



chez nous

NEWSLETTER OF JUIN-JUILLET, 1990 VOL. 11 NO. 6

La société canadienne-française

Editor: Dick Bernard

Co-Editor: Jerry Marie Forchette

A TRIP TO PEMBINA by Fr. Joseph Goiffon*

ED. NOTE: Sometime after 1881 Father Joseph Goiffon sat down to write his memories, probably at the Parish house at either Centerville or Little Canada MN (both communities are now St. Paul suburbs; then they would have been distinctly rural communities).

Born and raised and trained to the Priesthood in France. Fr. Goiffon had arrived in St. Paul on November 7, 1857, to serve the Diocese which then "was two or three or four times larger than all of France, and had no more than 15 Priests" (p. 2).

St. Paul and Minnesota were then still in their infancy.

Fr. Goiffon's memoirs talk about numerous events. Here we reprint exactly as translated, his recollections about his first trip from St. Paul to Pembina (now N.D.) in August, 1858.

In this article he talks about the famed Red River Ox Carts, the "charrettes of the Red River", which were for years the standard of transport on the prairies and woodlands between present day Winnipeg and St. Paul. While these carts travelled many different routes it is probable that the trip here described crossed the Red Lake River at Huot, near present day Red Lake Falls.

Read on and enjoy the reminiscences of a marvelous person.

"We were leaving St. Paul about August 8th 1858. Our caravan was composed of a brother of the Holy Family of Belley, brother Timothy, who had spent a year or two with Mr. Belcours in order to act as his servant; of the sister Superior from a new religious community that Mr. Belcours was trying to establish among the Metis of these countries. She was coming back from Montreal

A Note from the Editor: In his outline on the voyageurs, Dr. Virgil Benoit commented on history: "What we call up from the past, what we choose to remember, or what we represent publicly indicates a lot about how we see ourselves." Avril-Mai 1990 Chez Nous

In this issue we have two perceptions of history of relations with the American Indian - from Father Goiffon, and from the American Indian Movement.

Father Goiffon comments in his memoirs about the American Indians with whom he lived in the 1850's. In the accompanying article the comments are brief. There will be further comments in upcoming issues. His comments are doubtless based on what he had learned about Indians before he began his pioneer adventure.

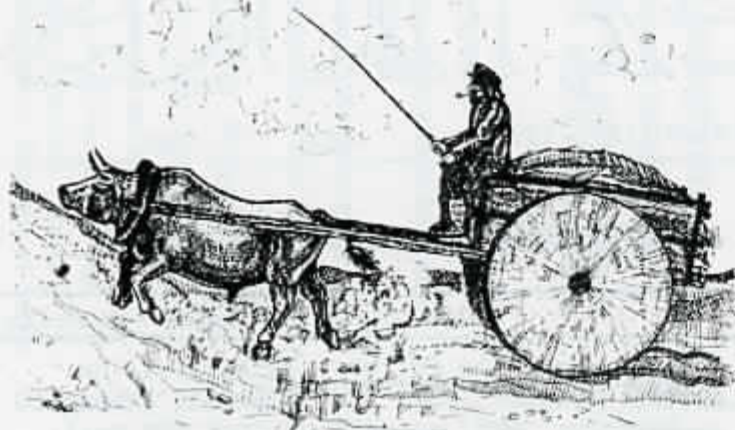
The latter representation, from the program of the May 25-27, 1990, Heart of the Earth Contest Pow Wow in Minneapolis, presents a distinctly different view of colonizing than that presented by Father Goiffon.

We hope the opinions expressed are of interest and serve to spark some debate amongst our readers.

bringing with her two novices who had been sent to Montreal to be instructed and also to form themselves to the real religious life. There was also a Metis, French Cree, a very honorable man named Louis Marion of St. Boniface, who was also the step father of Mr. Kittson. I have forgotten the names of the others who composed our little caravan. The Rev. Mr. Ravoux had given me, for my journey, the old buggy of Monsignor Cretin. But as I happened to have fairly good legs, I thought more suitable to give the use of the buggy to the sister superior and her two novices, and I travelled on foot during the entire journey of about 500 miles. This journey was to be

continued next page

made with oxen or with horses who very often could not follow the oxen without making them trot to keep up with them.



As the country of the Red River was only inhabited by savages and a few Metis hunters, who had no more industries than the savages, it was necessary to come to St. Paul for provisions of clothing and food as it was the nearest place where they could sell fur pelts and provide themselves with the necessary things for the year. This voyage, in which a horse could draw about a thousand pounds, lasted ordinarily about two months and $\frac{1}{2}$: a month to come down to St. Paul, and a month to return to Pembina with 12 to 15 days rest for the animals in St. Paul and to sell their pelts and buy their merchandise and above all to patch up their carts which had been made in a wild country only with the help of a hatchet and a draw knife and some time, of a plane, and made of green wood, and consequently could not always be very solid, especially after 5 or 6 years of service, having nothing in summer and winter but the sky as protection. These carts well known under the name of "Charrettes of the Red River" were very high so they could cross the rivers which had no bridges, the lakes and the large muddy marshes. They were always made with two wheels. The hubs were ordinarily made of white elm and the spokes and rims of oak as well as the axle. The iron did not enter in the fabrication of these charrettes. The bolts and the nails were replaced by wooden pins.

The harnesses of the horses and the oxen were not less simple. They were made of buffalo hides which, not being cured, were strong enough when it was nice weather, but when these hides were wet, by the rain, they became soft and stretched, and that obliged our voyageurs to stop and to put their harness under cover. The oxen were harnessed single file like the horses and

with collars, only the collars of the oxen were made differently. One had only to pull out two little wooden pins to release them; it was quickly done.

Happy the time when man knew how to get along without many things and be satisfied with just necessities.

Amongst the nations who believe themselves to have become civilized one is obliged to announce their approach by the use of bells; the Savages and our good Metis knew better. Not greasing the hubs of their wheels, their carts were heard at 2 or 3 miles distance.

During the travel the simplicity was not less admirable. To make the journey of 500 or 600 miles, our animals, used to frugality, knew how to content themselves with the grass of the prairies. Oats or corn were not known to them.

Their drivers did not nourish themselves any better; a cup of black tea with a few pieces of dried meat, or a piece of dried buffalo, was sufficient to them. Bread was unknown to them. When they had a little flour, they mixed it with the buffalo meat and a little water, which we called Rababou.

The kitchen utensils were not much in the way. Ordinarily a tea pot to make tea, a frying pan and a knife were all that was needed. To eat the meat we used ordinarily Adam and Eve forks - - the fingers, or a piece of pointed wood.

When bed time arrives, the bed is soon made. Each person wraps himself in a blanket or in a buffalo hide, to protect himself from the cold in winter, or to defend himself from the mosquitoes in summer. Each person's arm served as a pillow. In the morning, spending no time at their toilet, they start en route. And so passed happily the days of the week.

When Sunday arrived, we were in the plain. The second and third commandments of the Church tell us to hear Mass. The founder of the new religious community, two novices, all filled with the love of God, a brother who was to be the living model for the poor Metis, a priest sent from the Cathedral of St. Paul, not only to preach religion but also to give to his companions and parishioners the means to practice it, could they be indifferent and pass up a Sunday traveling the same as any other day of the week?

We all wished to sanctify the Lord's day, by hearing the Holy Mass. But what were we to do in the middle of a large prairie, resembling a vast ocean, no altar, no

continued next page

FATHER GOIFFON from page two church. A moment of reflection was sufficient to bring us to a decision. We looked above us, all around us, and we were surprised to find ourselves in a more beautiful, richer and better made temple than that which Solomon had, in olden days, constructed. The vault seemed to reach the sky, the pillars were innumerable, the temple was a beautiful rug of grass, ornamented by thousand of different flowers. The church was found, the sun was bright, and the day could not have been more calm. Nothing but an altar was lacking. The difficulty was nothing. The Priest, having served as sacristan and master of ceremonies in several seminaries in France, had learned to improvise altars. He had with him everything he needed to say the mass, and also some beautiful ornaments. Quickly he erected a pretty little altar behind a wagon, and there he is, saying the mass, served by brother Timothy of the Holy Family of the brothers of the diocese of Belley, in France. The mass ended, we all thanked the Grand Master of the universe for having done us the favor of being able to adore Him in person, in that grand prairie, a master piece of His hands.

What we did that first Sunday served as a model for the other Sundays until we reach St. Joseph de Pimbina. . end of our journey.

After having taken a little nourishment, we started on our journey, counting on the protection of God who had blessed us at mass. We were not mistaken in our hope, for we had a very happy journey; no sickness, no accident.

It was not the same for a caravan of Metis who preceded us by a few days. I walked always ahead of the wagons with my companion, Mr. Louis Marion, thinking of no danger whatever, when, all at once, at a turning in the woods, we find a hat of a Metis covered with blood. It was the hat of one of the men of the caravan that preceded us. They had been attacked by a band of savage Sioux who had killed this poor fellow and raised his scalp. At that time the Sauteux** and the Metis were at open war and had been for a long time. It was against the Sioux. It was to the one who could take the other by surprise, and kill him and scalp him (that is to say remove all the skin of the hair) a sign of triumph.

In this long journey of 500 miles we had to cross, without bridges, many rivers, with our wagons loaded, but arriving on the shore of the great river of Red Lake, we found it running full banks: what to do? It was large and too deep to cross the wagons; the

current would have taken everything: wagons, merchandises, horses, engulfed all. New travelers, like myself, would have been very much embarrassed. Our Metis, our drivers, were not. Quickly they unharnessed the horses and the oxen and made them swim across; then one of them took a long rope, attaching it to his waist, and swam across following the horses; arriving on the other side, he acts as ferry man. Those who remain on the opposite side take the other end of the cord and attach it to one of the wagons, which being completely made of wood and not having even the weight of an iron nail, floated on the water like ordinary wood, attach to it another cord and throw the wagon in the water. He who had crossed to the other side of the river, pulls the rope and those who remained on the opposite side ??? their rope ? the wagon, supported by these two ropes, arrives easily across the river. The two ropes are detached from the wagon, fastened together and drawn back across the river to be attach to another wagon, and a third and fourth until all the wagon have been cross. The wagons across, the question is now how to transport the merchandizes and the voyagers, and especially the voyagers who ordinarily knew little about swimming. Having neither boat, nor canoe, nor ferry boat the Metis find a way: they go and cut four branches, make them in a long square by fastening them at each end, taking a buffalo hide not tanned, or a thick cotton cloth they attach it solidly at the four corners and thus make a bark in which they cross all their merchandize with the aid of cords the same as they did with their wagon. The merchandize across to the other side, now come the turn of the voyagers who can not swim. It was thus that these dames and your servant crossed the Red Lake river for the first time.

PLEASE NOTE LAST PAGES OF THIS ISSUE FOR DETAILS ON THE HUOT CROSSING CHAUTAQUA. Perhaps you can relive with Father Goiffon the crossing of the Red Lake River.

When we arrived at another river of which I do not remember the name, and of which the shores were too muddy, our men were obliged to unharness the horses, make them swim across, and then take their place and draw the wagons themselves. (That reminds me of what Monseignor Tacher told me, that returning from Rome, after having been made Bishop was obliged to attach himself to the wagon with the other voyagers and drag

continued next page

FATHER GOIFFON from page three

them for miles in the mud with the water up to his waist.)

At last I arrived at St. Joseph of Pimbina, which was the capital city of Dakota. It was a town about a mile long, spread on the left bank of the Pimbina river, about 35 to 40 miles from its mouth and dotted, from place to place, with tiny homes of logs of a single story and covered with hay mixed with clay."

Fr. Goiffon's story to be continued in subsequent issues of Chez Nous.

* - Fr. Goiffon's memoirs were apparently written in French, and the typewritten version quoted here notes that the translation was done by Mr. B. Charlotte Huot of St. Paul. This story comes to us courtesy of Lois Tuckner of Woodbury MN. The oxcart illustration on page two is from *Sous La Pleine Lune D'automne* of l'Association des Francais du Nord (AFRAN-Red Lake Falls MN) Vol 2 #1 October, 1986.

** - presumably Fr. Goiffon is referring here to the tribe we now know as Chippewa or Ojibway

LA FÊTE DE ST. JEAN-BAPTISTE
by John England

All nations have a patron saint, thanks be to God, who is their special protector and intercessor. Our Belgian cousins have St. Joseph, the Italians have St. Catherine of Siena and St. Francis, and France, of course, has the intrepid Ste Jeanne D'arc. But we French Canadians have a special patron, St. Jean-Baptiste, a prophet and martyr. He is also our Lords' cousin, and the French Canadians seem to have a deep affection for Jesus' relatives in much the same way that we love our own family members. It goes with the territory: it's part of our culture. Saints such as St. Jean-Baptiste, La Sainte Vierge Marie, Joseph and Anne are among the most venerated. Shrines in Quebec to Sts Joseph and Anne are witness to this intense devotion. The largest church in the world dedicated to St. Joseph is located in Montreal, along with a lot of Frenchies who answer to "Jean-Baptiste."

He has left an indelible mark on the Quebecois: there are countless towns, churches, sons and societies named in his honor. Just about every parish had a statue of him (when statues were popular). And who among us is not related to at least one Canadian with the name Jean-Baptiste? He is, indeed, a saint with whom the French Canadians can identify, a saint who breeches no nonsense, a saint who zeroes in on reality and keeps us on the right

ANNUAL FRENCH CANADIAN PICNIC
BOOM ISLAND PARK, MINNEAPOLIS, MN
NOON TO 6:00 P.M., SUNDAY JULY 15, 1990

Pot luck from noon to 1:30 p.m, with singing along and games. There will be a 1½ hour cruise on the Anson Northrup Sidewheeler with boarding at 1:45 from Boom Island Park. Snacks and drinks not included but available on board.

TICKETS:

Adults, \$7.50 - Seniors
Seniors \$6.50
Children under 12, \$5.00

Advance tickets - 789-2214
Day of picnic if available - same price

Pot luck - phone 776-5087

track. Jean-Baptiste tells us to mend our ways, a fact we don't always want to hear. But his name and feast day, 24 Juin, are heard often.

It seems that the origins of the feast are rooted in ancient Gaul. The pagan Celts, Franks and Romans used to light bonfires to thank their gods for the summer solstice. Our primitive cousins associated fire with the origin of life.

After Gaul became a Christian nation, the Church used the feast day of St. Jean-Baptiste to coincide with the local customs. This was a way of swaying the locals, the man on the street, away from the heathen practices. And the French adopted dear St. Jean with great fervor while retaining the tradition of the bonfire. It was pagan in origin, but it became very Christian in scope. Indeed, during the middle ages cats were burned in these bonfires because they were thought to be agents of the devil and damnation. Knowing the religious vigor of our ancestors I wonder if there were enough mousers left in France to make the smallest of meows on the 25th! Why, back in 1572, the burning of these demonic felines was done to honor his royal highness Henri IV. And as with all feasts, preparations began well in advance. Young lads from the villages would go from house to house to gather kindling for the fires called feux de joie.

The feast of St. Jean-Baptiste emigrated to Quebec with our ancestors and it has been celebrated since the founding of the colony in the early 1600's, according to Benjamin Sulte an historian and writer. Another writer, Burnouf, stated that in order to grasp the magnitude of the feast one should travel through the villages and see the grandiose bonfires, the dancing and shouts of joy on 24

continued next page

St. Jean-Baptiste, continued

June. The fires actually formed a chain of lights along the St. Lawrence River from village to village. As recently as 1978 there were more than 15,000 feux de joie in honor of St. Jean-Baptiste between Hull and Sept-Iles, Gaspé and Malartic and from Chibougamau and Lac Mégantic.

The fires of St. Jean are a symbol of light and they have become a tradition firmly entrenched in the hearts of French Canadians. Often a song is chanted after the fires are lit "feu, feu, joli feu, ton ardeur nous rejouit...", that is, fire, fire, beautiful fire, your heat delights us. But along with the fires, dancing and singing were celebrations religious in nature.

As early as 1636, the Jesuits Vimont and LeJeune and Governor Montmagny assembled around a feu de joie. They had the soldiers fire cannons and muskets while the priests chanted Te Deum. Early in the 19th century, the priest would bless the wood before setting it afire. And in 1924, Mgr. Deschamps, vicar general of the diocese of Montreal, led a procession up Mont Royal while carrying the Blessed Sacrament in a monstrance. He chanted the benediction hymn Tantum Ergo while the crowds responded with the Latin Genitori, Genitoque at the foot of Mont Royal.

Another tradition associated with our patrons feast is petits pains bénits (blessed loaves of bread, not to be confused with the Eucharist.) They're called, on 24 Juin, pain de la St. Jean, and they're blessed by the priest at Mass. The custom goes back to 1645 when Bishop Laval encouraged their use at midnight Mass. Often the loaves would be in the shape of a star or a heart which would be given to the priest. This beautiful custom has been revived in Quebec where it had not been used for many years. Bread has always been sacred to the French, and the use of petits pains was a method to symbolize the Holy Eucharist and to increase devotion to this great sacrament.

Despite these ancient and faithful traditions, St. Jean-Baptiste did not become the official patron of Quebec until 1908. The archbishop, knowing that many of his flock had spread out to many other areas of Canada and the United States requested Pope Pius X to make St. Jean-Baptiste the patron of French-Canadians no matter where they lived. La Societe St. Jean-Baptiste was, of course, instrumental in influencing the archbishop.

The celebration of our patrons birthday has become a national holiday in Quebec. It is a display of faith and patriotism, and in some cases, political action. But in Minnesota, 24 Juin is a display of no action at all which, I suppose, is the result of our own doing.

St. Jean-Baptiste, priez pour nous.

CHEZ NOUS is your newsletter. Whether it succeeds or fails depends on your interest and involvement. If you have any items of interest please send them to us. Mail to Dick Bernard, 3030 45th Avenue South, Minneapolis MN 55406. Deadline for the next issue is July 25, 1990.

Nos Ancetres

Our French Canadian ancestors by Thomas J. Forest

by Dick Bernard

Thomas J. LaForest has just issued Vol X in a series of 12 volumes. If you have any interest in the French Canadian forebearers in early Canada you will be fascinated by these books.

Volume X, for example discusses the early roots of 19 families in it's 283 pages. If your surname starts with H-I-J-K you will find an appendix which shows common derivations of that surname. (There is only a single "I" listed -Iesoir, which sometimes appears as Isoire, Hisoire and Exoir.)

The writing is entertaining; for instance, in the chapter on Andre Patry the authors write on daily life in the Patry household about 1675 at Quebec. "After more than three centuries, we can imagine that the Patry pair resembled some couples of today, where there is one spouse reduced to silence and another who speaks for both. It would seem that Henriette Cartois handled verbal combat very well." (P. 153)

I have all 10 volumes.

Is your family included in any? To answer this and other questions, I would suggest a self addressed stamped envelope to The Lisi Press, Palm Harbor FL 34682-1063.

(Personal note to Marshall: Brouillet dit Laviolette, your famille, is one of the families in Vol. XI - next on the list.)

SOME SUMMER REHDEZVOUSs

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| June 22-24 | Ft Ridgley (near New Ulm) |
| July 14-15 | Old Ft William Thunder Bay ONT |
| July 27-29 | Fort Snelling - Minneapolis |
| Aug 10-12 | Grand Portage MN |
| Sep 1-3 | Madeline Island WI |
| Sep 22-23 | Pine City MN - NW Fur Post |
| Other Events | |
| Aug 13-19 | 150th Anniversary of Faribault House |
| Aug 25-26 | Kelley Farm Red River Ox Cart Days (between Anoka&Elk River) |

500 years after Columbus: The Legacy of Genocide

The year 1992 will be a time of governments, corporations and religious institutions attempting to celebrate the voyage of Christopher Columbus to the Caribbean. The gala events surrounding the Columbus Quincentennial (1492-1992) will serve to reinforce the epidemic historical amnesia in this country. Any party honoring the Columbus expedition only will obscure the true history of the genocidal era which began in 1492.

At a time when numerous Indian nations in this hemisphere are engaged in a desperate final stand to defend their land, resources and culture, the dominant society appears intent on losing itself in a frivolous attempt to mystify the history of the clash between Indians nations and the Europeans plunderers.

Simply, there is nothing to celebrate in the 500th year since the Columbus slave trading expedition sailed into the Western Hemisphere.

Jack Weatherford, an anthropology professor at Macalester College in St. Paul who has written about the contributions Indians have made to civilization, discussed the legacy of the Columbus voyage in an opinion piece published last year. He pointed out that the Spanish monarchy loaned Columbus venture capital on the condition that the debt be repaid with riches from the "New World."

"This pressing need to repay his debt underlies the frantic tone of Columbus' diaries as he raced from one Caribbean island to the next, stealing anything of value," according to Weatherford.

"After he failed to contact the emperor of China, the traders of India or the merchants of Japan, Columbus decided to pay for his voyage in the one important commodity he had found in ample supply — human lives. He seized 1,200 Taino Indians from the island of Hispaniola, crammed as many onto his ships as would fit and sent them to Spain, where they were paraded naked through the streets of Seville and sold as slaves in

1495. Columbus tore children from their parents, husbands from wives. On board Columbus' slave ships, hundreds died; the sailors tossed the Indian bodies into the Atlantic.

"Because Columbus captured more Indian slaves than he could transport to Spain in his small ships, he put them to work in mines and plantations which he, his family and followers created throughout the Caribbean. His marauding band hunted Indians for sport and profit — beating, raping, torturing, killing and then using the Indian bodies as food for their hunting dogs. Within four years of Columbus' arrival on Hispaniola, his men had killed or exported one-third of the original Indian population of 300,000. Within another 50 years, the Taino people had been made extinct — the first casualties of the holocaust of American Indians. The plantation owners then turned to the American mainland and to Africa for new slaves to follow the tragic path of the Taino.

"This was the great cultural encounter initiated by Christopher Columbus. This is the event we celebrate each year on Columbus Day."

Weatherford's summary gives proper credit to Columbus: He "opened the Atlantic slave trade and launched one of the greatest waves of genocide known in history."

Within a society that glorifies historical malefactors like Columbus, it is left to teachers like Weatherford, and those at Heart of the Earth Survival School, to tell the truth in the hope that we can learn from the past and heal the wounds caused by injustice.

We should be mindful of what lies ahead in 1992, and join those groups already organizing to spoil the big party being planned to honor Columbus.

- Mordecai Spektor

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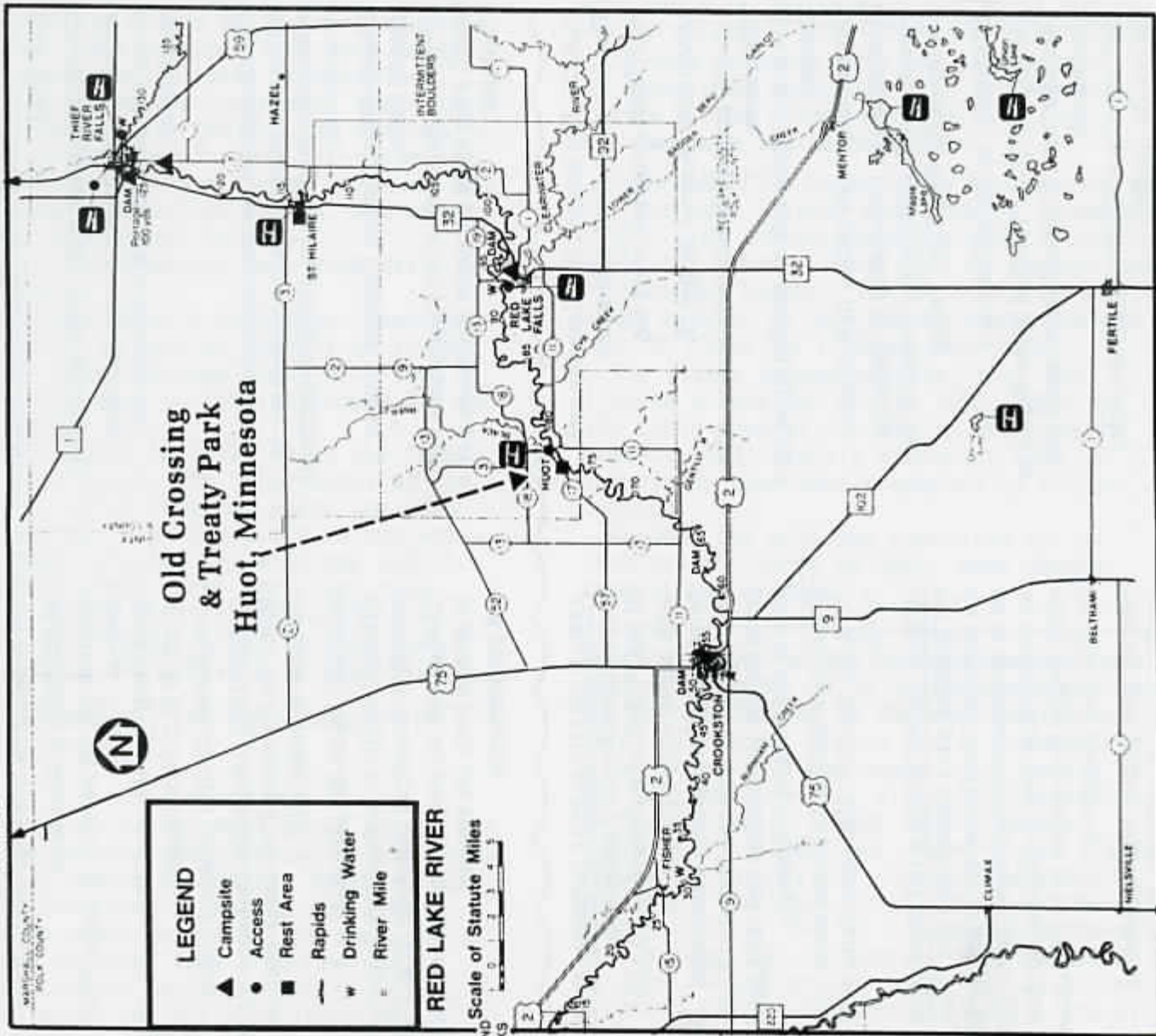
**24-25-26
August 1990**

**A Historical Program
based on the history of
the Red River Valley
from 1860-1880**

**AFRAN
CHAUTAQUA
INTERNATIONAL**

**24-25-26
août 1990**

**Une Réconstitution
historique des années
1860-1880
dans la Vallée de la
rivière Rouge**



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List of Presenters

Friday 24: 7 p.m. - 9 p.m.

William MacTavish, Governor of the Hudson Bay Company (Barry McPherson)
Donald Smith, Commissioner from Upper Canada (Fred Carsted)
Bridget O'Leary, Irish immigrant (Sherry O'Donnell)

Saturday 25: 7 p.m. - 9 p.m.

Louis Riel and the Métis people (Jean-Louis Hébert)
James J. Hill (David B. Miller)
Pierre Bottineau (Virgil Benoit)

Sunday 26: 7 p.m. - 9 p.m.

The Valley Mosaic: a group presentation by Chippewas, Métis, Canadians, Germans, Irish, Scots, Norwegians, Swedes and others.

Au programme

Le vendredi 24: 19H.-21H.

William MacTavish, gouverneur de la Compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson (Barry McPherson)
Donald Smith, commissaire du Haut Canada (Fred Carsted)
Bridget O'Leary, immigrante irlandaise (Sherry O'Donnell)

Le samedi 25: 19H.-21H.

Louis Riel et le peuple Métis (Jean-Louis Hébert)
James J. Hill (David B. Miller)
Pierre Bottineau (Virgil Benoit)

Le dimanche 26: 19H.-21H.

Les peuples de la Vallée: Chippewas, Métis, Canadiens, Irlandais, Ecossais, Allemands, Norvégiens, Suédois et autres

Chautauqua is a history program where characters reappear on the stage to present their views about what happened during their lives.

Chautauqua takes place under a large tent. AFRAN Chautauqua is a program that every person interested in history will want to see.

Chautauqua est un programme historique où les personnages réapparaissent sur la scène pour raconter les grands événements de leurs vies.

Chautauqua, c'est de l'histoire sous la grande tente.

AFRAN Chautauqua: un programme sans pareil pour toute personne intéressée par l'histoire.

PLACE: The historic Old Crossing and Treaty Park at Huot, Minnesota

A different program every day

MATINEE: August 25 and 26

(12-1:30 p.m.) Folk Dance workshop with folk stories
(2-4 p.m.) "Daily Life of the Red River Cart Drivers"

Encampment with Indian tipis to visit (4:30-6:00 p.m.) Workshop of songs (in French and English) on the theme of the history of the Red River Valley

EVENING: 24-25-26 (7-9 p.m.)

CHAUTAQUA: The Red River Valley as a frontier, area of development and a cultural mosaic

Each evening a different program under the tent (in English)

\$2 per person

LIEU: Au parc historique (Old Crossing and Treaty Park) à Huot au Minnesota

Un programme différent chaque jour

MATINEE: le 25 et le 26

(12H:00-1H:30) Atelier de danse folklorique
(14H-16H) "La Vie quotidienne des charretiers de la rivière Rouge"

Campement de tipis indiens à visiter

(16H30-18H) Atelier de chansons sur le thème de l'histoire à travers la chanson (en français et anglais)

SOIREE: 24-25-26 (19H-21H)

CHAUTAQUA: la frontière, la croissance et la mosaïque culturelle de la Vallée

Chaque soir un programme différent sous la grande tente (en anglais)

2 \$ par personne

AFRAN CHAUTAQUA INTERNATIONAL is sponsored by the Association

of the French of the North (AFRAN)

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For more information please write to:
AFRAN Box 101 Red Lake Falls, MN 56750.

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Pour de plus amples renseignements veuillez écrire à: AFRAN Box 101 Red Lake Falls, Minnesota 56750.

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chez nous

NEWSLETTER OF AOUT-SEPTEMBRE, 1990 VOL. 12 NO. 1

La société canadienne-française

Editor: Dick Bernard

Co-Editor: Jerry Marie Forchette

INTRODUCTION TO NORA REMEMBERS

In August of 1988 a reunion of the Sylvestre and Mercil descendants of Joseph O. Sauve and Rose Delima Bergevin was held with the generous cooperation of AFRAN (L'Association des Français du Nord). There were beautiful decorations and displays of family pictures, charts, artifacts, memorabilia, etc.

Presentations were made of the family genealogy, history and settlement in the Red River Valley. Dr. Virgil Benoit reviewed the history of Gently, Minnesota where Joseph Sauve had been one of the early residents.

After dinner with the French motif, including wine of course, there was story telling, a sing-a-long and French music and folk dance instructions presented by Jeanne and Tom O'Neil. The second day was devoted to attending a special Mass at Gently and to social activities.

One of the highlights of the reunion was a reading of "Nora Remembers". Nora Mercil Brusseau, a granddaughter of Rose Delima and Joseph Sauve was unable to make the trip from her residence in Vancouver, Washington. Nora felt bad about her absence. Her niece, Rosalie Brusseau kindly offered to write down Nora's reflections so she could attend the reunion in spirit. The article had the effect of shaming me into writing some reminiscences of early days - if she could do it at her age and health condition, what's wrong with me, her brother.

We deeply appreciate the efforts of Rosalie Brusseau and dedicate the publication of this article to Nora who is now confined to a nursing home in Vancouver, Washington with the horrible Alzheimer disease. (Lowell H. Mercil)

NORA REMEMBERS by Nora Mercil

We lived on a farm about three-quarters of a mile from the small town of Gently, Minnesota. We spoke only French at home, so when I started school it was necessary for me to learn to understand and speak English, before I could learn the usual school subjects. It was not easy, hearing only French at home and only English at school. It was a one room country school with eight grades, so the teacher had no extra time to spend with me. My parents decided that I must go to the Catholic boarding school, St. Josephs in Crookston. Here I would be around English speaking people all the time. Papa and I rode the ten or so miles from the farm to the Convent, in a horse and buggy. The first few miles went slow, because I was so anxious to get there, a bundle of excitement. However, the farther I got from home, frightening thoughts started to take over, would the other girls like me? Would someone speak French to me sometimes? How would I ever learn English? Then papa told me that I could not come home every weekend during the winter, it would depend on the weather, a blizzard or ice would leave me stranded at school. Then I started to worry; when would I see mama and papa and Al again? We drove up in front of the school and papa hitched the horse to the hitching post, and helped me down. Any other time I would have scrambled and jumped to the ground the minute papa said, "whoa" to the horse. He reached for my luggage, nothing fancy, just one small bag. Papa took my hand in his, it was so big and warm, it reminded me of home. We walked up to the front door, and even after all these years my mind is a blank as to what happened next? My memory is of lying in bed with my head buried under the pillow and under the quilt. I was sobbing as if my heart would break, and whispering, "I want to go home," over and over again.

NORA REMEMBERS, continued

A buzzer type bell rang to awaken the dormitory girls in the morning. We hurried to dress in our navy blue skirts and white blouses, then to Chapel and Communion. Breakfast was a bowl of oatmeal and milk to drink, but on special occasions, we got hot cocoa.

The academy was a large building, at least so it seemed to me in those days. The basement contained the kitchen, laundry, boarders dining room and the gym. The non-boarders brought their lunch and ate it in the gym. We all hurried to the playground after wolfing down our lunch. First floor housed classrooms for the first through eighth grades. The second floor housed the Chapel and classrooms for the high school students. The third floor was the girl's dormitory (our home away from home). Fourth floor was home for the Sisters. All the work at the school was done by the Sisters, no lay people to help. One Sister was the cook, one the laundress, and several teachers. One taught music, piano included, one math, and my favorite, Sister Margaret, the French teacher. Sister Alice, was very strict, she was a large strapping woman, very strong. She always carried a ball of string in her pocket along with a few nails. She taught math to the eighth grade boys, plus instructing the Altar boys in their duties. In later years, a huge house located behind the school, was purchased as a home for the Sisters.

There were some chores for the live-in children, One was to clean the blackboards and the erasers --remember! We went outdoors and slapped the erasers together and how the dust flew (this was cleaning?) Someone was assigned to sweep the floor, it was kind of tricky, to get under all the desks. Then when we were of an age to use pen and ink, the job of cleaning ink spots from the floor was an unforgettable chore. The Sisters gave us something like steel wool, to rub out these dark ink spots.

When the weather kept boarders at school over the weekend, the laundress did the laundry and ironing for the elementary students. The days ran together, my English was not becoming my second language very rapidly. Homesickness was overwhelming me. What were papa and mama doing now? How much had Albert grown? Would he still know me when I saw him again, if I ever did?

Sister Margaret was so good to me, she had come from France. I wondered if she understood me so well because she'd had

these same homesick feelings when she came to Crookston, from her homeland. Then there was Sister _____ oh, I can't remember her name, but she was something else. She ate my candy! Mama had ma' divinity for me and sent it to school. Maybe I would never had known, but the next time I went home, mama asked me if I had liked the candy and had I shared with the other girls? When I got back to school, I told Sister Margaret that mama had sent me a box of divinity and it should be coming soon. Sister Margaret tracked down the package. There were only a couple of pieces left, it seems that the other SISTER thought the candy had been sent to the Sisters, so naturally she opened the package and tasted. That night again, I cried and cried, hoping no one would hear my sobs, muffled by the quilt and pillow.

During the winter if the weather was nice, papa would come for me; put me in the sleigh and tuck me in with one of mama's quilts. Those rides were so much fun, but seemed slow because I was so anxious to get home. Sunday afternoon when I returned, I could never stay warm, even with the long underwear on and mama's quilt wrapped around me, of course, the reason was because I hated to leave home and family.

The Sisters taught me not only to read and write English, but how to read and write French. I had a good education at that school but my memories of that academy are of "one very, very homesick little girl."

Life on the farm was hard, but we were a happy family and there were lots of fun times. We children were all born at home. I, Nora, was the oldest, next Al and then Lorraine, those births I don't remember. When Jerry's birth was near, Lorraine, Al and I were sent over to the neighbors to wait. No telephone to call us home, instead the signal of the new arrival was a bed sheet hung on the clothesline.

Mama was of quite a serious disposition, she was sick often, as I remember, but as I think about it maybe she was just tired. Just the necessary work to be done included washing and ironing clothes, baking bread, making meals, churing butter, planting and harvesting a garden, canning meat as well as berries, apples and garden produce. So that was not all, she carded and spun wool. She would buy a gunny sack full at a time. She sewed not only for our family, of six children, herself and papa, but she sewed for
continued, page three

NORA REMEMBERS, continued

many of the families in town, she was a very accomplished seamstress.

Papa was a very kind, quiet man, not strong but a hard and willing worker. Don't think he ever insulted anyone in his life. Papa had lots of work to do. I, Nora the oldest child never had to do chores in the barn or field but carrying water and wood, that I did. Oh! yes, that I did.

Our house was situated on a hill, the well down below, an artesian well. Artesian comes from the French word, "artois" a provence in France, where this type well was first discovered. This type well was supposed to be very special, but I never understood why. We still had to carry our water up hill, for drinking, bathing, and laundry, then haul it out of the house after using it. Why didn't they build the house down by the well?

There was no electricity at our house, so your're thinking, "oh no lights! Yes, thats right, and no water heater, no washing machine, no hair dryer, no clothes dryer and lots more noes. So we hauled the water, heated it on the range (stove), washed clothes on the board and dried them in the sun, used flat irons, and heated our curling irons in a lamp chimney, which we used for light after the sun went down. The lamps had to be filled with kerosene, the chimneys washed and dried and the wicks trimmed. How often this cleaning process took place depended on how often and how long the lamps were used. Pail after pail of water I carried up the hill to fill the copper boiler and the two wash tubs. Papa helped me or did I help him - this was in the days before Al and Lorraine were big enough to help. It wasn't just water to be hauled up the hill, but also the wood papa had chopped. Wood kept the stove roaring to keep heating water for the laundry. Mama scrubbed clothes with soap on the wash board for several years before we got a washing machine. That meant wringing by hand, rinsing and wringing again, then hung on the clothesline outdoors, a far cry from your automatic washer and dryer of today. After the last of the clothes were washed and hung on the line, it was time to haul the water out, pail after pail. As the clothes dried and were brought into the house, you noticed such a lovely fresh aroma, there is nothing to compare it to, and found only on clothes dried out of doors in the sunshine. Hanging clothes out of doors in the winter was a



MEMORIES:

Our gift to those who follow us.

bone chilling job. When the clothes were frozen, they were then brought into the house to hang on lines through out the house. We always laughed at the frozen long underwear, like a ghost without a body.

Now it was sprinkling time, you spread each piece of clothing out on the table, one at a time with a pan of water near. You dipped your hand into the water, and then shook your hand over the item, you did this several times then it was rolled up tightly and put into a basket. You continued sprinkling till all of the clothing was dampened and ready for ironing the next morning.

Flat irons were set on the range to heat. These irons were in two parts, one the flat iron and the second part was the handle/cover which was put over the flat iron. A little clamp held it in place. Mama would test the iron to see if it were hot enough by putting a finger to her mouth to wet it and then she touched the iron, sssisst! if it sizzled it was ready. As soon as the iron cooled it was necessary to exchange it for a hot one. It was a hot steamy tiring job, due to the combination of the heat from the roaring fire in the range, the labor of ironing and the hot humid weather of summer. In the winter sprinkling was omitted as clothes were ironed while still damp.

Now on a quiet evening as I stare out of my window at the beautiful sunset, I am thinking back, way back, to my childhood on the farm. Shush! Shush! Can you hear it? It's Al teasing voice chanting:

NOR--A-----MER---CIL---
CROOKS----TON---MINN---
BORN---IN---A---PIG---PEN
NINE---TEEN----TEN

continued, page four

NORA REMEMBERS, continued

That little ditty was yelled at me for years, not only by Al, who started it but Jerry, Lowell, and Ray as well. These fellows were always full of mischief.

Churning butter was not an easy job but at least there was a tasty end to our work. The churn was a barrel shaped container into which the cream was poured and cover put in place, then the cranking started. You'd turn the crank and this would agitate the cream. As you turned the crank the barrel would go end over end. The cranking went on and on for ages it seemed. Finally you would hear flop flup, flop flup, now the butter was forming and as you continued a louder flop plop was heard which meant that a chunk of butter had formed and was hitting the ends of the churn as it was cranked. Now the top was turned and unscrewed a little, and a milky liquid (buttermilk) was poured off. I never cared to drink this, but papa did. Now the butter was packed in little molds and put in a cool place. Ummmm, so good on fresh baked bread.

Another job we don't bother with anymore is soap making. We saved fat from pork at butchering time and bacon grease. Then lye was mixed in and boiled for several hours until it was golden taffy colored, it then had to cool, usually till the next day. The top layer was usually white - it was cut into bars and dried, then used as hand soap. The second layer was yellow, cut in larger bars and dried - used for laundry, the third layer was brownish jelly like consistency at the bottom of the kettle, this was used for heavy cleaning, scrubbing floors and the privy. It's much easier to go to the store and buy soap don't you think?

Preparations for Christmas began right after Thanksgiving. Mama made mincemeat, cooked donuts, and baked cookies. We were especially fond of oatmeal cookies with raisins. Then there was "Blood Sausage", maybe I would have liked it if it had a different name. It was considered quite a specialty. Then there was "Head Cheese" another product that was tasty but what a name. It was made from the pig's head. When I made it I used shoulder pork boiled with onions and seasonings. It was then cooled and boned. The meat was put through a grinder and enough water that it was cooked in, to be mushy, then poured into pans and refrigerated, then sliced to serve.

delicious! The name pork loaf sounded better to me. Another favorite was Mock Duck, my recipe follows. Try it you will like it. 12

Early Christmas morning we went to Mass. I was usually cold and we walked three fourths of a mile to the country parish of St. Peter. We went to the Sylvester home for Christmas dinner, Mrs. Sylvester was my mama's sister. Mama always brought some of her goodies-Blood Sausage, Head Cheese, and divinity.

The three Sylvester children Harry, Ed and Henrietta, were our cousins and we were six children so it was a noisy, happy, exciting day for all of us that passed all too quickly. One year I got a beautiful doll with a porcelain head and long curly hair. What a treasure, mama made me several dresses and a coat and bonnet. I was so proud of that doll.

Now you know some of my memories, and how we lived and worked when I was a girl, so long ago, but you know something, there are times it seems like "ONLY YESTERDAY."

MOCK DUCK

Dressing

2 pounds ground beef

1 pound pork sausage

Brown and pour off fat

Add large onion, 1 med. cubed raw potato, 2 slices bread, moistened in water, torn apart

Salt and pepper and continue cooking

When potato is cooked mash the whole mixture
Meantime-

Cut one large round steak into cubes and brown, put half of the dressing in a pan, cover with steak pieces, top with remainder of dressing. Bake 350 til steak is tender.

New Years always called for "Tourtrers" remember?

1 pound ground pork

1 pound ground beef

onions and celery

2 tsp. corn starch

1/4 cup oatmeal

1 cup water

Blend ingredients thoroughly. Simmer 40 min. or so.

Pour into pastry lined pie tin.

Bake 450 for 10 min. then 250 for 35 min.

Cool and freeze and heat up for

NEW YEARS

ED. NOTE. As I typed this I noticed yet another spelling for tourtiere!

A CAJUN WRITES

by Lynda Guidry, Lafayette, LA

They came to Southern Louisiana from Acadia in Canada. These Acadians became known as Cajuns and developed one of the most unique and colorful cultures of all of the United States. The language is colorful, distinctive and a beautifully melodic dialect of the French language. Cajun French traces its beginnings almost four centuries ago. It evolved from the Acadian French of Canada and the native French of southern France; Cajun French is a very very antiquated version of the mother tongue.

Cajun French is heard less widely today than in the years prior to World War II, as Cajuns have continuously joined the great melting pot of the mainstream American culture.

Cajun food is some of the most uniquely American culinary developments of all time. Using locally caught and produced food items and seasonings, Cajun cooking has evolved into a fine art. Cajuns (or just about anybody else in Louisiana) consider food an art. We don't just eat to keep our bodies alive, we eat to keep our spirits alive. For us, eating is part of our culture, lunch is an event, even on a tight workday schedule. When we eat out, we prefer our restaurants to invest in the quality of what they serve as opposed to the quality of their wallpaper. For Cajuns, any meal is an event. That is why you really have to try hard to find a bad restaurant in South Louisiana...they just would not stay in business.

Cajun music is another local art with unique and varying roots. The instruments played can vary from locally manufactured accordions to electric guitars to massive bass fiddles. The sounds they make are festive...Cajun music is party music and is very much a part of their culture.

In fact, in recent years there has been much emphasis placed on the preservation of that culture. Such has been the case of Vermilionville, a commemorative center of living history featuring the Cajun and Creole cultures of South Louisiana on a site in Lafayette, LA.

Vermilionville has beautiful examples of buildings and displays of items used

13
by the early settlers. Continuous demonstrations of how life was lived and tasks performed are a major part of this village. And what really makes it enjoyable for visitors is the opportunity to try their hand at any or all of those things.

There is a cooking class, a boat builder, duck decoy carver, spinner, weaver, chair caner (using corn shucks, cane and rusk), quilter, dollmaker, rug maker, furniture maker, fiddle maker, toy maker, blacksmith, tanning, butcher, plus delightful story tellers, bands (Cajun and Zydeco), a dance company, folklore troupe, gospel singers and dramatic presentations.

And there is a farm, where a couple simulate daily life-with meals cooked on the open hearth and chores completed-and they carry on their conversations in first person in Cajun French. Some 85 of the employees are bi-lingual and interpret whatever is desired by visitors.

Vermilionville is a great project that has been built with the cooperation of public agencies and private endeavors. And it has been well planned with a primary purpose of preserving the Cajun culture. The Acadians who first settled in South Louisiana led hard lives, but they enjoyed life and had many customs that deserve to be preserved in some way so that future generations will be able to see first-hand how things were done and the reason behind some modern culture habits.

You may have seen Cajun country on the T.V. or in movies, or heard the music on the radio, but you haven't lived until you've seen it, tasted it and heard it for yourself.

ED. NOTE: We shared our newsletter with Lynda this spring, and her gift to us was the above article, which we much appreciate receiving.

Chez Nous is to be enjoyed, and shared. Pass your copy along to someone you think might be interested, and encourage them to join La Societe, too!

Deadline for the next issue is September 25. Mail to Dick Bernard, MEA, 1000 E. 146th St #140, Burnsville MN 55337.

Lafayette left his marquis on America

By TOM TIEDE Milwaukee JOURNAL
Newspaper Enterprise Association July 21, 1989

LAFAYETTE, La. — Nobody enjoys a party more than Francophiles enjoy a party, and they are enjoying a big one right now. The French Revolution took place 200 years ago, and so, ooh la la, the French are celebrating the bicentennial of their plunge into the liberty, equality and fraternity of Everyman.

The revolutionary plunge took the better part of a year to complete. But it was set in motion by a single bold stroke. The French stormed the Paris Bastille on July 14, 1789, to take over the symbol of the old authority, and the date is serving as the focal point of this year's 12-month commemoration.

The date might also serve to remind Americans of their own fight for independence, because one of the architects of the French Revolution was instrumental in the American Revolution as well.

He was the Marquis de Lafayette, the only man to become a famous hero in the two most portentous events in the chronicles of democracy. The marquis has not been remembered so fondly in France, it turns out. Yet he has become a familiar and lasting presence in the United States. He is indeed the most notable French personality in American history, owing to the fact that hundreds of counties, towns, streets and sundry places have been named in his honor. Even a car.

There are at least 10 US communities and five counties, including one in Wisconsin, named for



Marquis de Lafayette

Lafayette. And the number of mountains, valleys, waterways, squares and institutions has never been accurately counted. Lafayette, La., for example, has a Lafayette St., a Park de Lafayette, and it is located — where else? — in Lafayette Parish. [Milwaukee has a Lafayette Pl.]

The namings are curious, of course. Americans have not glorified any other visitor in this way except Christopher Columbus. Besides, the marquis was an unlikely hero at best, in a revolutionary sense; he was a blueblooded dandy and his full name was Marie Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert du Motier, marquis de La Fayette (the French spelling).

Nevertheless, he had mettle. He was born to the aristocracy in 1757, and served as a courtier at the court of King Louis XVI. He was no warrior; he'd never been in battle. But when the American Revolution began, he defied the king's orders and, in 1777, came to this country with his own small army.

Lafayette was only 19 at the time, and thus was greeted at first with amusement. He soon caught the eye of George Washington, however. After he agreed to serve the cause at his own expense, the Frenchman was given the rank of major general — mainly to impress King Louis, who eventually would contribute mightily to the American effort.

Lafayette fought often and valiantly in America. And he was wounded at least once, at the Battle of Brandywine. He served Washington all the way to Yorktown, where he was instrumental in attracting the French blockade that isolated the British forces and brought an end to the long conflict.

The marquis then went home to join the growing movement for political reform in France. He became a leader of the liberal gentry, for example. He likewise made significant contributions to the implementation of the "Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen," designed to create a constitutional monarchy.

Lafayette died in 1834 at the age of 77. This means he lived long enough to see his reputation somewhat diminished. American historians began to write that he was as much an opportunist as a radical; and they said he was motivated on this side of the ocean by his hatred of the British rather than his sentiments for democracy.

Worse, the marquis became a figure of contempt in France. In 1791, when people took to the streets to demand the king's abdication, Lafayette ordered Parisian troops to fire on them. He has not to this day been fully forgiven.

Still, it's impossible to fully forget him. Particularly in places like Lafayette, Ala.; Lafayette, Calif.; Lafayette, Colo.; Lafayette, Fla.; Lafayette, Ga.; Lafayette, Minn.; Lafayette, Miss.; Lafayette, Mo.; Lafayette, Ore.; Lafayette, Pa.; Lafayette, Tenn.; and — deep breath — the two Lafayettes, La.

The local Lafayettes are perhaps the most befitting of the lot. The area was settled by French Acadians and the parish was named when the marquis revisited America in 1824. This city was originally called Vermillionville. It was redesignated in 1884 when another Lafayette, La., dissolved its charter.

Today there is a statue of the marquis in the town center, a Lafayette Art Gallery, Lafayette Bargain Store, Lafayette Bowling Lanes, Lafayette Cable TV, Lafayette Drug Store, etc.

There also is a Lafayette Library. A woman there says there has been a lot of interest in material about the French Bicentennial, "but when I ask them if they also want things about the marquis, they sometimes shrug and say they don't know who he is."

REMEMBER:
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Falls and Crookston MN)
August 25-26, 1990
Details? SASE to
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Lake Falls MN
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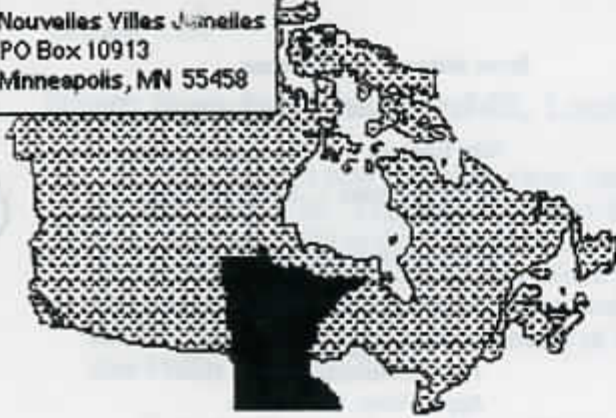
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NOUVELLES VILLES JUMELLES



October 1990



NEWSLETTER OF

La Societ e Canadienne Fran aise Du Minnesota



1990 Calendar of Events

All events our at the Parish Hall of the Church of St. Louis, 506 Cedar St., St. Paul. General meetings begin at 7:30 pm. Please come and bring friends.

October 1

General meeting

November 5

General meeting. Presentation: *Les Canadiennes Errants*. We may also have members from *des Hivernants de la Riviere St. Pierre*.

Early December

LSCF Annual Xmas party and dance. Watch for notice in Chez Nous.

Une Exhortation

This is your newsletter and without your participation and support we cannot succeed. If you have items of interest, please let us know. We publish every two months, alternating with Chez Nous. Villes Jumelles is primarily for an audience in the Twin Cities; Chez Nous for the entire state. For this reason Villes Jumelles will tend to have more of a local focus. The next deadline for Villes Jumelles will be October 25, 1990. We are looking for news and notices for events through January, 1991. Send to:

William B. Horn
2700 Foshay Tower
Minneapolis, MN 55402
341-2581 or 922-9013

Dick Bernard, editor of Chez Nous, gives his valued and experienced assistance to the "staff" of Villes Jumelles. Those who cannot reach Bill Horn or prefer to pass news on to Dick may reach him at: 1000 E. 146th St. #410, Burnsville, MN 55337, telephone 431-6515.

July Meetings

The Twin Cities Chapter held two board meetings in July. Bills totalling over \$600.00 were paid at the first meeting and new officers were elected. They include Bruce Bedore, president; LeRoy DuBois, vice-president; and John England, secretary-treasurer. Board members at large are: Sr. Mary Henry Nochtsheim, C.A.G.; Dick Bernard; Al Girard; and George L. Abrosse, membership chair.

Membership and finances were the main topics of discussion at the second meeting on 25 July. Although the treasury is low and an increase in dues could help, an increase in membership seemed more attractive as a first step. Also, a review of our overall financial situation is suggested; Roy DuBois volunteered to prepare a budget.

New Directors and Officers

At the July meeting a new board of directors for 1990-91 was elected as listed below. Most of these names are well known to you from their years of membership and service. Our new President Bruce Bedore is "one-half Gallic" and a Francophone. Sr. Mary Henry teaches at St. Catherine's, having her Ph.D. from Laval University in Québec City. Dick Bernard now resides in the Twin Cities, where he can be even more active in the affairs of LSCF.

Bruce Bedore President
Leroy L. Dubois Vice President
John England Secretary-Treasurer
George LaBrosse Membership
453-3128
Sr. Mary Henry Nachtsheim
Al Girard
Dick Bernard, Chez Nous
7632 157th St., #301
Apple Valley, MN 55124
431-6515

La Farce De Maistre Pathelin

This famous medieval farce will be performed in a modern version on Tuesday, October 23, at 7:30 pm at O'Shaughnessy Auditorium, The College of St. Catherine, by *La Compagnie Claude Beauclair*, a French theater touring company.

Tickets for the performance are \$6.00 for students and \$8.00 for adults. For information call the ticket office at 690-6700. Tickets will also be available at the door. The text will be on sale at the *Hungry Mind Bookstore*, St. Paul.

After the performance a buffet supper to the actors will be served. Cost is \$10.00. Supper reservations must be made by October 19.

The play is a presentation of the *American Associate of Teachers of French* and the *Alliance Française*.

Reverend Brian DuBois

The Reverend Brian DuBois, brother of charter member LeRoy DuBois, died June 3 in Minneapolis. Fr. DuBois, 47, a native of Chetek, Wisconsin, had served in the Diocese of Superior for 25 years. His last assignment was at Ladysmith.

He came from a family of 14 and is survived by eight brothers and one sister. Mass of the Christian Burial was held at St. Patrick's in Hudson on June 11 with 45 priests in attendance.

The French Canadian Society of Minnesota wish to extend its prayers and sympathy to the DuBois family on their loss of their brother, who served the church with great devotion.

Donnez-lui, Seigneur le repas éternelle, et que la lumière brille sur lui à jamais!

News from the Church of St. Louis

We welcome a new parochial vicar, Father Pat Primeaux, S.M. You may remember him from previous visits to the Church of St. Louis: this past year's celebration of Holy Week and Ester as well as the ceremony of consecration for the chalice dedicated to the memory of Father Philip McArdle, S.M.

"I am delighted to be working with my fellow Marists of the Washington Province," wrote Father Primeaux in a recent letter to Father Morrissey, "and also to ministering to the people of the Church of St. Louis especially as that community shares my French heritage." Father Primeaux is a native of Lafayette in Southwestern Louisiana.

Father Primeaux holds a B.A. in French Education from the University of Southwestern Louisiana; M.A. and Ph.D. degrees from St. Michael's college of the University of Toronto; and an MBA from Southern Methodist University. He is the author of Richard R. Niebuhr of Christ and Religion, a systematic study of the modern protestant theologian's ethics.

Les Canadiens Errants Du Minnesota

Al Girard

Another 1990 outing by the French Canadian singing group consisted of four performances at the Festival of Nations on April 28.

Some of the songs performed were: "Un Canadien Errant", with a solo by Marie Bouley; "Aupres De Ma Blonde", "Chevaliers De La Table Ronde", and "Alouette" which were led by Ralph Germain; "Pour Boire Il Faut Vendre" with the antics of Marie Trepanier and Feraidoon Bourbour; and "Prendre Un P'tit Coup", "Ah! Si Mon Moine Voulait Danser", "Les Moines De St. Bernardin" and the finale of "Bonsoir, Mes Amis, Bonsoir!"

Everyone was appreciative of our performance and Pat Stegbauer, the group leader, said "We done good!" It is enjoyable to see recognition of some songs on the faces of people with Canadian ancestry as well as sing to some of the youngsters, who have no inhibitions with dancing and clapping along to the music. It's great to be appreciated!

Others who performed were: Seraphine Byrne, Alan Ciesielczyk, LeRoy duBois, Al and Shirley Girard, Renee Juaire, and George La-Brosse. Thanks to the whole group for their faithfulness at practice and performances.

Most of the group and their families were also volunteers and helped with the Heritage and Bazaar booths. Thanks also to all of them!

On July 15 we sang at the Societé Picnic on Boom Island in Minneapolis. Songs were also performed on the boat ride and we were well received by a "Captive" audience. We really look forward to the opportunity to perform at these gatherings.

The next project is producing a new tape of French Christmas songs. It should be ready sometime in the fall. We also will have performed at various functions this summer, including the Little Canada "Canadian Days" parade on August 12.

Anyone interested in joining the *Les Canadiens Errants Du Minnesota* should contact Pat Stegbauer at 484-2384. Conversation French is not a requirement, just come on out and have a good time!

A. Film for Francophones

Film:

La Maison Assassinée

Showing:

Jerome Hill Theater
180 East 5th St., St. Paul, MN
(First Trust Center)

Showtime:

September 21-27

Fri. & Sat.

Sun.

Mon., Tues., Wed.

Thur.

5:30 pm, 7:30 pm, 9:30 pm

5:30 pm, 7:30 pm

7:30 pm only

5:30 pm, 7:30 pm

The film was made in France in 1988, directed by George Lautner, and is adapted from a novel by Pierre Magnan. 110 minutes running time.

Annual Villes Jumelles Picnic

The picnic at Boom Island Park on Minneapolis' near northeast side, enjoyed perfect weather and the usual great abundance of food, supplied "pot luck" by those attending.

As has become an annual tradition, *Les Canadiens Errants* entertained us all with singing and sing-a-longs.

After plenty of food, most of those in attendance embarked on the Anson Northrup. During the two hour Mississippi River tour, which included a trip through Lock #1, everyone enjoyed another round of songs by *Les Errants*.



Some 50 members of LSCF celebrated the joie de vivre at the annual picnic of the Twin Cities chapter on July 15.

John England and Judy Lovellett guide a visitor's search for her roots at the LSCF booth at the 1990 *Festival of Nations* in St. Paul. LSCF has long been a part of this annual fête. The 1990 theme was ethnic weddings.



Novelles Villes Jumelles is published monthly by LA SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE FRANÇAIS DU MINNESOTA. Correspondence may be submitted to PO Box 10913, Mpls., MN 55458. For subscription information contact Bill Horn, editor, (612) 922-9013.



chez nous

NEWSLETTER OF OCTOBRE-NOVEMBRE, 1990 VOL. 12 NO. 2

La société canadienne-française

Editor: Dick Bernard

Co-Editor: Jerry Marie Forchette

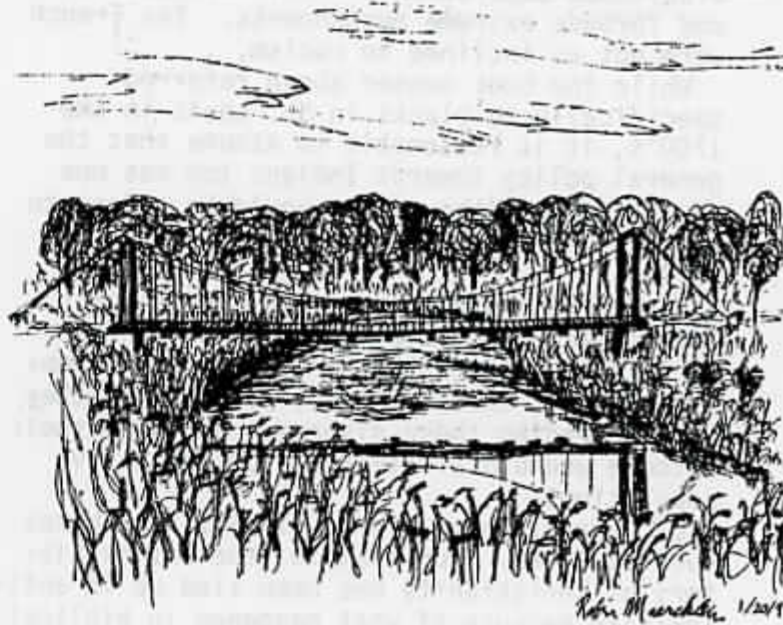
BRIDGES TO THE PAST... AND TO EACH OTHER by Dick Bernard

In the Juin-Juillet issue of Chez Nous we began a mini-debate: was the position of the American Indian Movement (AIM) correct in condemning the celebration of Columbus Day (October 8 this year); in companion, were our French ancestors any different from their peers in their manner of working with - or against - native Americans.

Of course, history happens on a daily basis. The ink was scarcely dry on Chez Nous when it was reported in the June 22, 1990, Minneapolis Star-Tribune that Elijah Harper, an Indian in the Manitoba Legislative Assembly, singlehandedly worked to scuttle the controversial Meech Lake accord which would recognize as a "distinct-society" the French culture of Quebec. Harpers point which was widely supported was that if the French portion of Canada were to be recognized as a "distinct society", surely the Native Americans of that country, long second class citizens, should get equal treatment.

Very shortly thereafter, in early July, Mohawks near Oka, Quebec, got into a major conflict with the local, then Quebec and national governments, over a parcel of land to be used for expansion of a 9-hole golf course. That conflict, which has been major news for several months, is not yet resolved and I believe the Indians were correct in their outrage.

The July 19 St. Paul Dispatch quoted a Kanistake Mohawk involved in the Oka dispute as follows: "It all started with Jacques Cartier. My ancestors should have snout him." He was referring to the French explorer who (according to the newspaper) "discovered" Canada in 1534. Of course all that Cartier discovered was land new to him as well as people who were already there. He was "the new kid on the block".



When it comes to discovery of America, it was the ancestors of the Indians who really discovered it; of course those ancestors most likely didn't know, or care, what it was they had discovered. From wherever they arrived, or when, their only goal was likely survival and not conquest. So it most likely was for most of our French ancestors when they finally reached the shore of America in the 16 and 1700's.

So, how about the Issues: are we guilty, and how were our ancestors with the native Americans?

In this issue of Chez Nous is a descriptive taken from a college textbook on French history which describes the environment from which nos ancêtre came. You will quickly note that our ancestors, who presumably were peasants for the most part, did not come from cities of gold. They did

"BRIDGES" from page one

come to do the business that the landed gentry of the time wished, and it appears that the landed gentry among our ancestors was more willing to accept the indigenous population as equals than were their brethren from Spain, England or other colonial countries.

In several independent resources, I have read that the French policy towards their new subjects was, for the time, relatively humane and accepting.

Recently, for example, I read that "French law [in the 18th century] obliged every owner to have his slaves instructed in religion and prepared for baptism. The law, further, protected female slaves from molestation, disallowed separation of families by sale, and forbade extreme punishments. The French were not as inclined to racism. . . ."

While the book quoted above referred specifically to blacks in St. Louis in the 1700's, it is reasonable to assume that the general policy towards Indians too was one of acceptance (though one would be a fool to presume that there was not exploitation as well).

Also, the indigenous population of North America was certainly decimated by "white man's diseases" in the early years of colonization. At the same time, no one knew they were spreading these diseases, nor what their outcome would ultimately be for the native populations.

Of course, there are no winners in debates such as these. For example, the entire history of Christianity has been tied up in anti-semitism because of what happened in biblical times 2000 years ago. We all seem to have a penchant of trying to convict those in the present of the sins of the past, when we have enough guilt just living from day to day.

The best we can do, I think, is to try to understand, appreciate and accept those of other cultures and backgrounds. And to understand as well the myths we have all been taught and attempt to modify our own understandings as we learn new information.

Should Jacques Cartier have been shot? No, in my opinion.

CHEZ NOUS is your newsletter, and without your active interest and contributions of material we cannot thrive. If you have comments, recollections, old photos, short histories. . . anything that someone might be interested in let us know. We publish every other month. Send your materials to: Dick Bernard, 7632 157th St W #301 Apple Valley MN 55124. Merci.

CALENDAR

Nov. 5 - at St. Louis Church, St. Paul 7:30 p.m. Dr. Milda Hedblom, Director of Canadian Studies and Chair of Political Science at Augsburg College, will speak on the topic CANADIAN CULTURAL POLICY IN MASS MEDIA. Dr. Hedblom is a consultant in communications and telecommunications policy and has completed a study of Canadian communications policy. Invite your friends to this meeting of La Societe.

Dec. 14 CHRISTMAS PARTY. Details in next issue of Nouvelles Villes Jumelles.

Apr. 25-28, 1991 FESTIVAL OF NATIONS, St. Paul This years theme is "FABLES AND FAIRYTALES". We will again participate. We will need your ideas and help. MARK YOUR CALENDAR

IDEAS FOR FUTURE PROGRAMS to BRUCE BEDORE, president, LSCF, 487-0623.

This is your club.

Should they expand a golf course in Oka, Quebec? No.

Should they recognize the French, or the Indians, as "distinct societies"? No, in my opinion.

Should Columbus Day be eliminated? Probably not, though it certainly should be used as an opportunity to more accurately portray the rather harsh realities of the time, including mans inhumanity towards his and her brothers and sisters.

I do thank A.I.M. for opening my eyes a little on a piece of history I never really understood, except from the school boy perspective.

I do thank AIM for opening my eyes a little on a piece of history I never really understood, except from the school boy perspective.

I hope for a better day in ethnic understanding and relations.



Dick Bernard

1 - "The Religious Roots of Black Catholics of St Louis MO" by Madeline Barni Oliver and William Barnaby Faherty, St. Stanislaus Historical Museum, Florissant MO 1977

BACK TO FRANCE

FRANCE IN MODERN TIMES
GORDON WRIGHT
NORTON, 1981

Have you ever wondered about your ancestors' life BQ (before Quebec)?

The below comments may give you a clue, since they refer to France about 1700's, and it is around that time in history that migration to Quebec took place.

To the author of the text below, our apologies. Foolishly when we copied this several years ago we neglected to take down title/author, etc. of the book. We continue the search and will, in time, find out. . . and pass along the info. D.B.

"France in 1750 was the most populous of European states. Louis XV's subjects totalled approximately 22 million, which meant that one of every six Europeans west of the Russian frontier was a Frenchman.

Of Louis's subjects, barely two per cent belonged to the socially and legally privileged nobility and clergy. The First Estate, which included members of the monastic orders as well as priests and bishops, numbered about 130,000; the Second Estate, the hereditary nobility, is usually estimated at about 300,000 (of whom 80,000 belonged to the "old" nobility). All the rest were commoners; either members of that ill-defined category called the bourgeoisie, or ordinary peasants, artisans, workers—le menu peuple, as they were usually called. Nine out of ten lived by agriculture, either on isolated farms or in small village clusters. Few of them ever saw a city; at most, they might look forward to a rare visit to the nearest bourg, a commercial town of five or ten thousand people. Paris, with a population of half-million, was the only metropolis; no other city except Lyon exceeded a hundred thousand.

Along side the aristocracy as a privileged order stood the clergy, whose label "First Estate" seemed to suggest even greater pre-eminence. Although there was a clear line distinguishing the clergy from the other estates, it's members by no means constituted a class, in any sense of the word, or even homogeneous stratum of society. It was, rather, a professional category enjoying certain social privileges; it's upper ranks came almost entirely from the nobility, it's middle and lower ranks from the bourgeoisie and the peasantry. Although a strong corporative spirit—and in some cases a common

intensity of faith—held these diverse elements together, the gulf between hierarchy and parish priests was growing steadily wider and more obvious during the eighteenth century. Many village curés resented the contrast in income between the upper and lower ranks—a contrast roughly of 140 to 1. The village priests were, however, better off than the average wage earner, and they enjoyed greater social prestige. Dissatisfaction was sharper in the middle ranks of the church hierarchy—the cathedral chapters, for example, and the seminary teachers. Many of these posts were held by bookish young men of bourgeois origin, who chose the clerical career for reasons similar to those that inspire their modern successors to become university teachers. There had been a time when the able and ambitious ones might hope to rise to so distinguished a post as a bishopric; but the interesting difficulties of advancement in the eighteenth century were producing a sense of exasperated frustration among them.

The line that separated the nobility and the clergy from the ninety-eight per cent of Frenchmen who made up the Third Estate was not, strictly speaking, a line between privilege and non-privilege. Historians of the period keep reminding us that privilege, in the sense of vested legal rights or special dispensations granted to certain groups, was varied and widely shared in the hierarchical society of the old regime. Not only the nobility and the clergy, but many well-to-do commoners, many cities, whole provinces, were exempt from direct taxation; while on the other hand even the nobility in certain provinces had to pay the direct land tax called the taille. The idea of equality of treatment for all citizens was still in the future. The fact remains that some Frenchmen were clearly more privileged than others, and that the nobility and clergy as a whole bore a far smaller share of the tax burden than did the commoners. To speak of them, then, as the privileged orders may not be technically correct, yet it does convey the deeper reality that marked the system.

Among the unprivileged, the great bulk of Frenchmen lived and worked on the land. With rare exceptions, these peasants were free men who had long since shaken off all but a few annoying remnants of feudal servitude. It is not easy to reconstruct the rural life of that time; travellers' accounts were sketchy and full of contradictions, and statistics are remarkably inadequate. Some of the evidence

continued next page

BACK TO FRANCE, continued

suggests an almost incredible degree of degradation and misery; mud floored huts, ragged clothing, undernourishment, frequent famine. Other testimony supports the view that, however primitive the existence of the French peasantry, conditions had improved over the previous century and were probably better than anywhere else on the continent.

Most peasants were tenants, sharecroppers, or day laborers on estates owned by the privileged orders or the bourgeoisie, but a great many, perhaps half of all the peasants, had achieved virtual ownership of at least a bit of land. A few of these, the so-called *laboureurs*, were on the way of becoming a kind of rural middle class; they were expanding their holdings, acquiring herds of stock, even hiring field hands and lending money. The great mass of *manouvriers*, on the other hand, lived at a precarious subsistence level, supplementing their meager crops by working part-time on the large estates or taking employment in the rural textile industry which allowed them to spin or weave at home. Their eagerness to acquire land amounted to a passion; but they were even more dedicated to preserving such remainders of the medieval rural structure as the right to graze animals and collect firewood on the common land of the village. The bulk of the peasantry was clearly precapitalist and intensely traditionalist in outlook—except that it wished to free itself from the tag-ends of feudalism.

It was in the cities and towns, not in the countryside, that the ferment of social change was at work. The bourgeoisie, an amorphous and varied category that included industrial and commercial enterprisers, financiers, professional men, bureaucrats, shopkeepers, and some independent artisans, had been making steady income gains during the eighteenth century. Some of this new wealth was plowed back into business expansions, but more of it was used to purchase town houses, country estates, government bonds, government or church offices, or army commissions. This was, on the whole, a professional rather than a business bourgeoisie; the capitalist urge to innovate and expand was not its dominant trait. Its goal for the most part was to gain social status, to broaden out its share of special privilege within a society of inequality, to "live nobly" after the pattern of the aristocracy. To view the social conflict of the old regime as one that pitted a rising capitalist class against a medieval

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feudal class is tempting, in an age so strongly marked by Marxist ideas as ours, but it is also more misleading than it is accurate. Classes were much less clearly defined, and their value systems much more clearly in conflict, than the Marxian model would require.

If France had possessed a rigid and impermeable caste system, no such idea of sharing aristocratic privilege and adopting the aristocratic value system would ever have occurred to the bourgeoisie. But over the centuries there had been opportunities to rise; difficult and devious perhaps, but always available to the opportunist. Some bought office and carried noble status; some married their daughters to an impecunious aristocrat (who might speak contemptuously of the need to "manure his land," but who nevertheless gave noble status to his half-bourgeois sons); some were content to move a few steps up the ladder by the purchase of a minor army commission or a middle-rank church post. Enough opportunities had been available in the past to keep the bourgeoisie generally satisfied with the system and to make them want to share its advantages. To what degree did the situation change in the mid-eighteenth century? On this crucial point, recent years have brought active historical debate. Many historians have argued that a drastic change did occur—that an "aristocratic reaction" saw the old nobility embark on a successful campaign to monopolize all high offices in the state, thus blocking the upward channels of mobility against the ambitious bourgeoisie. By the 1780's they point out, Jacques Necker was the only remaining top-level bureaucrat who was of common birth. There had been twenty non-noble bishops in 1740; the last one disappeared in 1783. By a royal decree of 1781, officers' commissions in certain army regiments were reserved to men who could show four generations of noble lineage. The result, as these historians see it, was the gradual alienation of much of the bourgeoisie. Forced to abandon its aristocratic aspirations, it began to adopt the views of the reforming philosophes, either in a mood of bitter frustration or in the hope that criticism might make the aristocracy retreat. By the 1780's—so goes the argument—enlightenment ideas were in general circulation in bourgeois salons and publications. Like Moliere's doctor, the French bourgeois was becoming revolutionist in spite of himself.

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BACK TO FRANCE, continued

One other segment of eighteenth-century society remains to be mentioned. At the very bottom of the social pyramid, marked off from the petty bourgeoisie by no clear line of division, was the small but growing category of urban wage earners. Only Paris and Lyon contained sizable groups of this sort. Most of them were skilled artisans or handicraftsmen who worked in small shops, in intimate association with a bourgeois employer. Frequently they crossed the line that separated them from bourgeois status simply by setting up shop as independent enterprisers, with one or two assistants. Below them, ranging down into a kind of urban underworld that lived by it's wits, was an almost submerged category of unskilled laborers who worked irregularly at menial or rough tasks. Many of them could not have survived without regular recourse to charity; in periods of economic stress, half of them—indeed, half of the skilled workers as well—might be unemployed. Early in 1790, according to official records, one Parisian in five was on some sort of relief roll, public or private. Even in prosperous times, the line between human and subhuman conditions in the urban areas would have been hard to draw.

SE RECUEILLIR

by John England

Mordecai Spector gave us a banquet of food for thought in his article printed in the June *Chez Nous*. He rips the historical image of Columbus apart with the vigor of a pit bull and goes on to mention the clash between Indian Nations and European plunderers. Is Mr. Specktor including the French in this broad spectrum of caucasian devils? I certainly hope that he does not. Indeed, most of the relationships between the Indians and the French appear to be harmonious.

It is my understanding that the English and the Spanish were unduly hard raw-hiders extra - ordinaire when dealing with their Indian brothers. Dr. Robert Fogerty, Professor Emeritus at St Thomas remarked in a lecture that the Spanish were in the habit of removing a foot from their Indian charges in order to prevent them from running away. And the English were no better. Their inhuman treatment of the Irish qualified them for bigger and better things in North America in their dealings with the Indians and French Acadians; a point Fogarty failed to

mention. However, the good professor did state that the French treated the Native American with greater dignity than any other European group settling in North America. The Metis are living proof of this.

The Catholic faith of the French I suppose had a great influence on the manner in which the explorer, the trader and settlers treated the Indians. Eve Gagne, P.H.D. a respected educator submits that there existed a wide difference in the way the Francos and Anglo-Saxons treated the Indians, based on religious beliefs. French Canadians accepted the teachings of the Church of Rome. One of those teachings was that all men possess souls, and in that respect, at least, all men were equal in the eyes of Catholics. Indeed, the Bishop of Quebec urged priests to treat the Indians and the French with equal consideration. Several of these priests took the Indians' hardships to heart and accepted the fate of the Indians for themselves. For example, in 1838, Reverend Father Benjamin Petit joined the Potowatomie Indians of his parish in their forced relocation march to the Southwest. Reverend Petit as well as many of the Indians died on that march.

An example closer to home involved Bishop Whipple of the Episcopal Church and Alexander Faribault. After the Dakota uprising of 1862, these two gentlemen provided help, food and land east of Faribault for Dakota refugees. The local newspapers attacked the men in print as if they were traitors instead of complementing them for their charity.

Monsignor Augustin Rovaux was another great friend of the Indian people. He is known to have nursed and ailing Dakota women and to have baptized many Dakota men before their execution at Mankato.

It is to the credit of the French that they adopted Indian customs as voyageurs and intermarried with them. Such unions were not always socially acceptable. And some marriages were intended to improve economic relations. Nevertheless, this new role produced a proud race of people, solid citizens like Pierre Bottineau, Alexander Faribault, and Louis Riel. and yes, Mr. Specktor, I have Metis ancestry too.

continued, next page

IN LOVING MEMORY OF GRANDPA
by George LaBrosse

Eulogy for George J. LaBrosse (1894 - 1990)
St. Michael's Church, West St. Paul, MN
September 22, 1990
by George A. LaBrosse

It was only 11 years ago last June, grandma and grampa were married in this very church. Most of us were here for the wedding. Time seems to have gone so fast.

When I was born, my mother and father decided to name me George as grampa's namesake. It was a name he always gave me reason to be proud of.

Grampa was a faithful and devoted husband and father. His responsibilities to his family were never ignored. His faith in God and the Church was always evident and unwavering.

His abilities as a carpenter were in demand many times and he was always there to help.

His standards have set an example I will always strive to achieve.

But I will remember more than this.

He loved fishing. He used to count the days to summer when it would be warm enough to sit on the lake all day and fish.

He thoroughly enjoyed his lakehome at Forest Lake. Everyone was always welcome and I have many fond memories of our trips up to the lake.

He loved football and baseball. He told me when he was a young man, he wanted to be a pitcher, but he knew he didn't have the ability. The Chicago Cubs were his pet team but he followed the Twins, too.

He loved to play cards. His favorite game was 500. He was a competitive player, sometimes a bit of a tease, but always sociable.

He loved looking at brand new station wagons on the showroom floor. And he bought many of them.

He enjoyed birthday parties and many times would lead the birthday song. Only a week ago, he sang happy birthday to my mother while he was laid up in bed.

All his grandchildren had nicknames: Mix Mox, Baby Karen, Goldilocks, Pip Squeek, Pudgy, Smiler, Jack, and Baby Suzy. And he knew all his great-grandchildren's names by heart. He was thrilled to be the adopted father and grandfather of Marion's three sons and their family.

And if some spoiled young boy about 10 years old decided to run away from home and hide in the choir loft at church, he was there to find him, ease his doubts, and bring him home.

These are only some of the memories I will carry with me until I go to meet him.

I'd like to read a poem someone gave me last week. It's called "Safely Home". The author is unknown. If grampa could talk to us from where he is, this might be what he'd say:



Safely Home
Author Unknown

I am home in heaven, dear ones,
Oh, so happy and so bright.
There is perfect joy and beauty
In this everlasting light.

All the pain and grief is over,
Every restless tossing passed.
I am now at peace forever,
Safely home in heaven at last.

Safely home at that lakehome by the still water,
Where the big fish bite on every cast.
Where all my friends and family come to visit,
And we talk about good times past.

Did you wonder I so calmly
Trode the valley of the shade?
Oh, but Jesus' love illumined
Every dark and fearful glade.

And He came Himself to meet me
In the way so hard to tread;
And with Jesus' arm to lean on
Could I have one doubt or dread?

Then you must not grieve so sorely,
For I love you dearly still.
Try to look beyond death's shadows;
Pray to trust our Father's will.

There is work still waiting for you,
So you must not idly stand.
Do it now while life remaineth;
You shall rest in Jesus' land.

When that work is all completed,
He will gently call you home.
Oh, the rapture of that meeting;
Oh, the joy to see you come.

Goodbye, grampa.

SE RECUEILLIR, continued

I would suggest that Mr. Specktor cease in dealing with generalities when addressing the subject of the relationships between the whites and Native Americans. I would further advise him to sow seeds of unity rather than discord.

THE BILINGUAL 1991-CALENDAR "LES FRANÇAIS D'AMÉRIQUE / FRENCH IN AMERICA"
is available at:

- \$6.50 a copy, postage and handling included.
- \$5.00 a copy, postage and handling included--for a minimum order of five 1991-calendars sent to a same address.

BACK COPIES. (except 1987): \$3.00 each (postage included)-- must be ordered at the same time as the 1991 calendar, they are not sold separately.

\$ _____ Check payable to: French-American Calendar 1991

Quantity: 1991 _____ Other years: _____

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____ 363

Return to: VIRGIL BENOIT, RR2, BOX 353, RED LAKE FALLS, MN 56750

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NOUVELLES VILLES JUMELLES



Decembre 1990



NEWSLETTER OF

La Société Canadienne Française Du Minnesota



Evénements à Venir - Upcoming Events

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| December 1 | <i>Les Canadiens Errants</i> will be performing at the Christmas celebrations at Murphy's Landing (story inside). |
| December 14 | LSCF Christmas Party, 6 pm, St. Louis Church, 506 Cedar St., St. Paul (story inside). |
| December 24 | Christmas Mass celebrated in French 6:30 pm, St. Louis Catholic Church |
| To be announced | American Indian Movement to discuss events in Canada this past summer. |
| To be announced | Program by <i>La Compagnie des Hivoemants de la Rivière St. Peter</i> |
| April 25-28 | Festival of Nations. This year's theme: "Fables and Fairytales" |



LSCF Fête de Noël - Christmas Party

"Come and enjoy a beautiful, joyous old fashioned family Christmas." This is the message of the LSCF committee led by Fern McClean regarding the party that will unroll at 6 pm, December 14 at the parish hall of St. Louis Church, St. Paul. For the children, a certain Père Noël will appear. For all there will be surprise entertainment.



This is a potluck and you are encouraged to bring your favorite dish. If not, you might want to make a nominal donation. Dinner begins at 6:30.

Tant mieux if you wish to come dressed in French Canadian costume and bring a French Canadian dish.

Venez tout le monde!

Ci-joint Sondage de Grande Importance Important Survey Enclosed

Enclosed with this issue of Nouvelles Villes Jumelles you will find back-to-back a 1979 letter by John Rivard and a new survey form put together by Sister Mary Henry and Dick Bernard.

Your participation in the survey is invited, requested, and pleaded for. Use a separate sheet for the long answers and mail it to Dick Bernard, 7632 157th St. W., #301, Apple Valley, MN 55124.

Fêtes de Noël à Murphy's Landing Christmas Time at Murphy's Landing

Les Canadiens Errants will be appearing again at the Christmas activities at Murphy's Landing in Shakopee on December 1. They will be performing "here and there" all day. If you do not know, Christmas time at the Old Town at Murphy's Landing is a very jolly experience.

Various heritage groups representing our Minnesota pioneer nationalities recreate their Christmas traditions of the period 1840 to 1890. The recreated

old town contains an authentic French log cabin dated 1844—the Faribault cabin—and German farmhouse and barn.

The *Errants* will be there on Saturday, December 1, but Christmas at Murphy's Landing is on weekends from November 23 through December 21, from 11:30 to 4:30. Admission is \$6 for adults, \$5 for seniors or students 6-18, and free for accompanied children under 5. The price includes a horse drawn shuttle and tour. For details call 445-6901 or 220-3988.

To reach Murphy's Landing Historic Site go south on 35W, then west on Hwy 13, which becomes 101. Murphy's Landing is 1 mile west of Valley Fair and 1 mile east of Shakopee. You will be outside part of the time, so dress accordingly.

Messe de Noël en Français French Christmas Mass

There will be a Christmas Mass celebrated in French on Monday, December 24th, 6:30 pm, at St. Louis Catholic Church. Let's all attend this Mass if at all possible, and show the Church that more French services would be appreciated.

St. Louis is the oldest continuous French parish in St. Paul. Let's all partake in our heritage during the holiday season.

Joyeux Noël

Chansons Français en Casette French Christmas Songs on Cassette

Al Girard

Les Canadiens Errants have just completed a new tape of French Christmas songs. Those interested in ordering a tape should contact Marie Bouley, 328 Pleasure Creek Drive, Blaine, MN 55434 or any member of the *Errants*.

These songs are probably very similar to many of French/Canadian heritage and would make a great Christmas gift for friends and relatives.

Some of the songs are: "Il Est Né Le Divin Enfant", "Pat-a-Pan", "Venez Divin Messie" and many more.

We're still looking for singers and musicians!

Renouvellement de Cotisation Membership Renewal

Mes Amis,

Once again it's time to renew your membership. The membership year runs from January 1st through December 31st. The dues are indicated on the membership form.

This year, in order to encourage new members, I'd like you to include a name and address, at the bottom of the membership form, of a friend or relative (young or old) that you feel would enjoy becoming part of our organization. We'll send them a brochure and add them to our mailing list for a short period of time on a trial basis.

Note: This form may also be used to submit donations, more than one membership, or gift memberships.

On behalf of the Board, I'd like to thank all the 1990 members for their generosity and support for this year. I know 1991 will be another great year.

Merci Beaucoup,

George LaBrosse
Membership Chairman

Thank You

I'd like to express my gratitude to all those who were so kind with their thoughts and expressions of sympathy with the passing of my grandfather.

George LaBrosse & Family

Merry Christmas

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL/APPLICATION

Name _____ Telephone _____ Profession _____

Address _____
Street City State ZIP

1991 Membership Dues:

2 Year Membership Dues ('91 & '92):

Family	\$15.00
Senior (over 62)	\$ 8.00
Senior Couple	\$10.00
Single	\$10.00
Minor (under 18)	\$ 1.00

Family	\$30.00
Senior (over 62)	\$16.00
Senior Couple	\$20.00
Single	\$20.00
Minor (under 18)	\$ 2.00

DONATIONS: The Société is a non-profit organization and accepts tax-deductible donations from people interested in promoting the French-Canadian culture. Please make out any donation you may wish to contribute to: "La Société Canadian-Française" and mail to:

P.O. Box 10913
Minneapolis, MN 55458

Donations will go into the general fund to help support our programs and activities.
Thanks!

Please add for fee trial mailings:

Name _____ Address _____

Gift memberships (please include dues with your check)

Name _____ Address _____

Name _____ Address _____

Novelles Villes Jumelles is published monthly by LA SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE FRANÇAIS DU MINNESOTA. The next deadline is December 28 for the mid-January issue. Send your news, contributions, ideas, photos to (or call) editor William Horn, 2700 Poshay Tower, Minneapolis, MN 55492, phone: 612 341-2581 (days), 612-922-9013 (evenings). Staff for *Novelles Villes Jumelles* are: Bill Horn-editor; Steve Andersen-desk top publishing; Al Girard-printing; George La-Brosse-labels; Lee Collalz-folding and mailing. Articles of statewide interests may also be sent to *Chez Nous*, which publishes on alternate months (editor Dick Bernard, 612-431-6515, days).

The Cajuns

Dick Bernard spotted the excellent article on our Cajun cousins in the October *National Geographic*. Editor agrees—check this one out.

Nouveaux Bureaux pour L'Alliance Française

New Offices for L'Alliance Française

L'Alliance Française has moved from the second floor to Suite 150 in Baker court at 821 Raymond Ave., St. Paul. You are invited to visit the expanded office and classroom space, come check out the library and magazines. At a recent open house several LSCF members were present, including Sister Mary Henry, Bruce Bedore, and Dick Bernard. The Consul General de France from Chicago, M. Richard Narich, was the guest of honor.

Culture Française dans les Villes Jumelles - French Cultural Event

Jean de Florette and *Manon des Sources*, two marvelous French films, will be shown at the West Bank Union Auditorium, U of M, at 7:30 pm, Nov. 28 and 29. The films are based on stories of Marcel Pagnol and are set in Provence. The films are parts 1 and 2 of the same story, so you should try to see both, but if you can't, choose *Manon des Sources*. With Gerard Depardieu, Yves Montand, Emmanuelle Beartet, Daniel Auteuil. FREE.

Fresh-Air KFAI 90.3 presents *Bonjour Minnesota* Tuesday mornings from 9 to 10. Music and patter in and out of English and French.

Français de Base - Basic French

Here is an opportunity for those of us who have no background in the French language to learn in an interesting and enjoyable atmosphere. Al Girard enrolled and tells us it is great fun. The following descriptions are provided by program supervisor Joady Tombarge.

Basic French

This is truly a beginners course for the adult who has had no previous language study. You will learn to speak, read, write, and com-

prehend French. You will also be able to use the knowledge you gain for travel, or as a foundation for further study.

Tuesdays **\$32** **St. Anthony HS**
Jan. 22-Mar. 12 **Room 104**
7-9 pm **(no class Mar 5)**

Basic French II

Basic French II is a continuation of Basic French. This class will offer more travel vocabulary in addition to more of the essential and basic survival language skills.

Wednesdays **\$32** **St. Anthony HS**
Jan. 23-March 6 **Room 104**
7-9 pm

Registration begins Monday, Jan. 7, 1991 at St. Anthony/New Brighton Community Services, 3301 Silver Lake Road, St. Anthony village, MN 55418. For more information call 781-5021.

Vente Annuelle à Notre Dame de Lourdes Bake & Gift Sale at Our Lady of Lourdes

The annual pre-Christmas sale at Our Lady of Lourdes will be held Dec. 1 and 2 (Sat. 9 to 6:30; Sun. 9 to 1). You can try a hot wedge of their famous



Tourtière, before buying a frozen one. There will be other baked goods and a variety of handcrafted items especially suitable as gifts. The sale will be in the French Hall in the Lower

Church. Guided tours of the historic Upper Church will be offered. The address is 21 SE Prince St., Mpls. (379-2259).

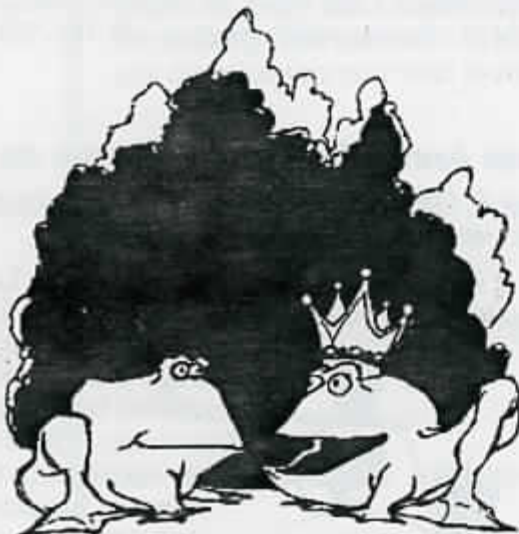
While in the area of Our Lady of Lourdes, you can cross over the new Father Louis Hennepin Bridge, now named for the man himself, not the avenue. Then nearby at Pioneer Square (7 Main Street NE, the intersection of Main and Marshall) see the "Pioneer's Monument" created by John K. Daniels in the 30's. The model for the pioneer woman was Sadie Winters, who died this April at age 72.

NOTE: The annual Festival to celebrate the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes will take place in February. *Villes Jumelles* will keep you posted.

Attention Artistes Folkloriques Folk Artists Take Note

The Minnesota State Arts Board advises us that the next deadline for the Folk Artists Directory is March 1, 1991. The Folk Artists Directory is a juried listing of folk artists in Minnesota. The completed Directory is sent to over a thousand potential presenters of folk art. Many of those listed have found the Directory to be a good promotional tool.

The Arts Board also gives Sponsorship and Apprenticeship grants in the area of Folk Art. The deadline of the next grants will have passed as you read this, but information on these and the Directory can be obtained by calling 297-1121 if you are in the Twin Cities, or 800-652-9747 if out-state. Ask for the Arts Board and then for Phil Nusbaum, Program Associate.



Fait Divers - News in Brief

PM Set to Launch Panel on Constitution

(*Montreal Gazette*): Prime Minister Brian Mulroney will launch his much-awaited initiative on national unity today with the establishment of a committee to consult Canadians on the future of the country. The prime minister will name about 10 well-known Canadians to the committee, which will hold informal town-hall meetings across the country as part of a two-phase approach to constitutional reform. It will be the government's first constitutional initiative since the failure in June of the Meech Lake accord, which would have brought Quebec into the 1982 constitution by recognizing the province as a distinct society within Canada. (1 Nov 90)

-(courtesy Canadian Consulate General)

Extrait du Procès-Verbal Gleanings from the Minutes

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General Membership October 1-

The Treasurer reported a balance of \$1324.30 which includes \$505.15 deposited by Mark Labine as a result of his sales effort at the AFRAN meeting at Huot Crossing in August....President Bedore announced that chairpersons are needed for the Sales Committee and the Social Committee. Also previewed the November meeting and plans for a French Mass in December....Angela Jerome Tuckner and her husband Steve along with Treffle Daniels have agreed to handle Public Relations for the SCFM....The Christmas tapes by *Les Canadiens Errants* were announced by Pierre Girard....Meeting attendance was a concern....The survey form was discussed....A film on *Les Voyageurs* was shown.

Board October 24-

Fern McLean and Renee Juairé have generously agreed to do the Christmas Party....Angela Jerome Tuckner, also a member of AFRAN (*L'Association des Français du Nord*) suggested programs by either of two Native American groups. Also, a French-Canadian festival with members preparing omelette, pea soup, etc.. and participating in other FC cultural activities.

General Membership November 5-

A very interesting talk by Dr. Milda Heblom on Canadian Radio and TV comparing and contrasting it with that of the U.S.A. Dr. Heblom is Director of Canadian Studies and Chair of Political Science at Augsburg College....A new brochure for LSCF has been prepared by Al Girard; it will be out soon....Leroy Dubois is investigating jackets with the LSCF logo. Think about how many you may need



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chez nous

NEWSLETTER OF DECEMBRE-JANVIER 1990-91 VOL. 12 NO. 3

La société canadienne-française



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 appeared to them and the glory of the Lord shone over them. Do not be afraid, I am here to bring good news... This very day in David's town your Savior was born - Christ the Lord - Suddenly a great army of heaven's angels appeared with the angel, singing praises to God.

JOYEUX NOËL ET BONNE ET HEUREUSE ANNÉE

LE JOUR D'ACTION DE GRÂCES
(Thanksgiving Day)

by Don Gribble, Hibbing MN

At our September meeting of La Societe, the question arose as to whether there was a French Thanksgiving Day. Toward an answer to that query, the following is extracted from Francis X. Weiser's Handbook of Christian Feasts and Customs (N.Y., Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1958.)

One special, yearly thanksgiving celebration going back to ancient times took place at the successful conclusion of the harvest. Thus, everyone as far back as one goes in the knowledge of religions and cultures, he finds harvest festivals with thanksgiving rites.

In northern France, harvesters seated on top of the last load brought home from the fields, chant an ancient traditional tune to the text Kyre-o-ôle. This is an interesting folklore relic dating from Carolingian times when shepherds and field workers cheered their solitary toil by singing the Kyrie Eleison as they had heard the monks sing it at High Mass.

In southern France the last sheaf of grain was tied in the form of a cross and decorated with ribbons and flowers for the harvest celebration. Afterward it was placed in the best room of the house to be kept as a token of blessing and good fortune.

The most common, almost universal harvest and thanksgiving celebration was held on the Feast of St. Martin of Tours (Martinmas) on November 11. It was a holiday in Germany, France, Holland, England and in Central Europe. People first went to Mass and then spent the rest of the day in games, dances, parades and a festive dinner, the main feature of which was the traditional goose dinner, they drank "St. Martin's wine," the first lot of wine made from the grapes of the recent harvest.

Martinmas was the festival commemorating filled barns and stocked larders, the actual Thanksgiving Day of the Middle Ages. Even today, it is still kept in rural sections of Europe, and dinner on St. Martin's Day would be unthinkable without the luscious, golden-brown Martin's goose.



THOSE WHO READ CHEZ NOUS thank us for it. "Share the wealth" with your friends and relatives who may be interested in LSCF and in Chez Nous.

"I truly enjoyed the newsletter and I am interested in contributing material in the future."

P.S. Desrosiers dit Dargis
Hayward, WI

"I have greatly enjoyed your newsletters. My family and I now live in eastern Wisconsin. However I am originally from Minnesota where my great-grandfather, Pierre Auguste LaCroix, settled in Hugo MN after leaving Quebec. Indeed my grandfather, Hector LaCroix, moved from Hugo to St. Paul and was employed by L'eglise St. Louis from approximately 1932 until the time of his death in 1949."

Brian LaCroix
512 S Christine St
Appleton WI 54915

"I have my sister reading your Chez Nous and she is enjoying it as much as I do, and I read it over and over."

Anna Himel
Houma, Louisiana

(Ed. Note: watch for some articles on Mardi Gras in the bayou country of South Louisiana in the next issue, courtesy of Anna.)

MEMORIES OF FALL, 1858

by Father Joseph Goiffon

ED. NOTE: In Juin-Juillet, 1990, Chez Nous we reprinted Father Goiffon's recollections of his trip by Red River Oxcart from St. Paul to Pembina, Dakota Territory, in late summer 1858.

Here we continue his recollections with his commentary about the first few months in his new home.

These recollections were probably penned sometime after 1881 at either Centerville or Little Canada MN, and were translated sometime later by Charlotte (Mrs. Henry) Huot of St. Paul. They are reprinted as they appear in the translation.

"At last I arrived at St. Joseph of Pembina, which was the capital city of Dakota. It was a town about a mile long, spread on the left bank of the Pembina river, about 35 to 40 miles from its mouth and dotted, from place to place, with tiny homes of logs of a single story and covered with hay mixed with clay. One house of about 50x28 covered with shingles with a basement and a story and a half was an exception. I directed myself towards this home thinking it was the residence of the Rev. George Belcourt, grand vicar of St. Paul. But no, the basement composed of 6 rooms was the home of the new community of sisters of Mr. Belcourt, and the upper floors served as a church while waiting till they could build a bigger one. I asked where dwelt the grand vicar and they showed me, a block from there a house of single story 16x24, covered with branches, and recovered with hay mixed with clay and grass. It was the home of Mr. Belcourt. It was divided in two. The front room 16x16 served as a work shop, the second 16x7 or 8 was his bed chamber and study.

I noticed but a poor bed that Mr. Belcourt wished me to use for the night; but having refused I spread an old buffalo hide on the floor and passed the night as in the journey in the prairie. All was so poor in that little room that the vicar general for more privacy thought better to divide the room. For that purpose nothing better was found than an old piece of oiled canvas which had been used to cover the cart and protect it from the rain during the voyage from St. Paul. It was nearly as black as the rod that it covered. The next day I was making myself a little cupboard in my little part of the room, in which to put my clothes, and made myself a little table to write on, thinking

of spending the winter at St. Joseph, but that evening, or the next day, Mr. Belcourt told me that he had received complaints from the inhabitants of Pembina who had learned that there were two priests at St. Joseph and reclaimed one for themselves. The demand appeared just to us. Pembina was a mission of 425 Metis catholiques. It is situated on the Red River, where the Pembina River joins it, and about 35 or 40 miles from St. Joseph. The house of St. Joseph was founded by Mr. Belcourt, belonging to the diocese of St. Boniface and was situated at 1½ miles from the Canadian limits. It had been about abandoned three years ago, by Mr. Belcourt because of the inundations which, for two successive years had upset most of the houses and destroyed most of the cultivation then in progress. The majority of the Metis had followed Mr. Belcourt in the new mission of St. Joseph, and the others had stayed at Pembina. They were nearly abandoned for 7 years concerning spiritual guidance. I resigned myself to go to evangelize them and Mr. Belcourt took me there the next day.

Arriving at Pembina, I found a village in the middle of the prairie, consisting only of a poor little church, made of oak logs and measuring about 20x30; by its side there was a small house inhabited by two sisters of the new society of Mr. Belcourt. Those were teaching school.

The settlement of Pembina had been well established by the time Goiffon arrived in 1858. According to Elwyn Robinson's History of North Dakota (University of Nebraska Press 1966) "in 1848, Father George A. Belcourt, a Catholic priest, built a mission nearby. . . Father Belcourt had been driven out of the Selkirk settlement for siding with the metis against the Hudson's Bay Company in the struggle over free trade. . . After the flood of 1851, Father Belcourt and Kittson chose a new site for the settlement thirty miles to the west, on Pembina Mountain. . . The metis at St. Joseph lived a civilized life. They built one-story houses along the Pembina River, planted fields of barley and potatoes, secured a reaper and thresher, and built a gristmill and sawmill. Grasshoppers or floods damaged or destroyed the crops, and pemmican long remained the staple food."

At about a block distant, Mr. Belcourt showed me a miserable cabin, 12x12, which served him formerly as a blacksmith shop, telling me that I could live there for the winter. I answered that I did not think it a suitable lodging for a priest, but, as the church had no sacristy, I was thinking of building a small addition to it, in which I would make for myself a small room and a sacristy.

Then, Mr. Belcourt called together the principal members of the congregation, and made them a convincing discourse in order to show them the privilege and advantage and happiness they possessed, to have from now on a priest in their midst to instruct them and look after their spiritual welfare. And the next day Mr. Belcourt returned to St. Joseph.

When the next Sunday came, I gathered all the little eloquence I possessed to try to prove to my new parishioners that I had come amongst them for their good and explained to them that, having no lodging, I proposed to make a small addition to the back of the church. I invited them then, to come the next day and bring the necessary wood and



raise a frame work, for this little addition. (I did not know the Metis who like to have a priest sacrifice himself for them but who do nothing for him.) The next day I only saw one young man, coming without tools. From that you can judge how much work was done. The next Wednesday Mr. Belcourt having returned to get what he had left at Pembina, and seeing that we had done nothing told me again that as the winter was approaching, I would do well to go and settle in the old blacksmith shop. Realizing already that if I would make an addition to the church, I could not count on my Metis, I answered "let us go and see". It was a tiny house of oak logs 12x12, and not fitted, and 7 or 8 feet high; it had a wooden floor and the roof was dovetailed. It appeared more beautiful within than without. And I was satisfied, thinking I could take it such as it was. I was much mistaken in my calculation. The winter was approaching; I had no stove; and it was not easy to find one in that section, and the house having no chimney, I was forced to make one, but how?

I could not begin the work because there was in this house a poor family who had begun to build elsewhere, promising day by day to leave but remaining forever. After I had waited a whole month, in the beginning of October, the tenant, at last ready to leave, told me "are you to keep the floor? It is mine and I need it in my new home." "If the floor is yours, you can take it up, I have some slabs of pine wood and will make a better floor than yours; anyway I wish to make also a cellar." It was a big undertaking for such a poor carpenter as myself who had nothing but tools even poorer, because these pine slabs were nothing but the leavings of logs from which Mr. Belcourt had made boards. And these slabs were too large and thick at the big end, too small and thin at the other end.

Anyhow, with perseverance, I finally was able to make a good enough floor. It was only a small beginning. My floor finished, the tenant asked me "are you going to keep the door? The door is also mine." "If the door is yours, you may take it, and I will make a better looking one." I had some boards and I made a door of which the wooden hinges made such a noise that I did not need a bell to announce the arrival of visitors.

At last I thought myself settled in my home when my man came for the third time and told me "are you going to keep the window? It is a window that I borrowed and I must return it." (It was a poor window frame attached against the logs, because the hole which it closed was without shape.) I started making fun of him a third time telling him that he could take away his window and I would make something more suitable. As I had watched the men, the winter before, making window frames for the Cathedral of St. Paul, I tried to imitate them and I succeeded in making a nice frame, which I did not put against the logs but fitted into the opening, and so made a fairly good looking window. When my house was enclosed, I divided it into two parts and in that way making four rooms, two above and two below, one serving as living room, the other as a kitchen, sitting room and bed room. I needed to have a chimney not having a stove. In order to make one, I cut five logs from the bottom of my cabin and replaced them by a wall of earth, as did the people of Lyons. This wall was a foot and $\frac{1}{2}$ thick. I made an oven, thinking of having something to cook in it, and built on the wall of earth, a fine chimney with a

French cornice. I used clay mixed with hay, as was the custom of the country, and made a chimney which went above the roof. I had no sand, no bricks and no cement. The house fixed, it was necessary to have furniture. With a slat of white wood, left from the floor, I made myself a three legged chair. As I had no bed, I made one in the corner of the room which was six feet wide. Above the bed I built myself a closet, and there I was completely established. I was only lacking of kitchen utensils. They soon came. Mr. Joe Rolette brought me a large tin pot, two plates, two forks, two spoons, and four or five pounds of flour, also two pounds of tea and some sugar. There I was furnished with everything and happy as a king in my beautiful castle.

My house ready, I had to think of the Good Lord. My church was of logs, but very poor. It had neither benches nor chairs. Every one, children, men, girls and women, all sat on the floor. There was a tabernacle on the altar, but it was only a little box, without ornaments and without a key. There was also a candle box, I think. I made myself a lathe with two branches affixed to a beam which held them together, two posts to hold

EDITORS NOTE: in our last issue we printed without attribution (and with apology to the author) an article about France in the 1700's.

Some detective work has resulted in a solution to our dilemma. The book from which the article came is France in Modern Times by Gordon Wright New York, Norton, 1981. Our thanks to Prof Johannes Postma, teacher of French History at Mankato State University for the information.

my wood to turn, a large arc above my two branches, and a cord attached to the one of my arc. With the aid of my foot, I turned the wood that I wanted to make beautiful. Then I turned four nice posts for the tabernacle, and fitted a key to it.

As I did not want to sit on the floor, like my parishioners, I continued to turn post for chairs, and soon found myself comfortably seated with my two altar boys. There was no stove in the church, but when we are young we can get along without one. I did not worry about that.

Having everything fixed in the church and in my castle, it was necessary to think of making provisions for the winter. As in the year of 1858, the grasshoppers had destroyed all the crops, and that, beside very few

concluded next page

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF CHEZ NOUS is January 20, 1991. LET US HEAR FROM YOU. Mail contributions to Dick Bernard 7632 157th St W #301 Apple Valley MN 55124 or to Jerry Forchette 214½ N High Street Chippewa Falls WI 54729. This is your newsletter. Let us hear from you.

THE BILINGUAL 1991-CALENDAR "LES FRANÇAIS D'AMÉRIQUE / FRENCH IN AMERICA" is available at:

\$6.50 a copy, postage and handling included.

\$5.00 a copy, postage and handling included--for a minimum order of five 1991-calendars sent to a same address.

BACK COPIES: (except 1987): **\$3.00** each (postage included)-- *must be ordered at the same time as the 1991 calendar, they are not sold separately.*

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people seeded their land. I went with one of my neighbors, who was a poor as I, to make my provisions at St. Boniface, which was 70 miles from Pembina. Having a poor horse it took us two days to get there, and not without misery, as we were obliged to sleep in the open, during very cold weather.

After having made about 60 miles our horse was exhausted. Fortunately we had arrived at St. Norbert, the first parish on this side of the diocese of Mgr. Tache. There I made the acquaintance of the good father Lestant, a young French priest, who received me as a brother and had the kindness to let me have his horse to make the 10 miles of prairie to reach St. Boniface. There also the provisions were scarce, the grasshoppers having destroyed most everything. I arrived at Mgr. Tache's, who was the biggest farmer of that section. He received me with the greatest cordiality, as if I had been one of his children. He gave me a sack of potatoes, one of peas, several cabbages, and refused to accept any payment. Our return to St. Norbert was happy as we had a good horse. But our luck ended when we had to take back our own horse which we had left there on the way up. My companion who had not taken any provision for the voyage, counting on his gun for dinner and supper, marched far ahead of me to find some game, not thinking that I might have some trouble with my old horse. One of the wheels of my cart dropped into a deep rut just the width of the rim; my horse sat down. To try to make him advance was to take a chance to have him make a side jump and break my wheel which did not have in its construction even the reinforcement of an iron nail to make it solid. I had to unload. I was not strong; it was only with the greatest difficulties that I was able to reload my sacks.

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To avoid falling into other ruts which were frequent on the prairie roads, I was obliged to lead my horse by the bridle for about 20 miles, as far as the river Gratiats where we arrived at sun set. Hardly had we made camp when the rain came to trouble us, and continued throughout the night. Having nothing to protect ourselves, but the large wheels of our cart. The next morning I would like to have slept, the weather had turned fine, but it was a Saturday and we still had 30 miles to travel to reach Pembina and say the Mass on Sunday. As old Peter Eden had joined on with an oxen, also carrying provisions, my man found himself with a new companion. I left him in charge of the horse and I went on afoot.

After I made my provisions, I visited my parishioners to take the census. I found 424 on the American side and 24 on the English side. It remained for me to learn the language of the Chippeways that my mission might be more fruitful in my efforts to evangelize these poor savages who were all or nearly all pagans.

Already having copied all the grammar of the Chippeways and thinking and I was contemplating living quietly and happy in my little parish when Mr. Belcourt, in the month of March, 1859, went to Big Canada leaving me in charge of his parish at St. Joseph, which had a population of 900 souls and was about 35 miles from Pembina."

To be continued in future issues. In spring, 1991, we will go on one of the last buffalo hunts with Fr. Goiffon and the Metis.

Our most sincere thanks to Lois Tuckner of Woodbury MN who kindly provided Fr. Goiffon's memoirs.

MESSE DE NOEL EN FRANCAIS

will be celebrated at St. Louis church in downtown St. Paul on December 24th at 6:30 p.m. Please plan to attend yourself and spread the word. St. Louis church is one block south of I-94 on Cedar Street. (The St. Paul Science Museum is across the street).

CHANSONS FRANCAIS EN CASSETTE

are available by contacting Marie Bouley, 328 Pleasure Creek Drive, Blaine MN 55434. This is a brand new tape completed by Les Canadiens Errants. Songs on the tape are very similar to many sung by French-Canadians and would make a great gift for friends and relatives.