

Les Nouvelles de la Famille Doucet

NEWSLETTER OF LES DOUCET DU MONDE

JULY 2009

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Dean Doucet

Dear Cousins:

It is rapidly approaching August, the time for another Congres Mondial Acadien (CMA) round of family reunions. It was ten years ago that most of us were first involved with a CMA reunion, that being 1999 in Louisiana. It was a wonderful time to celebrate the Cajun culture and make friends that would last for years to come. I still think of the fond memories that I have of our Doucet/Doucette reunion in Opelousas. There was excellent entertainment, excellent food, and, most of all, there was getting to know fabulous cousins from across Louisiana and from across the United States and Canada. Wonderful memories.

In 2004 we gathered in Nova Scotia, the land and home of our early ancestors on this continent, and the home of many of their descendants. The feelings were indescribable as to how it felt to walk where Germain and his family walked. I tried to picture walking there with him. In visiting Grand Pre, I tried to imagine the feelings that went through the minds of the men as they were imprisoned and told that they were leaving their beloved Acadie. We met together and enjoyed song and dance from family members who shared their culture with us. We listened at it was explained where the families of Germain's descendants traveled as they left Port Royal and the surrounding communities.

Now it is 2009. Many will be gathering in New Brunswick, the home of many other of Germain's descendants. Again, cousins will embrace and share their culture and history. These are moments to be cherished.

As we celebrate our family reunion in New Brunswick we will begin to look forward to the next reunion in 2014.

I think of the many individuals who have done so much to put together these excellent reunions. Their hard work testifies of their love for our great family and their desire to share a piece of their culture that belongs to our extended family.

I hope that all who participate in these reunions will strive to share their feelings with their immediate and extended families. We need to invigorate not only our generation, but the next generation with a reverence toward our family to ensure that these reunions will continue into the future. We need to teach our families of their heritage and help them to enjoy it.

It is with great gratitude in my heart that I have the privilege to be a part of such a great family. Germain and his descendants have given us a rich heritage. Walk with great gratitude where they walked and be thankful to have them as ancestors. May our love of our ancestors bring great joy into our hearts and into our lives. Be proud of them and have them be proud of you.

LE TERRAIN DE L'ÉGLISE

Par Fidèle Thériault

Submitted by Rolande O'Connell, May 23, 2009

[EDITOR'S NOTE: Rolande is Vice President of the Doucet Reunion Organizing Committee and is a direct descendant of Charles Doucet]

Lorsque les Acadiens vinrent s'établir à Nipisiguit, ils se logèrent principalement sur le côté nord du bassin. Même s'ils n'avaient pas encore reçu du gouvernement les titres officiels de leurs terres, ils convinrent entre eux qu'il fallait avoir des services religieux chez eux et de construire à cette fin une chapelle ou église.

Charles Doucet, qui était le patriarche de la petite colonie, prit la direction du mouvement et convint qu'il ferait don du terrain à la paroisse pour y bâtir une église. On jugea que le point le plus élevé sur la colline dominant le bassin de Nipisiguit était le plus approprié pour la construction d'une église. Ce terrain appartenait à son gendre et voisin, Joseph LeBlanc dit Bouquet qui avait épousé sa fille Modeste. Charles Doucet conclut une entente avec ce dernier pour échanger une égale quantité de terre. Charles se construisit par la suite une maison sur ce lot.¹ Cette donation se fit entre les années 1791 à 1795, époque où l'abbé Mathurin Bourg était missionnaire à Nipisiguit. L'abbé Bourg rédigea un document qu'il donna à Charles Doucet dans lequel étaient spécifiés les conditions de cette donation² Nous n'avons pas retrouvé cet écrit et nous ne savons pas n'ont plus si les dimensions du terrain étaient spécifiées. Cependant, le plan d'arpentage de A. McNeil en 1845 nous apprend qu'il était d'un peu plus de deux acres de superficie.³

Tout indique que ce terrain fut d'abord utilisé comme cimetière. La tradition veut qu'en 1793, un des fils d'Olivier Blanchard, laissa Caraquet en canot avec ses deux frères pour venir à Nipisiguit marier une des filles de Charles Doucet. Une tempête soudaine se leva et les trois frères périrent noyés vis-à-vis de la rivière Bass. Une corne à poudre de fusil fut trouvée par les Indiens sur la rive portant les initiales du futur marié. Charles Doucet transporta les corps des naufragés et les inhuma sur sa terre, près de chez-lui. Il y fit faire une pierre tombale qui existait encore au début du présent siècle.⁴ Charles Doucet donna cette partie de son terrain à l'église à cette époque (1791-1795) où l'abbé Mathurin Bourg était missionnaire à Nipisiguit. L'abbé Bourg remit un écrit à Charles Doucet lui promettant en échange de ce don « un ban d'une place auprès de celui des marguilliers » à condition qu'après sa mort le banc soit vendu aux enchères et que le produit de la vente et de la rente soit utilisé pour faire dire des messes à son intention. Les héritiers de Charles Doucet demandèrent à l'abbé Joyer de se conformer à cet écrit, sinon ils reprendraient possession du terrain. L'abbé Joyer en référa à l'évêque qui lui répondit que si cet écrit avait été rédigé par l'abbé Bourg à l'époque où il était grand-vicaire, il fallait s'y conformer. Il semble que tel fut le cas, car l'on établit une messe de fondation pour Charles Doucet qui devait être célébrée dans l'église de la paroisse à perpétuité.⁶

Le 24 juin 1845, Charles Doucet fils vendit à la paroisse une autre parcelle de terrain pour la somme de 30 shillings qui devaient lui être payé à Noël.⁷ Il fit rédiger le même jour un

autre acte de vente à Monseigneur Dollard pour légaliser le diocèse du Nouveau-Brunswick comme étant le propriétaire légal du terrain où était situé l'église, le cimetière et les autres bâtisses appartenant à la paroisse Sainte-Famille.⁸ Le 7 août 1848, Monseigneur Dollard étant en visite à Bathurst, inscrivit dans le registre des baptêmes de Sainte-Famille, que pour la terre donnée par le défunt Charles Doucet au diocèse pour 999 ans, 3 grandes messes devaient être célébrées...

Plan du terrain de l'église fait par A. McNeil le 19 juin 1845. Archives de l'évêché de Bathurst.

- ¹ Donat Robichaud, Extraits du **Greffé du comté de Gloucester**, volume II, 1986, p. 78. Charles Doucet à Hugh Munro, le 21 mars 1837, volume II, No 318, p. 353.
- ² **AAQ** NB VI-13, lettre de l'abbé Joyer à Monseigneur Plessis, le 14 janvier 1800.
- ³ Archives du diocèse de Bathurst.
- ⁴ **Re-Civil Parish of Bathurst - Important Notes early history**, Anonyme, le 27 mars 1953, 6 pages. Copie : Mme Geraldine Young, Bathurst.
- ⁵ **AAQ** NB VI-13, l'abbé Joyer à Monseigneur Plessis, le 14 janvier 1800.
- ⁶ **AAQ** Livre de comptes de la fabrique de Nipisiguit, le 6 juillet 1811.
- ⁷ Donat Robichaud, Extraits du **Greffé du comté de Gloucester**, volume IV, p. 53. Charles Doucet père au reverend William Dollard, numéro 253, p. 270.
- ⁸ *Ibid.* numéro 254, p. 271.

TRANSLATION OF "LE TERRAIN DE L'ÉGLISE" By Carol Doucet

When the Acadians came to establish themselves in Nipisiguit, they settled principally on the north coast of the basin. Even if they had not yet official titles to their lands from the government, they agreed among themselves that there had to be religious services in their area, and they agreed to build a chapel or a church to that end.

Charles Doucet, who was the patriarch of the little colony, took charge of the movement and agreed that he would donate some land to the parish to build a church there. The people decided that the highest spot on the hill dominating the basin of Nipisiguit was the most appropriate for the construction of a church. That land belonged to his son-in-law and neighbor, Joseph LeBlanc dit Bouquet who had married his daughter Modeste. Charles Doucet reached an agreement with the latter to exchange an equal amount of land. Afterwards, Charles built himself a house on that lot.¹ This donation occurred between 1791 and 1795, when the Father Mathurin Bourg was missionary at Nipisiguit. Father Bourg drew up a document which he gave to Charles and in which he specified the conditions of this donation.² We have not found this written document, nor do we know whether the dimensions of the lot were specified. However, the surveyor's plan of A. McNeil in 1845 tells us that it was a bit more than two acres in area.³

Everything indicates that this lot was first used as a cemetery. Tradition has it that in 1793, one of Olivier Blanchard's sons left Caraquet in a canoe with his two brothers to come to Nipisiguit to marry one of Charles Doucet's daughters. A sudden storm arose and the three brothers perished, drowned across from the Bass River. A powder horn was found by the Indians on the river bearing the initials of the future husband. Charles Doucet brought the bodies of the ship-wreck victims and buried them on his land, near his home. He had a tomb stone made there, which still existed at the beginning of the present century.⁴ Charles Doucet gave that part of his land to the church at that period of

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

time (1791-1795) when Father Bourg was missionary to Nipisiguit. Father Bourg gave a written promise to Charles Doucet promising him in exchange for this gift "a pew, a place close to that of the trustees" on condition that after his death the pew be sold at auction and that the proceeds from the sale be used to have Masses said in his intentions.⁵ Charles Doucet's heirs asked Father Joyer to honor the written agreement, otherwise they would repossess the lot. Father Joyer conferred with the bishop who answered him that if this written document had been drawn up while Father Bourg was grand vicar, he had to conform to it. It seems that such was the case, because they established a founder's Mass for Charles Doucet which was to be celebrated in the parish in perpetuity.

On June 24, 1845 Charles Doucet, II sold to the parish another parcel of land for the sum of 30 shillings, which was supposed to be paid to him on Christmas day.⁷ He had drawn up the same day another sale to Monsignor Dollard to assure that the Diocese of New Brunswick was the legal proprietor of the lot where the church, the cemetery and the other buildings belonging to the parish of Sainte-Famille (Holy Family) were located.⁸

On August 7, 1848, when Monsignor Dollard was visiting Bathurst, he wrote in the baptismal records of Sainte-Famille that for the land donated by the deceased Charles for 999 years, three high Masses were to be celebrated...

Plan of the church lot made by A. McNeil on June 19, 1845. Archives of the Bishopric of Bathurst.

DRESSING THE PART OF AN ACADIAN

Submitted by Jacqueline Auclair

An article by Beurmond Banville of the Bangor News Staff (Bangor, Maine, August 21, 1997)

[EDITOR'S NOTE: In the process of cleaning out old files, we found this interesting article. It was submitted by Jacqueline Auclair a few years ago, possibly around the time of CMA 2004 and somehow was never included in our newsletter. It is just as suitable for this CMA, so here goes.]

VAN BUREN The stereotype of the Acadian in peasant dress doesn't tell the whole story about how Acadians dressed, a historical clothing expert told descendants of the St. John Valley pioneers.

A textile conservator with the Acadian Museum at the University of Moncton for nine years, Annette White (Ed. Note: She is Stephen White's wife) said her research breaks the "myth that all Acadians were dressed like peasants. Those with influence enjoyed the fineries of the day."

...While not many pieces of clothing exist in Acadian museums, problem for experts, the seafaring and farming Acadians, persecuted by the British in the mid-1750's, were believed to have lived poorly in their new world in New Brunswick, Québec and northern Maine.

But research has shown that "Acadians had a class structure," said White. "There were social and economic standings among Acadians. There was a real difference among classes. Class stratification was prevalent in Acadia, at Louisbourg (Nova Scotia), for instance.

She showed slides of finery found among the higher social classes, including fancy capes women wore at weddings. Women's bonnets show the difference in classes.

"Some are very plain, with no ornamentation. Then silk was found on some. Not all dressed like peasants," said White.

"Homespun skirts and dresses existed. Some are still in museums. We also find the simple straw hats, sabots (wooden footwear), moccasins and boots." On the other hand, she said, "We have found ledgers and notes showing Acadians ordering and receiving fine linen, cotton and silk materials. We find them ordering beaver hats and all kinds of woven materials. Research has shown, said White, "where they took pride in notions to embellish their costumes. We found buttons of silk and metal."

"For a long time, we were told, into the early 1900s, that Acadians did not use buttons, but tied their clothing. It's not so."

White and others have found old pictures "showing Acadians in their best attire. The more affluent of the times followed the styles of the times. Some Acadians had the access to the finer merchandise."

While most records fail to show where the finer clothing came from, White said, "They knew where to get these fineries and purchased them."

Less affluent Acadians, she said did wear the peasant clothing of the time. "It included the long dresses, long bib aprons and bonnets of simple materials. They were not bright colors. They used earth tones in dyeing. The finer clothes were much brighter."

The Acadians dressed in layers. "The colder it was, the more layers they wore," White said.

Before the 1800s, much of the Acadian clothing was made of flax, which was plentiful. From the flax, linen bodices, jackets, skirts and shirts were made. From wool, they made warmer clothing.

Over the years, said White, "The Acadian clothing was oversimplified. We were led to believe Acadian couture was one type, one cut, and it's not so.

"We need to demystify the stories that they all wore clothing that was the same," said the expert.

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WE HAVE MEMBERS FROM ALL OVER THE US AND ALSO FROM CANADA AND FRANCE AS YOU CAN SEE FROM THE FOLLOWING LIST:

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SUR L'ENVELOPPE APRES VOTRE NOMON INDIQUE LA DERNIERE ANNEE POUR LAQUELLE VOUS AVEZ PAYE. INVITEZ UN PARENT A DEVENIR MEMBRE DE LDDM. VOUS TROUVIEZ LA FORMULAIRE D'ADHESION SUR NOTRE SITE WEB : WWW.DOUCETFAMILY.ORG.

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S'il vous plaît, envoyer votre adresse courriel à notre Trésorier Jacqueline Auclair. Écrivez-la sur le formulaire d'adhésion.

DONNIE ANDERSON RESTORED THIS 160-YEAR-OLD BELL, WHICH USED TO RING OUT FROM THE STEEPLE OF SAINT-BERNARD CATHOLIC CHURCH IN NEGUAC

**Marty Klinkenberg/Telegraph-Journal
Submitted by Jacqueline Auclair**

Like the Acadian people, the bell at the Saint-Bernard Catholic Church has survived great hardship.

Hoisted atop a steeple in Neguac for the first time on Aug. 12, 1849, it has endured rain, sleet and snow, a disastrous fire and even indifference.

It crashed to the ground and was damaged when the church burned in 1945, was sent back to France to be recast and then again served the parish in this southern gateway to the Acadian Peninsula until it was retired and stored beneath a stairway in 1962.

There it languished for more than four decades until Donnie Anderson stumbled across it a half-dozen years ago while overhauling the cathedral's newer bells.

When he found it there, stuffed beneath the stairs, the bell was dusty and dirty, covered in pigeon droppings and spray-painted green.

"It had been left to rot, but I am glad they put it where they did," Anderson said. "It at least helped protect the bell.

"I don't know what would have happened if it had been left outdoors."

An electrician by trade and bell doctor by devotion, Anderson began restoring the aged, bronze objet d'art in spring, buffing and polishing and, with assistance from his uncle, André Robichaud, returned it to its original glory.

Next month, 160 years after it chimed in Neguac for the first time, it will be unveiled shortly after an 11 a.m. mass at Saint-Bernard during the closing ceremonies of the World Acadian Congress.

"It will be nice to hear that bell again," said Leo Comeau, a retired teacher in Neguac and local historian. "When I was a young boy, you could hear it toll from three miles away."

As shiny and bright as the day it was cast in a foundry in France, the bell is big news in Neguac, which will host a number of activities during the three-week Congrès Mondial Acadien.

On Aug. 23, when it is revealed, the bell will be officially rung again for the first time in nearly 50 years by Aurel Godin, a former caretaker at the cathedral that towers over Rue Principal.

Now 97, Godin used to ring the bell several times a day by tugging on a rope when he worked at Saint-Bernard 75 years ago. A former postmaster and local school-bus driver, he will celebrate his 98th birthday that same day.

"I was happy to hear the bell has been fixed," Godin, who stopped driving only three years ago, said. "I look forward to ringing it again, if I am still alive."

Then, he smiled sheepishly.

"Clang, clang," he said.

A resident of Tabusintac and a parishioner at Saint-Bernard, Anderson is thrilled that Godin has been invited to participate in the unveiling.

"When I found out about him, that was the reason I did it," Anderson said. "I thought maybe there was something that could be done to bring the bell back to life."

For the past half-dozen years, Anderson has been fussing over the four motorized bells that were installed in the

church's soaring steeple in 1962.

In recent years, Neguac's bell doctor has fixed a faulty spring in an electronic timer, reconditioned seized motors, cleaned contacts and replaced bearings, and built a new foundation.

Almost always, he uses original materials.

And now, for the first time in more than 20 years, the bells are ringing flawlessly at Saint-Bernard Catholic Church.

"I love going up in the bell tower," Anderson said. "I go up there, leave my cellphone in the truck, and feel the cool air blowing through.

"It is a beautiful spot."

For the past few months, Anderson has committed most of his time to the church's original bell. He recently tuned it with a key and last week it sounded pitch-perfect, reverberating through the church when he tested it.

"After all those years, he has made the bell so that it is like brand new," said Comeau, who helped stash the bell beneath the stairwell. "The last time I had seen it, it was a tired, old bell.

"It had seen quite a few raindrops and quite a few storms. It is amazing that it has withstood the test of time."

Give thanks to the bell doctor, Donnie Anderson, for that.

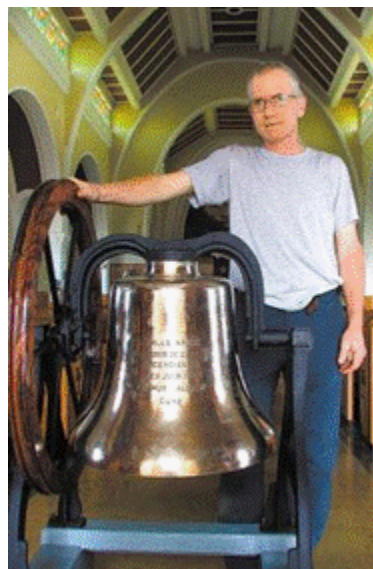
"The bell will become a legacy for our whole community," said Juliette Breau-Barrette, who is organizing the closing ceremonies in Neguac. "It is a collection piece, and its unveiling will be one of the key events in the congrès mondial."

Anderson, meanwhile, is simply happy to have helped.

"I am hoping that people from France will come to our church during the congress to see the bells," he said.

"I could talk about bells all day."

Marty Klinkenberg is contributing editor of the Telegraph-Journal. He can be reached at martyklinkenberg@hotmail.com



LDDM MADE A DONATION OF \$500 TO THE DOUCET REUNION TO SPONSOR GENEALOGIST STEPHEN WHITE. ANY REMAINING FUNDS WILL BE USED TO HELP SPONSOR A MUSICAL GROUP. FINAL PROGRAM FOR DOUCET/DOUCETTE REUNION

FRIDAY, August 21, 2009

6:00pm Greeting & registration 15\$ / person; 30\$ / family (free for children under 16 years old)
 8:00pm Wine & cheese - social gathering, meet & greet, music (open/cash bar)

SATURDAY, August 22, 2009

8:00am Greeting & registration
 Kiosks: genealogy display, crafts, souvenirs displays.
 10:00am Official opening
 11:00am - 2:00pm: Guest speaker: Stephen White, genealogist
 12:00: Dinner: picnic or you're free to do as you please.
 2:00pm - 5:00pm Family activities, time for sharing, games, rallies, music with different musicians (Jam) (The Doucet's artistic talents)
 5:00pm - 7:00pm Supper available at the arena. (ticket will be sold at registration time)

8:00pm - midnight Dance with orchestra "LA RE-VANCHE" from Bouctouche



ORGANIZING COMMITTEE:

FIRST ROW (LEFT TO RIGHT) Nathalie Lebreton, Secretary; Jean-Yves Doucet, President; Rolande Doucet O'Connell, Vice-President;
 SECOND ROW, (LEFT TO RIGHT) Odette Comeau Doucet, communications; Gilberte Doucet-Degrace, board member Marie Doucet-Boulay, board member; Carmella Doucet-Lavigne, Treasurer; Denis Doucet, board member, family activities; Andréa Doucet, board member, welcome ;Yvon Doucet, board member, family activities.

The 4th World Acadian Congress will be held in the Acadian Peninsula, the northeastern part of New Brunswick, from Friday, August 7, 2009 to Saturday, August 23, 2009.

As of April 29, 2009 there remain

100 days

until the beginning of CMA 2009.



Le 4e Congrès Mondial Acadien aura lieu du vendredi, 7 août au dimanche, 23 août Dans la péninsule acadienne

Commençant le 29 août il reste **100 jours** à l'ouverture du CMA 2009.

CMA 2009 will present four major activities throughout the Acadian Peninsula:

- Opening day activities in the Lamèque-Shippagan-Miscou region
- The main event for the feast of August 15 in the region of Caraquet
- Closing day in the region of Tracadie-Shellia and Neguac
- Festive activities in the Pokemouche area, the geographical center of the Acadian Peninsula

Le CMA 2009 présentera en partenariat quatre grand rassemblements dans la Péninsule acadienne:

- La journée d'ouverture dans la région Lamèque-Shippagan-Miscou
- L'événement principal autour de la fête du 15 août dans la région de Caraquet
- La journée de fermeture dans la grande région de Tracadie-Shellia et Neguac
- Un "carrefour d'activités festives" installé à Pokemouche au centre géographique de la Péninsule acadienne

More than 60 families have begun preparing for the 2009 Congrès Mondial Acadien (World Acadian Congress), to be held in the Acadian peninsula August 7-23, 2009.

Preparations include creating official organizing committees and putting plans in motion for family reunions.

The 2009 CMA family reunions aren't exclusively for people with Acadian names, but are open to anyone interested in Acadie.

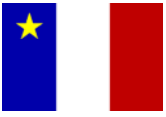
Four major events will mark the fourth World Acadian Congress. Three days of festivities filled with symbolism will culminate in a major show featuring artists from each of the host areas. In addition, Espace 2009, a place for meeting and innovation located in the heart of the Acadian Peninsula, will be a key gathering location for all involved.

During the Congress, high-caliber events, as well as major artistic, cultural and sporting activities will take place

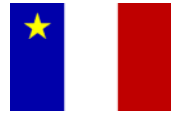
throughout the entire Acadian Peninsula, including audio-visual exhibits, plays, shows, nature tours, bicycle tours of the area, school projects, radio shows, music, films and business meetings.

Community programming will be at the heart of the event. More than 225 activities are already on the program in 80 of the Acadian Peninsula's nearly 100 towns and villages...

Whether it's an exhibit on the history of the forced landing of a Russian airplane in Miscou, lobster suppers in Pigeon Hill, clams in St-Simon or eels in Evangeline, trips out on the water with Anse-Bleue fishermen, square dancing in Sainte-Rose, workshops on making snowshoes in Saint-Sauveur, boat races on the river in Tracadie-Shellia, or an exhibit on the first settlers in Val-Comeau, nearly all Peninsular communities will be organizing activities to highlight their can-do attitude



ACADIAN/CANADIAN CHAPTER NEWS



Close to Home: Professor studying decline of French language in Maine

By Juliana L'Heureux

(Portland Press Herald, Portland, ME, July 15, 2009)
Submitted by Norman Doucette, Jr.

French was once widely spoken in Maine's cities and towns. Now it's only occasionally heard, except in the St. John Valley. Claire Quintal, a Franco-American writer and retired professor, has some opinions about why this is happening.

U.S. Census data from 2000 shows French is the most common language after English in Maine. Likewise, 25 percent of Maine's residents identify their heritage as French-Canadian or French.

Maine's Franco-American heritage is evident by picking up any local telephone book to check out the pages of French names. Numerous Maine heritage sites boast French origins, like Acadia National Park and Bowdoin College. French history predates the arrival of the English in New England by 17 years.

Maine and New England's Franco-American heritage is inherited from immigrants from Quebec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

Acadians began arriving in 1755, as a result of Le Grand Drangement, or the brutal expulsion of the French from Nova Scotia by the British.

Immigration from Quebec was spurred by America's industrial revolution of the last two centuries. Maine's proximity to Canada's French-speaking provinces aided the decision made by thousands of French-Canadians to leave their homes for economic reasons to find work in the United States.

Quintal is a bilingual writer and retired professor from Assumption College in Worcester Mass., who grew up in Central Falls, R.I., speaking French. She is editor of the anthology "Steeple and Smokestacks – A Collection of Essays on The Franco-American Experience in New England." In the summer, she lives in York.

At one time, the French language was the key component of the Franco-Americans' identity, after their devout practices as Roman Catholics, Quintal writes. But the French language is waning because Franco-Americans who grew up speaking French before they learned English are aging.

Perhaps native French speakers are declining because they came to New England too early, Quintal believes.

"We were here before efforts were in place to protect our bilingual heritage," she said. "We were left to learn English on our own. Voter registration was in English only. Learning English was a matter of economic and social survival."

More damage was done to inhibit the language when Franco-Americans were wrongly told they did not speak real French, says Quintal.

This language myth prevails to this day. It contributes to the reluctance many Franco-Americans feel about speaking the French they learned at home with their parents and grandparents.

Quebecois French is something like speaking English

with a Boston or Texas accent. It's still French -- whether it's spoken in Haiti, Africa, the Far East, Quebec, Maine or Paris. Undoubtedly a mixture of Francophone regions developed special accents and colloquialisms, which is the same for English and Spanish.

"Spanish speakers are reasonable about language variations," said Quintal. "They do not make a fuss about regional accents."

Quintal will speak at 7 p.m. Thursday at the Sanford-Springvale Historical Society, 505 Main St., about the important contributions Franco-Americans made to New England.

The program is free and open to the public. The historical society is handicapped-accessible and air-conditioned. Call 324-2797 for more information.

*Juliana L'Heureux can be contacted at: Juliana@MaineWriter.com
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CLOSE TO HOME—LES FRANCO AMERICAINS: WWI PHOTO KINDLES MEMORIES OF ANCESTOR

By Juliana L'Heureux

(Portland Press Herald, Portland ME, May 6, 2009)
Submitted by Norman Doucette, Jr.

My grandfather James Joseph Carroll was drafted through the new 1918 Camp Devens, MA and went to France till the completion of WWI. My brother James Joseph Doucette was at Camp Devens when it was closed around 1996 and was transferred to Fort Bragg, NC with his Green Beret group at that time. I have an old picture book I purchased about 10 years ago showing Camp Devens during the 1918 period.

—NORMAN DOUCETTE, JR.

A World War I infantry photograph is more than a picture. It's evidence of how my Franco-American father-in-law witnessed history. William L'Heureux's picture is facing front and center in the 73rd Infantry group photo. The men are dressed in smart-looking World War I army uniforms with distinctive hats.

It's a sepia-toned family heirloom measuring 37 inches long by 9 inches wide. The old photograph actually hung in the family's garage for many years before it was rescued. A fading inscription at the bottom says the 73rd Infantry photo was taken on Dec. 6, 1918, at camp Devens, Mass.

Pvt. L'Heureux was 26 years old when the photograph was taken. Our family says he was handsome "Pepere," an endearing name his grandchildren and great-grandchildren called him. Pepere died in 1978 in Sanford.

L'Heureux was one of nine brothers and four sisters in his French-Canadian family. Two brothers were born in the U.S. My father-in-law was born in 1892 in Seymour, Conn. As a U. S. citizen, he was drafted into the Army along with his brother Albert to serve in World War I. He never left Fort Devens because history intervened, he said.

An internet search provided historical information about the 73rd infantry at the time the 1918 photograph was taken.

According to our research, Pepere probably crossed paths with Edwin Estlin Cummings, known by his pen name, e. e. cummings (1894-1962), the famous American poet, writer, painter, playwright and essayist. On New Year's Day of 1918, Cummings was drafted into the Army and served in the 73rd Infantry at Fort (Camp) Devens, until his discharge following the November armistice.

Another 73rd infantryman was found on the web site of the "Roy and Boucher" family's French Canadian genealogy, www.royandboucher.com. It's quite likely Pepere knew a fellow Franco-American and Mainer named Henry P. Bouchard of Old Town (1896-1981), who served with the 73rd from August 1918 through January 1919.

We were surprised to find a sad witness-to-history connection when the 73rd at Fort Devens was hard hit by the 1917-18 Great Influenza pandemic. Millions died in that influenza pandemic, and Fort Devens was particularly hard hit. Pepere told his family how he became ill with the influenza and recovered while some of his colleagues died. He said the 1918 influenza prevented the 73rd from deploying to fight in France.

John M. Barry's book, "The Great Influenza: The Story of the Deadliest Pandemic in History," published by Penguin Books in 2004, provides a vivid documentation from physicians at the scene of the Fort Devens pandemic, while Pepere was stationed there.

Several physicians studying the Devens outbreak described watching a continuous line of men "in the uniform of their country" streaming into the wards of the Camp Devens hospital, in groups of 10 or more. Devens' physicians were frightened and shocked by the numbers of ill soldiers. At the time, the physicians were trying to isolate and identify the microscopic organisms causing the disease.

Another story describing Fort Devens during the Great Influenza is in "Fever of War: The Influenza epidemic in the U.S. Army in World War I," written by Carol R. Byerly, which is available to read on-line.

Recalling Pepere's witness to history reminds us to write our family stories for future generations to relish. Our family will now paste this new information about the 73rd Infantry on the back of the unit's photograph and keep it in a well-protected place.

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CLOSE TO HOME: FRANCO TWIST STEREOTYPE OF THE 'FROG' SLUR

**By Juliana L'Heureux/Les Franco-Américains
(Portland Press, Portland, Maine, May 13, 2009)
Submitted by Norman Doucette, Jr.**

Only a few decades ago, the work "frog" was considered a slur on the French. Now, the frog stereotype has lost its power.

Yvon Labbe, director of the Franco-American Center at the University of Maine in Orono, explains how the frog has been turned into a cultural logo.

Historically, the frog slur on the French probably has its origins in haute cuisine.

David Bindman explains the origins in "How the French Became Frogs: English caricature and a National Stereotype!" It's a stereotype dating to 18th-

century Europe and is related to the French penchant for eating cooked frogs' legs.

He goes on to explain how the 17th- and 18-century Dutch were also known as frogs because their habitat in Holland is damp from being below sea level. Somehow, the frog slur remained with the French, because the English apparently had a habit for using words as social labels. In other words, "You are what you eat."

A turnaround began in the 1970s, when Franco-American students at the University of Maine joined forces informally to learn about their heritage, sharing different stories about their special family traditions.

"Although we knew how many we were, we did not know about our special history and sociology," says Labbe. They uniformly felt the same outrage when the frog stereotype was discussed. Rather than accept the stereotype, the students organized to transform the frog into an ethnic logo.

"We actually co-opted the frog," says Labbe.

Instead of a slur, the Franco-American students created the FAROG Forum (Franco-American Resource Opportunity Group). In reality, the group worked to revive the ethnic consciousness of Franco-Americans. Rather than a traditional fleur de lis logo, FAROG adopted the "FAROG de lis."

There are additional examples of how the French twisted the power of stereotypes to eliminate their stigmatizing power. Labbe explains how the French-Canadians in the Beauce area of Quebec created a cultural turnaround with the label "les chevilles noires."

The "black ankles" referred to poor Beauce-area farmers, who walked their produce to market in the early spring without wearing shoes. They wore shoes only after they arrived in Quebec City. The shoes did not cover the dirt caked on their ankles from walking in the mud.

Consequently, "les chevilles noires" became synonymous with being poor and dirty. Today, the Beauce-area descendants of les chevilles noires farmers have turned the slur into a symbol of their heritage.

Still another example of ethnic pride displayed as a frog in Franquette, of Festival La Kermesse. This friendly logo is a beaming frog who promotes Biddeford's annual Franco-American festival. Franquette is La Kermesse's logo because of a story told about England's Queen Elizabeth I, who called her favorite French suitor "grenouille."

Festival La Kermesse committee founders cleverly twisted the frog label into a symbol of love and endearment.

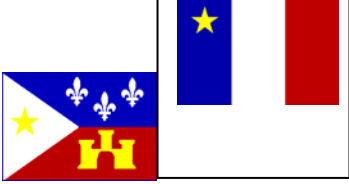
So, the frog slur has lost its power, says Labbe.

FAROG Forum and University of Maine's Franco-American Center are continuing to teach ethnic pride.

"Franco-American students who want to earn their professional degrees from the University of Maine will often take electives at our center," he says.

"We would like FAROG forum with the University of Maine to be the university of choice for Franco-American students throughout New England."

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LOUISIANA CHAPTER NEWS



Churches to mark Acadian diaspora Memorial set for July 28

(The Daily Advertiser, From staff reports • July 13, 2009)

ST. MARTINVILLE - A "Day of Commemoration" memorial service will be held at 6 p.m. on July 28 at St. Martin De Tours Catholic Church.

As mandated by the Queen's Proclamation of Dec. 9, 2003, and with the support of the Catholic Diocese of Lafayette, all churches in the Acadiana region are asked to toll the church bells at 6 p.m. on July 28 in remembrance of the day that the Acadian Deportation Order was signed by British officials in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

The signing of the Order by the British Lt. Gov. Charles Lawrence brought about the Diaspora which commenced on Sept. 5, 1755 and resulted in the removal of Acadians from their homelands in Acadie, present-day Nova Scotia. From 1755 to 1763, more than 7,000 (half of the population) perished.

Warren Perrin, instrumental in bringing awareness to the Canadian Parliament comments, "Over 250 years after the defining tragic event of Acadian history, we will pause to remember the unparalleled saga of our ancestors because, as was stated in dictum by William Faulk-

ner,' The past is never dead. It's not even past.' The desirability of an official apology to the Acadians became the subject of debate in the Canadian Parliament and within the Acadian community. In 2003, the Society Nationale d'Acadie, -- the largest Acadian organization in the world-- wrote directly to the Queen of England "asking that she 'recognize the wrongs done to the Acadian people as a consequence of the deportations from 1755-1763' in order "to turn the page definitely on this tragic episode in our past". As I look back upon the Petition For An Apology, which I launched in 1990, I'm very gratified to have played a role in bringing about this closure.

"The "Day of Commemoration" event honors the memory of Acadians who died during the years of the deportation.

Brenda Comeaux Trahan, Curator Director of the Acadian Memorial, and Monsignor Douglas Courville of St. Martin De Tours invite all to join in a spiritual memorial to remember the Acadian victims who died during the years of the deportation.

The ceremony will be followed by a prayerful procession to the Acadian Memorial Deportation Cross and the closing ceremony. There will also be a short reception and later a communal dinner at local restaurants in St. Martinville (Dutch treat).

MICHAEL DOUCET

Congratulations to Michael Doucet and Beausoleil, who received a Grammy in the Zydeco/Cajun Category for the CD Live at the 2008 New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival, presented Feb. 8, 2009, in Los Angeles. This was the second year that the category has been in existence. Over the years, BeauSoleil has received 10 Grammy nominations. In 1997, the band won the first Grammy ever given to a Cajun band when the CD *L'amour ou la Folie* won in the Best Traditional Folk Album category. In early 2009 BeauSoleil released a new CD, *Alligator Purse*.

Doucet began playing in a folk rock band with his cousin, Zachary Richard, when they were about 12. Growing up in Scott near Lafayette at a time when the Cajun renaissance was just beginning, Doucet did not fully appreciate the rich musical heritage of his native region until he visited France, where he discovered that French bands were performing traditional Cajun music. On his return to Louisiana, he sought out musicians like Dewey Balfa, Canray Fontenot, and Dennis McGee. Through his close friendship with McGee, who died in 1989 at age 96, Doucet learned about traditional Cajun music extending back before the introduction of the accordion and including music produced through the collaboration between McGee and Amédé Ardoin.

Doucet was a member of Coteau, a mid-seventies band that combined Cajun and rock styles, but at the same time he was performing with friends who came together to form BeauSoleil. The band's name BeauSoleil comes from a nickname for Joseph Broussard, one of the heroes in the Acadian resistance against the English in Acadie, who later joined the Acadians in Louisiana. The nickname is said to describe Broussard's smile, which was bright as the sun.

BeauSoleil's debut album, *The Spirit of Cajun Music*, was released in 1977. The band has recorded regularly ever since. 2006 was the 30th anniversary year of BeauSoleil avec Michael Doucet. Probably the most musically adventurous of all Cajun bands, BeauSoleil has drawn on, or Cajunized, many musical traditions, but they remain fundamentally Cajun to the core. As the liner notes to their 2006 CD demonstrate, the band's list of "influences and masters they've worked directly

with reads like an encyclopedia of Cajun cultural history" and also includes legendary Creole musicians.

In 2005, Michael Doucet, was one of twelve artists who had been awarded the prestigious [National Heritage Fellowship by The National Endowment for the Arts](#). Beausoleil's 2004 CD *Gitane Cajun* was nominated for a Grammy in the Best Traditional Folk Album--the group's 10th Grammy nomination.

Michael Doucet and BeauSoleil have deservedly gained international renown for their inspired interpretation of traditional Cajun music and their innovation in "Cajunizing" other musical styles--jazz, Caribbean, or even Tex-Mex.

*Adapted from [Cajun, Creole and Zydeco Musicians](#)
Posted Between 1999 and 2008*



Help! Do you know a Doucet(te) that you would like to see profiled in the LDDM newsletter? Suggestions are most welcome.

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