

Maine Acadian  
Heritage Council  
Preserving  
Acadian culture,  
language, and  
history in the  
St. John Valley

Pour préserver la  
culture, la langue  
et l'histoire des  
Acadiennes et des  
Acadiens de  
la vallée du  
Haut St-Jean



Maine Acadian  
Heritage

Maine Acadian Heritage is published two times a year by the Maine Acadian Heritage Council. This newsletter is designed to provide information on efforts to preserve and promote the Acadian culture, language and history in the St. John Valley and beyond. Submissions are subject to editing. For details, contact Kim Deschenes at 207-728-6826.

In complying with the letter and spirit of applicable laws and in pursuing its own goals of pluralism, the Maine Acadian Heritage Council shall not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin or citizen status, age, disability, or veteran status in all areas.

# Maine Acadian Heritage Council Conseil d'héritage acadien du Maine

Fall/Winter 2020

## President's Message

Last year was extremely productive, in spite of Covid-19 throwing a sabot in our well-oiled cogs! Actually, I shouldn't be using that image because "the origin of "sabotage" derives from the French word *saboter*, meaning to "bungle, botch, wreck or sabotage", and was originally used to refer to labour disputes in which workers wearing wooden shoes called *sabots* interrupted production through different means. A popular but **incorrect** account of the origin of the term's present meaning is the story that poor workers in France would throw a wooden *sabot* into the machines to disrupt production." Merci Wikipedia!

The MAHC started its fiscal year by inviting Cindy Larock, a recognized master teacher of traditional French Canadian dancing, to the St. John Valley schools to share her passion for social dances. And the kids loved it! So much so that we invited Cindy to come back for a second round. The "Youth Renaissance" project, which funded this event, is looking for more great ways to share our Acadian heritage with the youth of the St. John Valley. Share your ideas with us.

The individual members of the MAHC met frequently to discuss celebrating together our state's bicentennial in 2020, focusing on the weekend when an Acadian mass is traditionally scheduled in Madawaska, at the end of June. Unfortunately, we had to cancel the activities planned because of Covid, but all is not lost. That planning will be revisited in 2021 or 2022, when crowds will be able once again to gather for celebrations. Boy are we going to be ready to celebrate!!!

The St. John Valley is home to many historic buildings that deserve attention. They must be preserved! Most of them are on historical sites owned by non-profit organizations that don't have a lot of money and don't have the expertise to research and apply for historical preservation funds. We have been speaking with buildings assessment experts from the National Park Service to schedule a visit to the St. John Valley to examine and assess them. Quite a few of them were visited in 1997, by an architectural firm working for the NPS. We must continue that effort and reach out to those sites that have not been visited for fear of losing these historic treasures. The HACE experts had to reschedule their visit to 2022, but local assessments will be conducted before they come to the St. John Valley.

In order to make our historical sites more visible, the MAHC has ordered beautiful signs to grace the historical sites of the St. John Valley. You will see them next year.

In May, our executive committee met with every historical site to discuss whether or not it would open to the public for the summer 2020 season. Most historical sites decided not to, but they used the opportunity to focus on much-needed internal TLC. More on this in the next newsletter.

Thank you all MAHC members and St. John Valley for cherishing your Acadian heritage!

-Lise Pelletier  
MAHC President

**Célébrons les Acadiens de la vallée St-Jean!**

## MAHC

Kim Deschênes,  
Office Manager  
P.O. Box 88  
Madawaska, ME  
04756

Phone:  
207-728-6826

E-mail:  
maineacadianheritage@gmail.com

Website:  
maineacadian.org



## MAHC President

Lise Pelletier

## Vice President

Ken Theriault

## Secretary

Susan Tardie

## Treasurer

Anne Roy



## MAHC

gratefully  
acknowledges  
the generous  
financial support  
of our partner,  
the  
National Park  
Service.

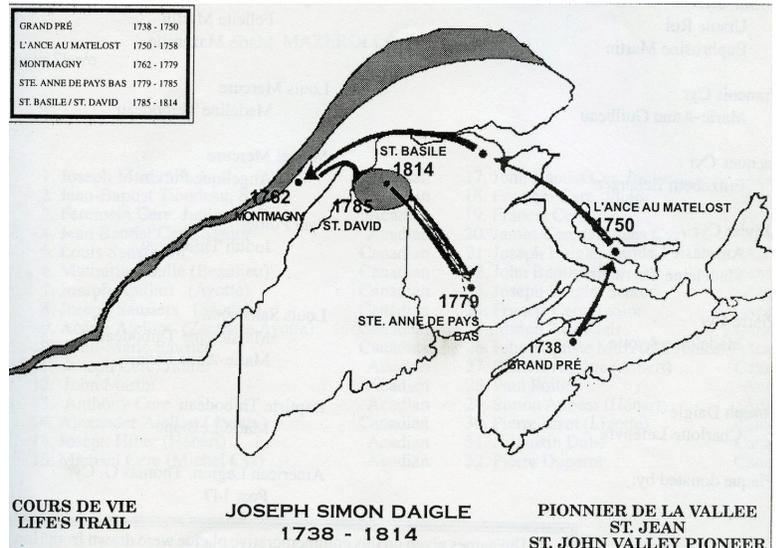
## The Makeup of the Early French Settlers of the Madawaska Territory

A trip around the Upper St. John River Valley reveals a strong pride in Acadian Heritage. Acadian flags fly on poles in front of homes and are painted on the sides of barns. The Acadian culture is celebrated every year during the Acadian Festival. But while the first permanent French settlers to the Valley have popularly been known as "Acadian", these folks were actually a decided mixture of Acadian and Quebecois. Famously clannish, Acadian settlement patterns almost always revolve around extended familial connections. Such was the case here,

but due to the circumstances surrounding the Grand Derangement and the subsequent flight of many Acadians to Quebec for refuge, the makeup of those families had met with a sudden change from what some call "pure line" Acadian to a substantial infusion of Canadian blood.

Most people know of the circumstances of the Grand Derangement and the movement of the Acadians out of Acadia, much has been written on it and there is no need to go into detail in this article. People are less apt to know about the movement of their Acadian ancestors immediately after the expulsions. We can explore that somewhat by looking at the course of life and the slightly different variations of three of the largest "clans" of the Upper St. John Valley.

The Daigles of the Valley descend from Joseph Simon Daigle. Joseph has often been portrayed as the leader of the colony and his travels and travails have been mapped out by my good friend Guy Dubay. Daigle's movements are an example of what has become the popular notion of what our ancestors did: he fled to Isle St. Jean, he then hid in



the woods, he then went to Quebec, then after the war he spent years down the St. John River at St. Anne de Pays Bas.

Joseph met his wife Marguerite Guilbeau in Quebec- although she was also Acadian- Interestingly, but sadly, their parents had all perished in the smallpox epidemic that was raging in there when they arrived. Joseph moved his family back down the St. John River after the war, and Marguerite brought along her sister Anne, who would marry to the next clan we will look at, the Cyrs.

The most obvious of the Upper St. John Valley Acadians were the Cyrs. The patriarch of the clan, Jean Baptiste Cyr had been involved in the French defense of Fort Beausajour. After the fall of the fort to the American Colonials, the Acadians of the area dispersed, some to Isle St. Jean and others to the lower St. John River. Jean baptiste and his wife Marguerite Cormier took their family in to the Kennebecassis River, and from there to the St. John. We don't know if they had access to the French schooners at the mouth of the river being used to evacuate or if he took

the overland route up the river. If he did he was likely aided by Boishebert and his band of guerrilla fighters. What we do know is that two of the Cyr's sons were married in Quebec villages that were usually accessed by the overland route. Jacques married Quebec girl Elizabeth Belanger in Port Joli, her parents came from L'Islet. Jean baptiste Jr. married Judith Dumont (Gueret) at Kamouraska, which had been her family's generational h o m e s t e a d .

Two other brothers in the Cyr clan married Quebec girls, specifically sisters from an Ayotte family. Paul and Pierre Cyr married Charlotte and Madeleine Ayotte, respectively, but not in Quebec. Numerous families from Quebec were doing business in the Beaubassin area, and the family of Zacharie Ayotte was one of them. He had fully moved there by 1750 and later was caught up in the expulsion. He fled back to Kamouraska. When the Acadians at Kamouraska went back down the St. John River to the St. Anne area, Zacharie's son, Alexandre went with

## The Makeup of the Early French Settlers of the Madawaska Territory continued

them. It was there that his daughters would marry into the Cyr clan. This family would also take part in the move to Madawaska.

The third large clan of the initial settlers were the Thibodeaus. This family, headed by Jean Baptiste Thibodeau and Marie LeBlanc of Grand Pre were deported to Massachusetts in 1755. They appeared on a list of "Acadians who appeal to go to Canada" in 1760. The government of Massachusetts was reluctant to let and Acadians go until the war was over and the Treaty of Paris signed in 1763. The largest number came in 1765 when the Governor of Quebec, General Murray, offered uninhabited land and even abandoned farms to immigrants. Few English immigrants were coming to Quebec, and the offer was an attempt to jumpstart the economy. The Acadians were great candidates, industrious and skilled, but the English still made them pay for their own passage.

This was not a hindrance, as the Acadians

wanted to leave New England at any cost. They were disliked and often mistreated by the Yankees because they were considered papists. As soon as they were allowed the Acadians left by any means they had. Many who lived in the ports left by boat, others took the overland route up the river systems of western New England.

We know that at least some of the Thibodeaus came with ytis exodus, because we have a record of Olivier Thibodeau and Judith Thibodeau, children of Jean Baptiste, having a dual marriage with Madeleine and Paul Potier, children of Jean Potier and Josette Hebert, Acadians, in LaPocatiere in 1765. Both couples would come to Madawaska. Beore that move, however, the Thibodeaus would join the Daigles and the Cyrs at St. Anne on the St. John. We know this because sister Madeleine would marry Joseph Theriault there in 1768. It was also here that the family would ally through mar-

riage with many other prominent names of the early settlers- Violette, Mercure and Sanfacon.

In the years that followed more Acadians would come in to the Valley- Landrys, Savoies and Robichauds among others. They would be later followed by many Canadians, the Dionnes, Ouellettes, Michauds, Levesques, Sirois and many others. These groups both moved in mostly from Quebec and likely were already mixed in their familial makeup. This mixture of the two populations makes our makeup here much more similar to the Acadians of Quebec than the Acadians who remained solely in the Eastern Maritimes.

-Ken Theriault,  
MAHC Vice President

## The Acadian Archives/acadiennes Present Gift Baskets To Valley School Libraries



The Acadian Archives acadiennes, with financial assistance from the Maine Acadian Heritage Council, recently donated to the St. John Valley school libraries a gift basket. It is a basket full of pedagogical tools to teach about Acadie and Acadians of the St. John Valley.

Five baskets went to school libraries of the St. John Valley. They contain over thirty history texts, documentary videos, juvenile literature for readers of all ages, 8 lesson plans for grades K - 8 , posters, a large Acadian flag, and a "Timeline of Acadian and St. John Valley History", a Power Point Presentation of sixty slides with illustrations and historical facts.

Every item was selected for historical accuracy and completeness. Books for students were chosen for their historical accuracy and for their honest depiction of Acadian women, men and children.

## Valley Outreach

Last summer, WFKT and Don Raymond produced a series of videos showcasing our Valley's history and culture. These are available on YouTube (search for WFKTV-4) and on the Facebook Page of the Maine Acadian Heritage Council.

### St. John Valley Promotional Videos: (YouTube views as of October 2020)

- (182 views) VI63 Fort Kent Blockhouse: <https://youtu.be/RN65B9NFEyI>
- (80 views) VI67 "Un Braie" Flax and Linen: (Ste-Agathe Historical Society): <https://youtu.be/lsVZpm6uv2I>
- (136 views) VI68 Quilts and Blankets Display (Ste-Agathe Historical Society): <https://youtu.be/oQtYVY-DMX4>
- (684 views) Acadian Village Tour 2020 (Acadian Village): <https://youtu.be/UmoBokNjFEc>
- (356 views) Ste Agathe Historical Society Museum Tour 2020 (Ste-Agathe Historical Society): <https://youtu.be/9iGXTId7Up8>
- (129 views) Frenchville Historical Society Museum Tour 2020: <https://youtu.be/7N8oLOw9U7k>
- (110 views) Tante Blanche Historic Museum Tour 2020: [https://youtu.be/1iG9\\_pxrKTW](https://youtu.be/1iG9_pxrKTW)
- (340 views) 1842 Webster-Ashburton Treaty Settlement: <https://youtu.be/DW4ThQ8VDj4>

### St. John Valley Traditional Foods:

- (1,510 views) VI64 Salade a Crème Sure (Acadian Village): <https://youtu.be/EM7GyQGeHlg>
- (295 views) VI65 Confiture a Rhubarbe (New Canada): <https://youtu.be/fB219G08MEk>
- (564 views) VI66 Eschalotte et Herbes Salee: <https://youtu.be/ucvznzvULgE>
- (742 views) VI69 Patates Fricassé: <https://youtu.be/rXIFP9SBKM0>
- (974 views) VI71 Grillade Salé avec Sauce Blanche: <https://youtu.be/X00mjBCeATE>
- (1,099 views) VI73 Sandwich au P'tite Saucisse: [https://youtu.be/ho\\_LJaENfQ](https://youtu.be/ho_LJaENfQ)
- (1,230 views) VI76 Soupe a Poulette Grasse: <https://youtu.be/FA31tBmTBiE>
- (769 views) VI75 Patates-Cosses de Feve-Cautlette Salé: <https://youtu.be/g3VFXBtlJZc>
- (404 views) VI77 Valley Summer Meal: <https://youtu.be/pr8IcYMI7U>
- (853 views) VI78 Des Herbes Salé: <https://youtu.be/oHe4GBxcwi8>
- (733 views) VI79 Pouding Chômeur: [https://youtu.be/h3iNh1\\_aKQU](https://youtu.be/h3iNh1_aKQU)
- (980 views) VI80 Des Beignets: <https://youtu.be/Fxe1VSvj5VE>
- (2,151 views) VI81 De la Trampette pour Dejeuner: [https://youtu.be/RgR\\_k6h5wGE](https://youtu.be/RgR_k6h5wGE)
- (644 views) VI82 Des Crepes: [https://youtu.be/h\\_0MQ6SrBM8](https://youtu.be/h_0MQ6SrBM8)
- (577 views) VI84 La Gelée au Pavina: <https://youtu.be/qSjdrQnL-PM>
- (1,341 views) VI85 Pot-en-Pot : <https://youtu.be/orr2B-mvM5E>



Denise Michaud of Ste Agathe demonstrating how to make Pot en Pot.

Terry Ouellette and Roberta Guerrette making Trampette pour Dejeuner.

