part of the present site of Quebec when Jacques Cartier discovered and explored the St. Lawrence river in 1535. It was not until 1608 however, that Samuel de Champlain established a trading post in the area and named it Quebec. Twelve years later, Quebec's first settlement had a population of 60 persons.

er, Water, everywhere--
Heading the list of Quebec rivers, is the great St. Lawrence, 1900 miles long flowing almost the entire length of the Province.



Chez nous. It means "our house" or "our place", and it connotes warmth, congeniality, familiarity, and support.

LA SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE-FRANÇAISE believes in these things; we have based our foundation on them. Please come and see for yourself the many wonderful things this group can offer you.

The following Calendrier of Mid-west events for the summer should be of interest for any of you who will be traveling this summer or for those members who are not sure how they would like to spend some of their vacation, this might just give you a few ideas..... 23

- JUIN - RENDEZ-VOUS DE FORT DE CHARTRES, près Prairie du Rocher, ILLINOIS
2-3
- JUIN - ASSEMBLEE ANNUELLE DU CERCLE DE LA FLEUR-DE-LYS, Gary, INDIANA
6 à Wicker Park Social Center, Highland, à 19h30. Invités d'honneur: M. Luc Lapiere de la Délégation du Québec à Chicago et Mme Marie-Reine Mikesell Présidente de l'Alliance Franco-Américaine du Midwest.
- JUIN - LA SAINT-JEAN-BAPTISTE en soirée au Club La Salle, Warren, MICHIGAN
23 Le Club La Salle et la Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste conjointement. GRANDE TABAGIE! Souper canadien suivi d'une soirée canadienne. Bénédiction du feu de la Saint-Jean et des petits pains—deux coutumes ancestrales!
- JUIN - LA SAINT-JEAN-BAPTISTE au Hyatt Regency Hotel, centre-ville, Chicago, ILLINOIS
24 Parrainée par la Délégation du Québec à Chicago. Coctail & artistes québécois.
- JUIN - HERITAGE FESTIVAL 1634-1984 - A Celebration of Discovery, Green Bay, WISCONSIN
29 350^e ANNIVERSAIRE DE LA VENUE DE JEAN NICOLET à La Baye des Puants. La Bay Area Genealogical Society offre un certificat du 350^e anniversaire aux familles qui peuvent documenter leur résidence dans la région avant 1884. En faire la demande, après le 1er septembre, à la Société Généalogique ou à la Bibliothèque du Comté Brown. JUSQU'AU 8 JUILLET.
- JUILLET - LA BASTILLE sur un bateau de la Cie Wendella sur le lac Michigan, ILLINOIS
Parrainée par l'Alliance Française/Maison Française de Chicago, de 18h à 21h.
- JUILLET - KERMESSE DE LA BASTILLE sur la "rive gauche" de la Milwaukee, WISCONSIN
13-15 Festival Français célébrant Milwaukee's "French Connection". Balladez-vous sur le Grand Boulevard (avenue Jefferson, entre avenue Wisconsin et Kilbourn), parmi les terrasses de café, les marchés de fleurs, au son authentique de la musique française, divertissements de toutes sortes, art, danseurs, etc. Un Festival Français dans la tradition américaine...
- JUILLET - REUNION ANNUELLE DES ICARIENS à la Historical Society de Saint-Louis, MISSOURI
Ce sont les descendants des disciples d'Etienne Cabet venus de France pour établir une commune utopienne et socialiste (1849-1898) en Illinois et en Iowa. Déjeuner offert par la Société Française de Saint-Louis, Missouri.
- JUILLET - OLD FRENCH TOWN DAYS FESTIVAL à Monroe, MICHIGAN
27-29 et 200^e ANNIVERSAIRE DE LA FONDATION de RIVIERE AUX RAISINS-FRENCHTOWN-MONROE. Parrainé par la Monroe County Historical Society. La SSJB y tiendra un kiosque.
- AOÛT - FRENCH DAY au Iron Range Interpretative Centre, Chisholm, MINNESOTA
9 Musique, chorales, arts, gastronomie. Participation de la SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE.
- SEPT. - HAMMOND ETHNIC FESTIVAL au Morton High School Parking Lot, Hammond, INDIANA
8-9 LE CERCLE DE LA FLEUR DE LYS y tiendra un kiosque.
- SEPT. - 1760-RENDEZ-VOUS, de 10h00 à 17h00 à Eagle Creek Park, Indianapolis, INDIANA
8-9 "Bonjour Messieurs, Dames. Bienvenue au Pays des Illinois, dans la Province de Louisiane, en l'an de grâce du Seigneur 1758. Le drapeau des Etats-Unis ne flotte pas ici ce matin, car cette nation est encore à naître... Nous sommes les loyaux sujets de l'Empire français..." Ainsi sont accueillis les visiteurs du parc, ces jours-là... Parrainé par la ville d'Indianapolis.

To Pierre Girard and John Rivard who went to Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin, (my home town) to get another chapter of La Société going. It takes a lot of work and a lot of planning and time. Merci.

To Mrs. Walter Hebert of Chippewa Falls who was very responsive when asked to help recruit French-Canadians who may be interested in getting a chapter started there of our Society. She came up with many names, and addresses, so to you, we say un gros merci.

To Lucille Ingram, who continues in her support with the Chez Nous, proofreading etc. Thanks Lucille.

To Sister Ella and George LaBrosse who together put out the flyer for our picnic being held on the feast of St. John the Baptist. The art work was done by Sister Ella, so now we know who to go to when we need artistic talent. Merci to both of you.

To John England who has made a sustained effort to research and contribute articles for the Chez Nous. I would like to encourage more of you to contribute in like manner. Merci John.

To Carmelle Pompey who through all the trials of moving and starting a new job, has been faithful in sending us material for her column. We enjoy seeing a little bit of Canada thru her eyes.

CONGRATULATIONSto the newly elected board members. They are as follows:
Marie Bouley, Magi Charbonneau, André Dube, Jerry Forchette, Pierre Girard, Louis Ritchot, Jon Trambley and Pat Stegbauer.

Due to the fact that some of our board members are in Canada for the festivities, we were unable to meet. We will choose and announce officers in the August flyer.

LATE NEWS BULLETIN ...Murphy's Landing will celebrate French-Canadian Days from July 14 to July 20.

CARMELLE'S CORNER-Je reviens Chez-moi

24

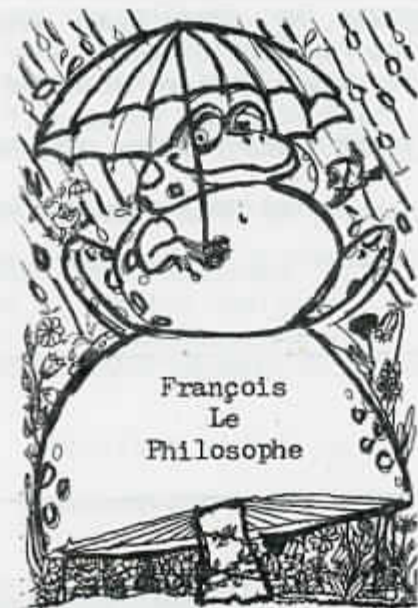
I am completely emersed in the French culture. I work in Old Montreal where the atmosphere is folklorique, with the outside café terrasse, the narrow streets, the horse and buggies and crowds of people everywhere. We are now starting to see a lot of tourists, sight-seeing and enjoying the French surroundings.

For the past month I have been working for Le Journal des Affaires, as a publicity representative, which puts me in contact with a very sophisticated class of business people. I am getting to know what lies ahead for the Québécois. The economy is suffering but there seems to be a definite comback for Québec. Political issues are kept at a very low profile. People are very dissatisfied with the Parti Québécois and a change of party is also predicted for the next election.

This summer will be a great time to visit Québec, since a lot of events are organized to celebrate the 350 anniversary of Jacques Cartier's discovery of Canada.

Have a great summer everyone.

Carmelle Pompey



To KNOW is nothing at all,
To IMAGINE is everything.

SALES SUB-COMMITTEE
FESTIVAL OF NATIONS 1984

ASSETS
MAY 1, 1984

25

SALES:		\$2,378.25	CASH	\$1,333.83
EXPENSES:			INVENTORY	1,165.06
	Merchandise	\$1,319.14		
	Entry fee	250.00	TOTAL	\$2,498.89
	Materials	67.99		
	Sales tax	55.22		
	Total expenses	1,692.35		
				Pat Jacoby
PROFIT:		\$ 685.90		



THINGS TO SEE AND THINGS TO DO

July 14, Voyageur Days at Crane Lake, MN
July 28-29 Fur Trade Rendezvous at Ft. Snelling, MN
July 28-29 Ely, MN, Canoe Derby which also includes the Voyageur Singers.
July 29, Fur Trade History at Grand Rapids, MN called "A visit with the Voyageur."
Aug. 10-11-12 Grand Portage, MN, Rendezvous Days.
Aug. 12, Morton, MN "Fur Trade in Minnesota."
 For more information on the above call 296-5029.

"What you inherit from your forebearers isn't yours unless you do something with it. Only your creativeness moment by moment can turn them into account."

Goethe

Sunshine Club. Lucille Ingram will be sending cards or flowers to those members who are ill, have just lost a loved one, or to recognize other family occasions. Please call Lucille if you know of anyone who would benefit from this service. 533-0890

LA SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE-FRANÇAISE meets regularly on the first MONDAY of each month at 7:30 in the school cafeteria of St. Luke's Church near Summit and Lexington in St. Paul. LET'S take pride in our Société, LET'S volunteer our services and talents, LET'S GROW.

From
La Société Canadienne-Française
4655 University Avenue N.E.
Minneapolis, MN 55421

Dick Bernard
2014 First Ave. #6
Hibbing, MN 55746

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chez nous

Newsletter of SEPTEMBER 1984

La société canadienne-française

VOL. 6. NO. 4.

How Does Our Garden Grow?

WE ARE ABOUT TO START ANOTHER GREAT AND EXCITING YEAR.....

4120 Rue Vincent
Burrhead P.O.
49J 1W9
1-514-620-6075

I think our Society can be likened to a garden in that without hard work, tilling of the soil and weeding out the negatives, can we reap the fruits of a growing Society.

The young and the not so young, must contribute towards the work load regardless of how major or minor the task; it is very important to work as a team. Then and only then will we prosper and move ahead.

The members of the board encourage all of you to announce your ideas to them. The board members are only representatives of you people, so talk to them, tell them where you think we should be going and how you think we should go about getting there. LET'S MAKE OUR MEETINGS PRODUCTIVE AND A FUNTIME FOR ALL.

Jerry Forchette
Editor



ELECTION-NEWS-1984

Our Fall meeting of September 10 is drawing near. The Board has met this summer, and the following people have been elected to the Board:

- Pat Stegbauer
- Jon Tremblay
- Pierre Girard
- Louis Ritchot
- Marie Bouley
- Andre Dubé
- Jerry Forchette
- Magi Charbonneau

Officers elected are:

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| President | Louis Ritchot |
| Vice President | Pierre Girard |
| Second Vice Pres. | Jon Tremblay |
| Treasurer | Magi Charbonneau |
| Secretary | Marie Bouley |
| Corp. Secretary | Evelyn Lund |

Committee Chairpersons:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Public Relations | Jerry Forchette |
| Cultural-Education | Marie Trepanier |
| Historical | John England |
| Membership | Geo. LaBrosse |
| Sales Committee | Pat Jacoby |
| Sub. Committee of Cultural-Educ. | Pat Stegbauer |

Also, please note, that we will be meeting in a different place this year. We will be once again meeting in St Louis's Church at 506 Cedar in St. Paul. We will meet in the basement as before, and most of you familiar with the parking area etc. The time is 7:30 p.m.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING ALL OF YOU AGAIN.

THATS ENTERTAINMENT

Pat Stegbauer will speak to us at our September meeting about the history of French Canadian folk music and song, AND, our very own singers, Les Canadiens Errants, will be in concert.

COME BRING YOUR FRIENDS AND ENJOY

THIS WEED IS DEAD AND GONE
WHAT REMAINS IS AN IMAGE OF
WHAT IT WAS.
PRAY OUR IMAGE IS AS BEAUTIFUL.



LA SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE-FRANCAÏSE meets regularly on the first MONDAY of each month at 7:30 in the basement of St. Louis's Church at 506 Cedar in St. Paul. LET'S take pride in our Societe, LET'S volunteer our services and talents, LET'S GROW.



chez nous

Newsletter of NOVEMBRE—DECEMBRE 1984

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La société canadienne-française

VOL. 6 NO. 3

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS FROM OUR PRESIDENT AND OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

note de l'éditeur

Christ Is Born In Bethlehem



There were some shepherds in that part of the country who were spending the night in the fields, taking care of their flocks. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone over them. They were terribly afraid, but the angel said to them, "Don't be afraid! I am here with good news for you, which will bring great joy to all the people. This very day in David's town your Savior was born—Christ the Lord! And this is what will prove it to you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

Suddenly a great army of heaven's angels appeared with the angel, singing praises to God:

"Glory to God in the highest
heaven,
and peace on earth to those
with whom he is pleased!"

Luke 2:8-14



JOYEUX NOËL ET BONNE ET HEUREUSE ANNÉE

In December it will have been 1 year since I took over the editing of the Chez Nous. It has been a busy but productive year..

There are a number of things I need to mention here at this time; I would like to thank all who have sent material in for the newsletter and also Leroy DuBois for his continued help in the mailing of the Chez Nous. It is tedious and takes lots of time and work, merci Leroy.

Another thing, we need any and all of your material that you may have from the early days of the Society, such as the first Chez Nous' that came out, any photos of parades, or the Pea Soup Days etc. In other words any pertinent material that should be put into the historical file to be saved for future generations. Pierre Gerard is handling this and you may call him at 593-1175 or send to 3146 Kent Ave. North, Minneapolis, MN 55427

There are tentative plans being made for a French-Canadian Heritage festival in the fall of 1985 and we would really appreciate being able to display the quilt that is now in the making. It is slow and arduous work and we would appreciate it if we could get more volunteers to help with the quilt in order to help this process along. It would be a great asset to the festival.

Cont.

I would also like to mention that we had a letter from Tom LaForest of the LaForest International Service stating that John England sent him a Chez Nous with the LaForest flyer in it and he was most impressed with our newsletter and requested that we enroll him in our chapter. Welcome to you Mr. LaForest.

We will have a new feature in the newsletter which is a specific area set aside for advertisements (business or personal). A business card size ad for 1 issue would be \$4.00 or \$24.00 for a year which would be in 6 issues. For a small personal ad such as a garage sale or any personal item for 1 time only would be \$1.00. This will be a convenience for you and added revenue for the Society and it will benefit us all.

May you have a happy and blessed Christmas.

Jerry Forchette, Editor



NEWS FROM HIBBING

The Range chapter of La Société met on October 24 at the Hibbing High School.

A dozen folks gathered to hear Pat Poirier Ciochetto talk about growing up in Quebec City. Pat also related some fascinating stories about Quebec's French Canadian traditions, legends and superstitions. Many in the audience could relate to some of the stories from their own childhood.

The Range Chapter is growing, but still looking for new members. We have 16 paid members and an active program.

Readers of Chez Nous who have French-Canadian friends or relatives in the Iron Range should refer them to Dick Bernard, 2014 First Ave, Apt. 6, Hibbing, MN or ask them to call toll free 1-800-622-7767.

Dick Bernard

NEWS FROM ST CLOUD

The October 18 meeting of the St. Cloud Chapter of La Société Canadienne-Française consisted of an interesting visit to the Stearns County Heritage Center in St. Cloud. After viewing the exhibits of the new center, Dr. Julian Plante presented a program about the Hill Monastic Library based on St. John's University. Dr. Plante is our Historic Committee Chairman and a board director. This library has one of the world's greatest collections of microfilmed monastic manuscripts gathered from monasteries in Europe and Asia. More than 18 million pages have been filmed including papyri from the 3rd century B.C.

Under the leadership of John Langlais, the chapter has 36 memberships and over 50 members. At the meeting November 15 the membership voted to cooperate and support the French-Canadian Heritage Day planned for the fall of 1985 in the Twin Cities. Diane Olson, Cultural Chairperson, has designed the official costume for the ladies to be worn on special occasions. The men will wear the voyageur costume.

On December 7, we will have our annual Christmas Party. The party will take place in the party room at 1340 S. 9th Avenue. A singing group is being organized for future events. The membership has obtained the French Calendar published by the Alliance Franco-Américaine du Midwest. It will be on sale at the party.

John T. Rivard



ENTERTAINMENT=ENTERTAINMENT=ENTERTAINMENT

For our general meeting in January/85 we will have Pat Stegbauer's brother Jim, who is a professional photographer to present us with slides of Pope John Paul II on his trip to Canada, along with a running commentary. This should prove very exciting.

In February, we will have our very own John T. Rivard, Official Voyageur du Minnesota. John always has something entertaining informative for us. We are most fortunate to have him, it will be a joy.

Official Vogageur of Minnesota

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FRENCH-CANADIAN HERITAGE DAY PLANNED

In the Fall of 1985, the Société is planning a Heritage Day of state-wide significance. The Heritage Day will be proclaimed by Governor Perpich and will consist of two events, namely, a festival of music, art, crafts, genealogy, exhibits and cultural programs with an Award Banquet; and a Conference on French-Americans in the Midwest sponsored by the French Department of Languages of Moorhead College.

The proposal now before the Société is to conduct a festival-type day with booths for food, sale of arts and crafts, a cabaret type of singing and dancing, a slide show of history, bingo in French, strolling historic figures like Radisson, Hennepin, etc., an evening concert of national significance like Lewis Reid or some outstanding group from Canada. The evening banquet would be an award evening. The Société would like to honor outstanding French-Canadians in the state in different fields, namely, medicine, law, industry, public service, teaching, authors, artists and sports.

The festival would take place in or near Riverplace. This site has great French historical significance as Hennepin discovered St. Anthony Falls in 1680 and the first settlers around the Falls were French.

The date of the festival would be coordinated with the above Conference in late September or early October. The Heritage Day Committee of Geo. LaBrosse, Andre Dubé and John Rivard will enlist other committees from the Twin Cities Chapter and the chapters from St. Cloud, Hibbing and Red Lake Falls.

Watch this column for further developments about Heritage Day in 1985.

John T. Rivard



UNE PETITE LEGENDE CANADIENNE FRANCAISE

Le Canadien Français est un être spirituel, religieux, superstitieux, et totalement aimable. Ses légendes sont pleines de vigueur, d'imagination, de poésies et d'horreur.

La chasse-galerie, un immense canot traverse le firmament un de ces beau soir d'été. C'est le Diable qui tient l'aviron! Les gens ont peur, ils se cachent dans leurs maisons - c'est peut-être pour eux qu'il cherche! Ou c'est peut-être le pauvre Pierre, hivernant dans les bois qui, prit d'une envie terrible de revoir une seule fois son amie de coeur, se vendit à l'esprit maléfique, pour s'y faire conduire.

Que les hivers sont longues pour ces anciens coureurs de bois, voyageurs et trappeurs. Qu'il fait froids et qu'ons s'ennuient. Ils se hâtent de retrouver leurs familles et leurs amis. Le printemps n'arrivera t'il jamais? On se vendrait au diable pour se retrouver chez nous!

A LITTLE FRENCH CANADIAN LEGEND

The French Canadian is a witty, religious, superstitious and totally likable person. His legends are full of liveliness, imagination, poetry and horror.

The "chasse-galerie", a huge canoe, crosses the sky some beautiful summer evening. It is the Devil who steers!

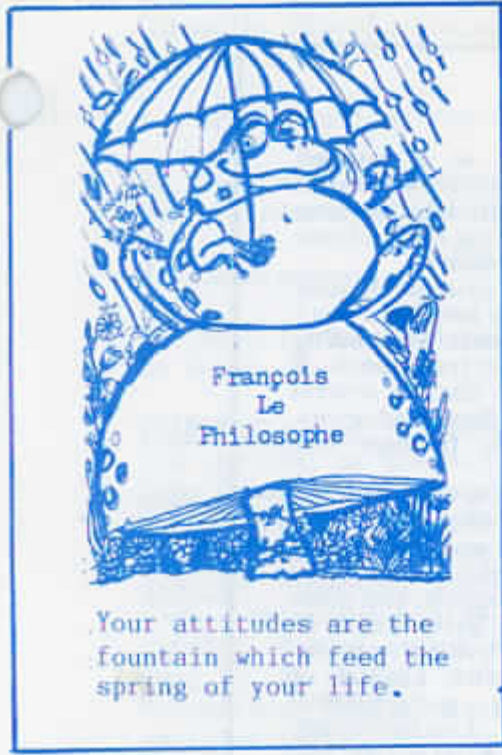
People are frightened and hide in their houses. He is perhaps searching for them! Or perhaps it is poor Pierre, wintering in the deep forests, who, seized with a terrible longing to see his true love just one more time, has sold himself to the evil one in order to be taken to her.

The winters are long for the early woodsmen, voyageurs and trappers. It is so cold and they are so lonely. They are eager to see their loved ones and friends again. Will the springtime never come? It's enough to sell one's self to the Devil just to be home again.

Patricia P. Ciochetto
Box 350
Side Lake, MN 55781

This is the first article
recived of this nature from
one of our outlying chapters,
UN GROS MERCI, Patricia.

Christmas Story



recette

FRENCH-CANADIAN PEA SOUP

- 1 electric roaster
- 4 lbs. split green peas
- 3 gal. water
- 3 1/2 lb. ground picnic ham
- 1 whole picnic ham bone
- 1/3 lb. salt pork (ground)
- 1/2 cup ham base
- 1 cup barley
- 1 lb. carrots, grated
- 1 lb. celery, chopped fine
- 2 lbs. onions (ground)
- 1 T. black pepper
- salt to taste
- Simmer 4 hrs.

Now fat rind of ham in pot.

Shirley & Andy Belisle
of Somerset, Wisc.

Christmas, the last feast day in the year . . . Every house would put up a "creche", sometimes a very humble one, simulating the manger in which the Christ Child lay. At dusk my mother always made quite a ceremony of lighting the candle in the window — to light Him on His way.

The house was always decorated with boughs, garlands and wreaths of greens, but the Christmas tree was never trimmed until the small children were fast asleep on Christmas Eve. We used to pin up our stockings and in the morning find them filled with fruit, candy and nuts, but if one had been naughty he would find only a small potato in the foot of his stocking . . .

Everyone went to Midnight Mass, and afterwards there was a "Reveillons" at home, everyone bringing along a friend. There would be hot, rich oyster stew to open the supper, then fresh "tete fromagee" (*head cheese*) with bread and butter, and for dessert, fritters cooked in maple syrup served with hot black coffee. Not until the wee hours of the morning did the celebrants go to bed, but the children, who had slept all night, were up early to see what "le bon Nicolas" had brought them. Mornings were spent in delivering gifts to neighbors and friends nearby . . . In the late afternoon the festive dinner was served with either a goose or turkey, and for dessert a flaming plum pudding . . . The singing of Christmas carols, with all members of the family joining in, closed the day.

And here we are, ready for another New Year's Day, filled with blessings, kissings, and visiting . . .

—By Donalda LaGrandeur



FEUX DE JOIE - Fires Of Joy

In Louisiana things are done just a little bit different, and Christmas is no exception. In the river parishes of Ascension, St. James and St. John the Baptist, located just north-west of New Orleans, Christmas is celebrated with the spectacular "Bonfires on the Levee", the traditional *feux de joie*.

Although bonfires are found as far south on the Mississippi River as Jefferson Parish and as far north as West Baton Rouge, the largest concentration of Yuletide blazes is in Litcher, Gramercy and Union. In one three mile stretch the strange teepee structures rise to as high as 30 feet, and are as close as just 100 feet apart.

Each year in the weeks preceding Christmas groups of people from the river parishes erect these wooden towers, just as their ancestors did over a hundred years ago. Although no one can pinpoint just when the first levee bonfire was ignited, it's fairly certain the original Acadian settlers started the tradition.

But just why the bonfires were first constructed, is anybody's guess. One widely held view is that the fires were originally built to light the way for Papa Noel—Santa Claus.

Others, however, will contend that the fires were lit to show the way for ships on the river so they could arrive in time for Christmas. Some folks swear that their grandfather said the fires showed the way for early settlers so they could attend midnight mass.

Construction of the bonfires starts after the levee inspection in November, and are in full swing by Thanksgiving. Entire families search the river batture, and the forests for material, driftwood, dead tree limbs, reeds, bamboo and sugar cane stalks. In past years, old rubber tires were also ingredients of the bonfires, but have been outlawed by general consent thankfully because of the fumes they give off.

Traditionally, structures are built like teepees, with three, four, five, and even six sides at the base,

gradually tapering to a pointed top. But many innovative bonfire architects are now building "les feux de joie" to resemble log cabins, boats and even the superdome!

Although the construction is quite simple, a lot of time and hard work goes into these projects. Depending on the size of the framework, it can take from one day, to several weeks to complete these endeavors, initiated by clubs, families and groups of kids.

The bonfires are always finished at least one week before Christmas eve. Like trophies on a shelf, the structures sit on the levee to be admired by their creators, and those that travel the old River Road. In St. James Parish (which was declared "The Bonfire Capital of The World," by gubernatorial proclamation) the Litcher-Gramercy Jaycee awards \$100 for the best constructed bonfire, so interest grows each year.

Come Christmas eve, the Christmas pyres are ignited beginning just after dusk and continuing for two hours. But the fires aren't lit at random as they once were, but under the supervision of the Litcher-Gramercy Volunteer Fire Department, who see that the fires remain safe. Fire officials delay ignition of the bonfires if wind conditions aren't favorable, or if it is raining. If all is right a fire truck sounds it's alarm and drives up and down the River Road to signal that it's alright to light "les feux de joie."

The bonfires burn for hours and can be seen up and down the river for miles, in what can be described as one of Louisiana's most breathtaking events. Those who worked on the bonfires usually spend Christmas eve watching their work go up in smoke. Many pack their Christmas eve supper and celebrate the Yuletide from the back of a truck with their fellow workers.

Even though the face of South Louisiana has rapidly changed and many of the traditional customs have disappeared, thankfully "les feux de joie" remain as a reminder of the Acadian heritage.

—Jeff Hannusch

I will be facilitating a trip to the above two cities through Southwest Community School. Estimated tour cost based on 24 people is \$521. That includes:

1. Accommodations for 3 nights in Montreal, 2 nights in Quebec City.
2. Two full breakfasts, 3 continental breakfasts and 1 dinner at a French gourmet restaurant.
3. Sightseeing.
4. R.T. airfare and taxes from Minneapolis to Montreal, from Montreal airport to hotel, Montreal to Québec by bus and back to Montreal airport.

ITINERARY: June 7, leave 8:30 a.m., met at airport, brought to hotel. and the rest of the day to self.

June 8, After full breakfast, transfer by subway to olympic site for guided tour. Afternoon guided bus tour, underground shopping.

June 9, Independent activities.

June 10, Breakfast proceeded by private motorcoach to Québec, arrive before noon. Afternoon walking tour of old Québec, musée du fort, tour of the citadel, dinner at gourmet restaurant.

June 11, After full breakfast, guided tour of St. Anne de Beaupré Basilica, Montmorency Falls, roadside oven stop for slice of homemade bread with apple butter.

June 12, French style breakfast, remainder of morning free to explore. Depart Québec 1:30, return in time for early evening flight, arrive at approximately 9 p.m. in the Twin Cities.

Maximum number -- 30 people, Minimum 15 people.

Contact Southwest Community School in order to sign up for this trip.

Telephone: 627-2463

Address: 3414 W. 47th Street, Mpls. MN 55410.

Barbara Yerich (I teach at Southwest High School and Southwest Community School). I will go along on the trip as an educator, but there will be trained guides who speak English who will be guiding us on the sightseeing tours.

Barbara Yerich





A CHRISTMAS PUDDING

Take some Human Nature, as you find it, the commonest variety will do; put a little Graciousness behind it, add a lump of Charity, or two.

Squeeze in just a drop of Moderation, half as much Frugality, or less; add some very fine Consideration, strain off all of Poverty's distress.

Pour some milk of Human Kindness in it, put in all the Happiness you can; stir it up with

Laughter every minute, season with Goodwill Toward Every Man.

Set it on the fire of Heart's Affection, leave it till the jolly bubbles rise; sprinkle it with Kisses; for Confection, sweeten with a look of Loving Eyes.

Flavor it with Children's Merry Chatter, frost it with the snow of wintry dells; place it on a holly-garnished platter, and serve it with the Song of Christmas Bells!

—Anon

LA SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE-FRANÇAISE meets regularly on the first Monday of each month at 7:30 in the Parish hall of St. Louis's Church at 506 Cedar in St. Paul, MN. LET'S take pride in our Society, LET'S volunteer our services and talents, LET'S GROW.

(ATTENTION: JANUARY MEETING WILL BE ON JANUARY 7-85)



JOYEUX NOËL! BONNE ANNÉE!

