



Les Nouvelles de la Famille Doucet

NEWSLETTER OF LES DOUCET DU MONDE

FEBRUARY 2003

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Message from the INTERNATIONAL president

By Carol Doucet

As we begin a new year, I wish all of you and your families a very happy new year—
"une bonne et heureuse année et le paradis à la fin de vos jours."

Two activities of tremendous import will be occurring over the next two years—the Louisiana Purchase celebration in 2003 and the Congrès Mondial Acadien in 2004.

Because we kept LDDM active after the Doucet family reunion during Congrès Mondial 1999 in Opelousas, LA, we are ready to participate in each of these events, We are in direct contact with the organizing groups and we are organized and ready to pass on information to LDDM members. Take advantage of the benefits of being an LDDM member. June 2003 will soon be upon us and CMA 2004 will be here soon enough. We need to be preparing for the two events. Some people are already making reservations for lodging for 2004. This is wise since the Clare area of Nova Scotia (where the Doucet/Doucette reunion will be) has small towns which offer limited accommodations. There are no large hotel/motel chains like many of us are accustomed to.

As you fill out your LDDM Membership Form for 2003 (if you have not sent it in yet), take advantage of the opportunity to give a gift membership to someone in your family—a brother or sister, an uncle or aunt, for instance.

The Doucet 2004 Membership and Enrollment Form is only for admission to the Doucet/Doucette family reunion to be held on August 2, 2004 in Church Point, Nova Scotia.

Fill out the two forms (LDDM and Doucet 2004) and mail them in now! We hope to see you at both events!

AS OF MARCH 1, 2003, THERE ARE 541 DAYS LEFT UNTIL THE DOUCET/DOUCETTE REUNION IN CHURCH POINT, NOVA SCOTIA ON AUGUST 2, 2004

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Deadlines for submitting material are: January 31 for February issue, May 31 for June issue and September 30 for October issue.

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LOUISIANA CHAPTER NEWS



The Louisiana Chapter will participate in the special Louisiana Purchase celebration organized by CAFA at the Rayne Civic Center in Rayne, LA on June 13-15, 2003. This will commemorate the 200th anniversary of the United States' purchase of the Louisiana Territory from France. All families who were in Louisiana at the time of the purchase are invited to attend. Emphasis will be on the family and genealogy. There will be free time for socializing within and among family groups.

Les Doucet du Monde will have a booth to display and share Doucet genealogical information and information about LDDM - application forms, brochures, etc.

We will need the help of two or three persons at 8:00 a.m. on Friday, June 13 to set up and at 10:00 a.m. to decorate. On Saturday, June 14 we will need help throughout

the day to staff our booth. So, get in touch with Becky Lavergne, Louisiana Chapter President, to volunteer to help on Friday or Saturday. Her phone number, mailing address and E-Mail are listed on the front of this newsletter.

Also make reservations with Becky if you plan to eat lunch (\$5.00) and supper (\$7.00) there on Saturday.

There is a \$5.00 per person admission fee. All monies can be paid at the door on Saturday.

On Friday evening, by special invitation only, representatives from each family will attend a social and meet dignitaries from CMA 2004.

The tentative schedule is as follows:

SATURDAY

8:00 a.m. - Registration begins

10:00 a.m. - Opening ceremonies

12:00 noon - Lunch

1:00 p.m. Presentation on Congrès Mondial by CMA 2004 representatives

3:00 p.m. - Entertainment

5:00 p.m. - Supper

7:00 p.m. - Entertainment by Terry Huval

SUNDAY

10:00 a.m. - French Mass

Approximately 1:30 p.m. - Those who wish to do so can go to the Acadian Memorial in St. Martinville, LA for the dedication of a replica of the Grand-Pré Deportation Cross.

This will be our Louisiana Chapter function for the first part of the year. Let's meet in Rayne for this celebration. The Rayne Civic Center is huge, so there'll be room for any Doucet family member wishing to attend. See you there.

CELEBRATING A HOMELAND

Submitted by Anna Lee Doucet Beadle, Louisiana Chapter

(This article by Dana Adkins Campbell is reprinted from Southern Living Magazine, August 2000)

Being received and welcomed is a soothing joy
to Louisiana Acadians returning to their roots
in Nova Scotia.

It felt strange standing in another country, so far from home, yet so close to it. Reading a guest register in Nova Scotia, I saw town names of my native Louisiana, places I knew so well: DeRidder, Lafayette, Rayne. I glanced around at all those who had signed just before me, and was tempted to approach them and introduce myself as a Sulphur girl. But I, like them, remained silent. I, like them, had come a long way to this sacred spot, and jovial conversation didn't seem appropriate.



We were gathered at Grand-Pré, the pinnacle of every Cajun's (slang for "Acadian") pilgrimage to the homeland. It was on this very ground in 1755 that Acadian families - who 125 years earlier had given first European life to this region - were taken prisoner by British victors, separated from one another, and shipped off their beloved coast. Their homes were burned and farmland seized, and they were sent, without hope, on journeys of uncertainty.

Grand-Pré's artwork quietly captures the sorrow and devastation that lies at the base of Cajun history. We took turns stepping up to the copies of 18th-century, handwritten deportation records on the walls, each of us looking for that one name that tied us so strongly to this place. For some, it would be a LeBlanc, a Comeau, or a Doucet. For my husband and me, it was Josef Landry.

As we searched, I realized I was completing a circle I'd begun in St. Martinville, Louisiana, on a family vacation when I was 5 years old. Though we had no blood ties to the Cajun people, my parents took us to see the heritage of this region we called home. We touched the moss-laden Evangeline Oak on the banks of Bayou Teche, then strolled to the famed Evangeline statue. I was too young to comprehend these tributes to Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's poem "Evangeline," whose characters were fictional but whose heartbreak was real.

Longfellow's Acadians - Evangeline and her betrothed, Gabriel - lost each other in their expulsion from Grand-Pré, as many did. In 1755, the British deported 7,000 Acadians, and by 1763, that number grew to about 10,000. These French people were not sent back to Europe but instead to British possessions-the New England colonies. Unwelcome and discontent in these new places, some eventually tried to return to Nova Scotia; others sought lands that would foster their French roots and Catholicism. Louisiana did just that, so, over time, many exiles settled there.

But happy endings were a slow, distant reward. Evangeline and Gabriel found each other again at an old age, as Gabriel lay dying. Most Acadian families had to start over, with very little. Generations later, Cajuns are now known for their *joie de vivre*, their music and dancing, their celebrations of food. But even today's generation feels a somber tug to the mysterious past, an inexplicable pull to a homeland they know only through family stories.

I heard those tales as I joined my husband and his family, glad to borrow a bit of their history. Kent's grandparents told about their ancestor Josef Landry and of their own trek to Nova Scotia to reclaim something they felt they'd lost. Nearly 20 years later, Kent and I decided to follow that journey.

In our planning, Grandma directed us to Grand-Pré. And we took advice from friends in Louisiana who've made the trip, settling on the Evangeline Trail - a 200-mile stretch from Halifax to Yarmouth. Yvonne Thibodeaux Bogan from Lafayette told us to see the dykes Acadians had built in the marshlands, controlling the water to create rich soil.

"I thought about my ancestors working there. It's still emotional for me." She remembers staring at the land, thinking, "This is where I could have lived if all this other history hadn't happened."

Mavis Fruge of Arnaudville searched for her roots on grave markers in Nova Scotia. "What is it about that place that brings tears to your eyes?" she mused. "I tell you, walking through a cemetery and seeing the same names there that I know...oh, it was so poignant."

Kent and I stopped at a 1700s Acadian burial site on St. Mary's Bay near Belliveau Cove. Primitive, wooden cross markers stood in front of the tiny chapel's altar, tied with a ribbon that read, "To all that stayed, we haven't forgotten you." We carry your name and blood. We are Acadians. Your children in Louisiana: Broussard, Bertrand, Blanchard, Benoit, Richard, Saulnier, Vincent."

Earline Broussard, a Kaplan native, has made the pilgrimage north many times but remembers best her first flight over her homeland. She was shocked at how familiar it seemed, calling the sensation a "genetic memory." What struck her most? "This deep, deep sense of loss. We have had to discover our own history," Earline recalled. But her journey was a healing one. "Through me, generations were validated. It's like our ancestors live on." She said.

Those who visit both Grand-Pré and the new Acadian Memorial near Louisiana's Evangeline Oak note the intentional similarities. In St. Martinville now hang copies of original oil paintings of the expulsion. There, too, a wall - this one in bronze -

bears names of the deported with the engraved plea, in both French and English, "Pause, friend, read my name and remember."

Perhaps the most touching words that speak of hope are those on the eternal flame there: "A people without a past are a people without a future."

(For more information: Check In Nova Scotia, 1-800-565-0000; Grand Pre National Historic Site, (902- 542-3631; Acadian Memorial, (337) 394-2258)

Port-Royal National Historic Site of Canada

Submitted by Jacqueline Auclair

Commemorative Intent:

Port-Royal is a national historic site because of its legacy: French culture, commerce and colonization, and the experiences of Mi'kmaq and French colonists, covering the period from 1605 to 1613; and the replica of the Habitation as a milestone in the Canadian heritage movement.



In 1603, a French gentleman, Pierre Dugua de Mons, received a fur trade monopoly for a large area between the 40th and 45th parallel in northeastern North America on condition he establish a colony there. His first expedition arrived in 1604 and selected a site for settlement on St. Croix Island. That winter, nearly half the colonists succumbed to the cold and scurvy. The following summer, after exploring the nearby coasts, Samuel de Champlain, explorer and mapmaker, and François Pont-Gravé selected a new site, named Port-Royal, across the Bay of Fundy. The colony was moved before Sieur de Mons returned to France, leaving Pont-Gravé in charge of the new settlement.

Ironically, just as the colony seemed capable of sustaining itself, word arrived that Sieur de Mons' monopoly was revoked. By the fall of 1607, the colonists were en route to France and the Habitation was left in the care of Membertou, chief of the Mi'kmaq in the Port-Royal area. Although Sieur de Mons' monopoly was temporarily reinstated and a member of the earlier expeditions, Champdoré, came to trade with the Mi'kmaq in 1608, French settlement was temporarily on hold.

In February 1606 Sieur de Poutrincourt, to whom Sieur de Mons had earlier granted land at Port-Royal, received confirmation of this grant from the king of France. He returned in 1610 with a small expedition to Port-Royal, where he received a warm welcome from Membertou. Hoping to regain royal favour and financial backing, Jean de Poutrincourt encouraged Membertou, his family and several of his people to convert to Catholicism. Despite these efforts, the colony's financial support remained on shaky grounds. Jesuit interest in establishing missions in Acadie and their influence at Court ensured their participation when they became financial partners of a wary and reluctant Jean de Poutrincourt. The arrival and subsequent involvement of Pères Massé and Biard in local affairs at Port-Royal made existing internal conflicts worse. Crises occurred regarding the affairs of Robert Pont-Gravé and the burial of Membertou. The colony lost its financial support due to conflicts between the Poutrincourts, father and son, and the Jesuits. In May 1613, a relief ship removed the Jesuits to Penobscot where they founded another settlement named Saint-Sauveur. They were attacked in July by Samuel Argall, of Virginia, who was commissioned to expel all Frenchmen from territory claimed by England.

In November 1613, while the inhabitants of the Port-Royal settlement were away up river, Samuel Argall's expedition sailed into Port-Royal and looted and burned the Habitation. De Poutrincourt, who was in France, returned in the spring of 1614 to find his Habitation in ruins, and his son and companions living with the Mi'kmaq. Discouraged, he returned to France and transferred his North American lands to his son, who remained loyal to his adopted homeland. He died around 1623 and bequeathed his possessions to Charles de La Tour.

The Canadian government rebuilt the Habitation at Port-Royal in 1939-40 after much lobbying and research by several dedicated preservationists. Summer resident Harriette Taber Richardson of Cambridge, Massachusetts; Loftus Morton Fortier, the first Honourary Superintendent of Fort Anne and President of the Historical Association of Annapolis Royal; and Colonel E.K. Eaton were the most prominent lobbyists. Today the Habitation not only commemorates historic events of the distant past but is itself a landmark in Canada's preservation movement.

(Source: Port-Royal Habitation Site)

DOUCET/DOUCETTE REUNION FOR CMA 2004

The Doucet/Doucette family reunion during Congrès Mondial Acadien 2004 will be in Church Point, Clare County, Nova Scotia on Monday, August 2, 2004. Those of us from the Doucet family have the advantage of being able to attend the opening ceremony of CMA on Saturday, July 31, conferences on Sunday, August 1 and our Doucet/Doucette reunion on Monday, August 2 at the University of Ste. Anne - all in Church Point.

Nova Scotia has a free 400-page travel guide called "Doer's and Dreamer's Guide." You can get this by calling the toll free number (1-800-565-0000) by E-mail at: <http://destination-ns.com/forms/guide.asp>, or by writing to Department of Tourism and Culture, Visitor Services, Box 456, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada B3J 2R5. It's an easy way to get information on accommodations. In addition, the university has 300 dorm rooms that will be available. There is talk of people in Nova Scotia opening up their homes for visiting cousins.

Here are some useful web sites:

CMA programs and family reunions (French and English): <http://www.cma2004.com>

Clare County, NS (French and English): <http://www.clarenovascotia.com>

Nova Scotia: <http://explore.gov.ns.ca> and <http://www.novascotia.com>



Acadian/Canadian Chapter News



RARE BRAIN DISEASE STILLS LOVING, DETERMINED HEART

Submitted by George Doucette
Acadian/Canadian Chapter President

(Excerpts from an article by Susan LeBlanc that appeared in "The Chronicle Herald," January 17, 2003)

Susan Bethune will miss everything about her daughter, Lesley, who died January 15 at age 18.

She'll miss little things especially. Like Lesley's gentle pat on the back when she hugged you. And her "child-like voice," a result of the rare Niemann-Pick disease that took her life, Ms. Bethune said Thursday from her home in Port Maitland, Yarmouth County...

About six years ago, Lesley-Anne Doucet was diagnosed with Niemann-Pick, a degenerative and fatal brain disease that robbed her of the ability to walk unassisted and eat solid foods....She was one of 23 or so Yarmouth area residents diagnosed with the rare disease between 1968 and 1998. Yarmouth County is believed to have the world's highest concentration, and sufferers are descendants of an Acadian couple from the 1700s. In Lesley's case, both her father, a Doucet, and her mother, who is not of Acadian descent, were carriers. Ms. Bethune said another type of Niemann-Pick was present on her side of the family. At one time, Lesley was the poster child for the IWK.

Last spring, school staff, not knowing if Lesley would finish Grade 12 this year, gave her a certificate acknowledging her years in high school. Yet she attended school two mornings a week until recently, despite being exhausted and unable to

focus, said her mother. She said that was indicative of Lesley's determination and love of life.

The night before Lesley died, her mom sensed that the end was near. "In my heart, I just saw it in her eyes. I just saw her despondency, but Lesley knew where she was going. Lesley knew that she was going to heaven and that she would be an angel."

Tribute To Lesley Anne Doucet

By Michele Doucette

As many Doucet cousins know, Lesley Anne had Neimann-Pick disease; a disease associated with the French Acadian population of Yarmouth County, Nova Scotia. Lesley Anne Doucet was born in Yarmouth, Nova Scotia on March 10, 1984. She passed away in the comfort of her own home at 12:10 am on Wednesday, January 15th, 2003, having fought a long, brave fight with Neimann-Pick. She was, indeed, a "mighty soul" as I prefer to call her.



I clearly remember having spoken to my sisters about the fact that I was planning to meet this spirited young lady when I ventured home for my yearly summer visit. A sister had spotted Lesley's picture in a local paper one day. She quickly called out to another sister, for neither could get over the fact that she looked as if she could easily have been a sibling in our immediate family.

As eagerly as I was looking forward to spending time with family, my primary goal was to meet Lesley Anne. We met for the first time on July 9th, 2002. Upon being greeted with a hug from Susan, I felt as if I had known the family forever. Upon being introduced to Lesley, I was immediately captivated by the intensity evident in her root-beer brown eyes. In the short space of time that was spent with Lesley, I knew that she had impacted my life in a monumental way. In the sharing of this experience with Doucet cousins, I believe that Lesley was also able to affect your lives as well.

"Some spirits choose a life of extreme sacrifice or nearly unbearable suffering. The light of God shines brightly around these people, and in Heaven they are thought of as mighty spirits, because they come to earth to suffer so that others can grow in understanding and love" (The Soul's Remembrance: Earth is Not Our Home by Roy Mills, pages 119 and 120). The light that emanated from Lesley was clear to see for all who wished to see as she was giving direct eye contact, paired with a thumbs up signal and a smile. It was merely a matter of acceptance, compassion and love.

"When we think we are helping the disabled, we are really helping ourselves by learning selflessness, charity, and how to demonstrate our love" (The Soul's Remembrance: Earth is Not Our Home by Roy Mills, page 120).

February has long been associated with love. In this case, I find it most fitting that this tribute to such a "mighty spirit" has been printed in the Les Doucet du Monde February newsletter. I know in my heart that Lesley will continue to look out for her family, even from afar. Love and Light to you, Lesley.

Committal Service

Dear Friends and Family,

This is to let everyone know that on the 13th of April, 2003, at 2 o'clock we will be having Lesley-Anne's committal service. Any one who would like to attend is certainly welcome. We will meet at the main gate to Yarmouth Mountain Cemetery at 1:50. There will be a gathering at our home 202 Richmond Road afterward. All are welcome. This is not to be a sad occasion, it is a laying to rest of Miss Lesley's ashes and we will rejoice in love for her memory together.

Love and prayers,
Sue, Norman and Angela

WANT TO BUY YOUR FAMILY'S COAT OF ARMS?

Submitted by Jacqueline Auclair

(Reprinted from "Eastman's Genealogy Newsletter", December 1, 2002)

Many people like to purchase Christmas gifts that are "personal." What can be more personal than one's name? I bet that thousands of people will give presents this year that depict a family coat of arms printed on paper, suitable for framing. They also may give coats of arms on t-shirts, sweatshirts, golf jerseys, stationery, coffee mugs, or even key chains. There is only one problem: almost all of them are bogus!

In many shopping malls across America, you will see pushvenders selling reproductions of coats of arms, claiming to be the "proud history and heritage of your family name" or some such words. Similar "businesses" exist on the Web. A number of Web sites proclaim that they can sell you "authentic" copies of your family's coat of arms.

I have one thing to say to these con artists: "Balderdash!" Actually, that's not my first choice of response, but that word will have to suffice in this family newsletter.

The study of coats of arms is called heraldry. Those who control the issuance of arms are the heralds. Typically, each country in Western Europe as well as in England, Scotland, and Ireland has an office of the heralds, sometimes called the Kings of Arms. The heralds are empowered to decide who is authorized to display a certain coat of arms. If you do not have authorization from the heralds, you are not authorized to display any coat of arms. The rules are a bit different in the Netherlands and in some eastern European countries.

Most Americans seem ignorant of one very basic fact: in most of Western Europe and in all of the British Isles, there is no such thing as a "family coat of arms." A coat of arms is issued to one person, not to a family. After that person is deceased, his primary heir (normally the oldest son) may apply for the same coat of arms. Again, when he dies, his heir may apply. The rules for determining who is eligible to display a coat of arms are very similar to the rules for becoming King or Queen of England. However, even the proper heir cannot display the coat of arms until he or she has received authorization (been confirmed) by the heralds. At any one time, only one person may rightfully display a coat of arms.

According to the American College of Heraldry, "While Americans are usually fascinated by the beauty of heraldry, they are rarely familiar with its meaning and traditions and, therefore, often misunderstand and even abuse this rich cultural heritage. They seldom understand that a coat of arms is usually granted, certified, registered or otherwise recognized as belonging to one individual alone, and that only his direct descendants with proven lineage can be recognized as eligible to inherit the arms. Exceptions to this rule are rare."

The American College of Heraldry also says, "It is highly inappropriate for one to locate the arms of another person sharing the same surname, and to simply adopt and use these arms as one's own." My interpretation of this is that, if you are displaying an unauthorized coat of arms, you are impersonating someone else.

The College of Arms in England (the heralds for English, Welsh, Northern Irish, and Commonwealth families) says, "For any person to have a right to a coat of arms, they must either have had it granted to them or be descended in the legitimate male line from a person to whom arms were granted or confirmed in the past."

Despite these warnings, many vendors are making money by preying on Americans' ignorance of the topic. The pushcarts you see in shopping malls typically are franchise operations. One pushcart owner told me that he paid \$6,000 for a "franchise" to sell this stuff. The so-called franchise did not include a protected territory; another franchisee was free to set up business in the same area. For the \$6,000 investment, the franchisee receives a computer with a database containing thousands of surnames and so-called "family coats of arms," a high-quality printer, a supply of parchment paper, and a supply of coffee cups, key chains and other paraphernalia. These franchisees reportedly receive no training in the study of heraldry. The ones I have talked to didn't recognize the term "College of Arms."

The Web sites aren't much better. The ones I have looked at seem to have carefully-worded claims. Instead of saying, "your family's coat of arms," they will say something like "your historical namesakes." Okay, "namesakes" has a different meaning than "ancestors," but it still can be misleading to many people. When a Web site proclaims, "your historical namesakes," most people will think this means "my family." However, if argued in court, the wording on the Web site would probably be

considered correct. In short, their statements are legally correct. I doubt if any of these companies will ever be shut down for misrepresenting their wares.

The next time someone offers a copy of your "family's coat of arms," ask them for the documentation. They won't have any. If a friend of yours is displaying a coat of arms on his stationery or on his fireplace mantel, I suggest you simply walk away smiling. There's no sense in upsetting a good friendship. But don't be as gullible as your friend. And please, please do not display your "family's coat of arms" on your genealogy Web site unless you have been confirmed by the heralds, okay?

If you would like to learn more about the serious study of heraldry and any rights you might have to display a coat of arms, there are a number of Web sites devoted to the truth. Here is a short list of some of the more reputable ones:

v The College of Arms (the official repository of the coats of arms and pedigrees of English, Welsh, Northern Irish and Commonwealth families and their descendants). This site is operated by the British government: <http://www.college-of-arms.gov.uk/>

v The Augustan Society at: <http://www.augustansociety.org>

v The American College of Heraldry at: <http://www.americancollegeofheraldry.org>

v The Baronage Press at: <http://www.baronage.co.uk/>

v The British Heraldic Archive at: <http://www.kwtelecom.com/heraldry/>

None of the above sell printouts on parchment paper, t-shirts, or key chains. However, some of them do sell books and magazines devoted to the study of heraldry.

If you use a search engine, you can find many Web sites that claim they can sell "your family's coat of arms" to you. However, you now know that any site that purports to sell "your family coat of arms" is a rip-off.