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chez nous

NEWSLETTER OF Septembre-Octobre, 1997 VOL. 19 NO. 2

La société canadienne-française

Editor: Dick Bernard

#103



The Consul General of Canada
and Mrs. Robert Déry

request the pleasure of your company
for wine and cheese with

La Société canadienne française du Minnesota

and

Les Errants

Sunday, September 14, 1997
3:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Official Residence
28 Park Lane
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Please reply
prior to September 11
(612) 332-7486, extension 3201

Map to Dery's home on page eight



A true jewel in downtown St. Paul is St. Louis, King of France Catholic Church, to be found at the southeast corner of 10th and Cedar Street. The present church is the third building used by the French-Canadians of St. Paul. The first church (1868) was at the northeast corner of 10th and Cedar; the second (1881) was at the corner of Exchange and Wabasha (the site of the present-day Fitzgerald Theater). The present day church was constructed in 1909. The above photo, which is undated, shows the present day church and, at left, a portion of the school which had been built in 1886, replacing the first school built at the site of the present church in 1873. (The school was demolished in 1963.) In a 1958 column, well known columnist Oliver Towne wrote a description of a visit to the school. Among other comments he mentioned the nationalities served there: "...because this is a melting pot these days, the LaVasseurs, Goyettes, Lancettes and Juaires who came from miles away, sit with other youngsters of all nationalities - Italian, German, Negro, Oriental and Spanish...because the French influence has faded with Americanization, the subject of the French language was discontinued in the 1930's....In that first school of 1873 there were only 130 students, with names like Auge, Gadbois, LaPointe, Nadeau, LaMarre, Villancourt, Souci. And by the way, two names O'Toole and Kelly...."

The architect of this stunningly beautiful church was Emmanuel Masqueray, whose name may be familiar to readers. Masqueray was the noted French architect who, at the same time in history, designed the magnificent Cathedral of St. Paul, and the Basilica of St. Mary in Minneapolis. Mr. Masqueray was known to have made the remark: "The Cathedral and Basilica are grand indeed, but my favorite is St. Louis Church. It is my little gem."

St. Louis Catholic Church is indeed a gem of a church. At the present time it is in the midst of a massive renovation project, and is seeking pledges from parishioners and others wishing to help renovate Masqueray's "little gem". Members of LaSociete are urged to contribute. For more information, please contact the Church of St. Louis, King of France, 506 Cedar Street, St. Paul MN 55101 (612) 224-3379

The Great Red River Flood of 1997

by Ernest Ebert, Grand Forks ND

From the Editor: A while back we asked Mr. Ebert, a regular contributor to *Chez Nous*, to give his thoughts on the 1997 flood of the Red River of the North. His story follows.

There are, of course, thousands of stories about this flood of the century. Many of us had relatives somewhere in the Red River Valley during those awful days of April and May, 1997. Relatives in Fargo, Grand Forks, and St. Jean-Baptiste and St. Adolphe, Manitoba, sent photos and accounts of their personal trials and tribulations to the editor. For those whose property was damaged or destroyed, the recovery continues, and is difficult both financially and emotionally.

Whenever the conversation turned to the topic of great floods in the Red River Valley of the North, the flood of 1897 was always accepted as having been the greatest of all. That is no longer true. The flood of 1997 rose to 54.3 feet - four feet higher than the massive inundation of a century earlier, and because there are far more people who hold more property, the devastation and loss of property is far greater in the 1997 flood. The loss of property was extensive throughout the Valley but nature unleashed its greatest fury on the twin cities of Grand Forks ND and East Grand Forks MN. It was in Grand Forks that the raging waters of the Red, somehow, ignited a blaze that destroyed several buildings in old Downtown along 3rd Street and DeMers Avenue.

In the residential area as well as in the business area, most basements were flooded except in southwest Grand Forks. This meant that furnaces, washers, dryers, hot water heaters had to be replaced. Weeks after the flood waters had receded, berms were piled high with the remnants of these once valuable units waiting to be hauled away to the city land fill.

Businesses all over the cities were hit hard - many are not operating yet. First, it was necessary for the business people to physically crawl out from under the debris and next to mentally adjust to a completely new situation which included the maze of relocation, refinancing or just plain quitting. Of course, the people selling furnaces, washers, dryers, etc., have been doing a lot of business as have those who furnish building materials. Losses in inventory were tremendous.

The story of the Great Flood of 1997 began with the first snowstorm about the middle of November way back there in 1996! We've had

some winters in the past which produced nary a blizzard, but this past winter had eight major storms that qualified as blizzards. And the many storms piled up a lot of snow cover - about 100 inches well laden with moisture. But when the last week of March came it seemed that spring was just around the corner. From the viewpoint of 88 years of experience, I believed then, and still believe, that Mother Nature has never thrown such a bundle of weather at us as she did in that memorable first week of April, 1997. All of it began with a sleet storm accompanied by high winds which soon blended into a snow storm with continuing high winds. It had the effect of an artillery barrage the purpose of which is to destroy defensive units and to disrupt communications. It soon knocked out



The farm home of Rita and Gilles Marion near St. Jean-Baptiste Manitoba sits in the lake which the Red River became in early May, 1997. Ultimately, one and one-half feet of water flooded the first floor of their home. The Marions were refugees for several weeks, and are still uncertain about the future status of their home, which sits only about one-fourth mile from the Red River of the North.

most of the electric capacity which energizes our light, furnaces, water pumps and sewage pumps. Fortunately, it didn't affect the telephone service. The television stations, cable and all but one or two radio stations were wiped out. Those radio stations relayed messages 24 hours a day. They were tired people! The power company had some electricity but not nearly enough so they rotated us about every 8 hours or so.

The power to this area went off about 4 o'clock Sunday morning and didn't come back on until 4 o'clock that afternoon. I found that 12 hours can be a long time to be without central heat. Clad in my street clothes plus a very heavy winter coat, I listened to the unfolding drama engendered by the many, many messages relating to the storm. My battery operated radio was my only source of information except for the telephone. During this period of "incarceration", it seemed that time stood still. I kept looking at my watch only to find that it had moved only two or three minutes since I had looked before. The time was especially long because there was no power to cook with. After a dry cereal breakfast I kept on eating something every little while - there was nothing else to do! When the lights came on a 4 o'clock, it was time to blow out my two kerosene lamps which had once more performed their duty in a faithful way as they had in that long ago back on the farm. What a blessing to hear the furnace, refrigerator and sump-pump motors run again. What a blessing to be back in the twentieth century!

Meanwhile, the flood which would eventually get here, was in full progress in the southern section of the Valley. The pressure of billions of tons of water made the otherwise modest Red River into one, long, moving lake from four to six miles which flowed over or around anything in its path. This had to be squeezed in between relatively narrow waters between the banks in Greater Grand Forks. However, the rampaging waters could not be contained and levees gave way in several places in spite of super-human efforts to reinforce them.

A few days of cold weather had delayed the inevitable. Then at 6 a.m. on Friday, April 18th, whining sirens screamed and the evacuation of 3000 residents from Grand Forks Lincoln Drive had begun. The dikes in this area are 15 to 20 feet high. Later, all of the area's 50,000 people were evacuated or left of their own accord. The hundreds of volunteers, policemen, firemen and National Guardsmen had lost the fight to save the cities but they had put up a good fight.

As mentioned before, all the TV stations and all except one or two radio stations had been silenced by the sleet storm. And the Grand Forks Herald building had fallen to the blaze. KFGO radio at Fargo supplied much of the local news. Bismarck was much better supplied with news, and my two

daughters living there were fairly screaming at me over the telephone to get out. On Saturday afternoon, April 19th, Barbara came to get me and the lady who was soon to become my wife, Clara Murphy. I was to spend 3 weeks as a guest of my daughter, Joyce, and Clara spent that time with her sister in Center ND. The streets were dry in the southwestern part of Grand Forks, where I live, and the country side harbored a few pot holes in the field. On the surface, it seemed there was little to worry about. But nearer to the Red River, the streets had become supplementary little rivers with popping manhole covers. The massive evacuation was on the way.

Where did all the people go? Many were sheltered at the Air Base, some went out of town to relatives and friends; some were quartered in out of town gymnasiums; patients in rest homes were farmed out to hospitals and rest homes in other parts of the state. Now they are being brought back as quickly as room can be found. Some aftereffects of this flood will be felt forever.

On Writing a Family History

by Sr. Ann Thomasine Sampson, CSJ

From the Editor: Sr. Ann is an historian for the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, and continues to be involved in history projects at Bethany Convent in St. Paul where she is writing a book, Seeds on Good Ground, about pioneer Sisters of St. Joseph for the community's sesquicentennial in St. Paul 2001 A.D. She is a loyal member of LaSociete and is well-rooted in the French-Canadian culture of Quebec and the Twin Cities (she grew up in southeast Minneapolis). Here, Sister Ann shares her thoughts on writing a family history, which she shared with her own family in 1984. She provides a useful, common-sense, framework for anyone who has ever thought of writing their own history. **The editor would urge particular note to her comments about the relative lack of historical record of women. We perhaps can not rewrite the past, but we can make certain that the women we remember in our lives can be more completely described for the benefit of those who follow us. Thank you, Sister Ann.**

"[For] Christmas [1984] I gave a present of a family history to members of my immediate family consisting of three brothers, a sister, nine nephews and nieces. The present was a result of a question my oldest nephew posed when he asked, "Is there something wrong with my father's father? I have never heard anything about him." It struck me that my nephew was talking about my own father and that my parents died when the generation to which

the nephew belonged were either very young or had not yet been born.

Now, I had been collecting genealogical material about my family since college days when my psychology teacher asked for information about that subject. Gradually through the years, I had acquired a massive array of materials: ancestor/pedigree charts, documents, newspaper clippings, maps, certificates, letters, pictures of places and people, names and dates, census/cemetery/church/government records, etc., gotten through extensive correspondence, oral history interviews, exchange of data, trips, telephone calls plus membership and meetings with members of genealogical societies (Minnesota Genealogical Society; NWT&CHI; Urbain Baudreau Graveline Genealogical Association). In order to be able to know what I had, I organized this material into a number of three ring notebooks - each one having to do with a specific branch of our family.

Now, the question before me was: what to share with my family without becoming so bogged down with details that the reader would quickly lose interest. I had watched various methods and techniques people used in collecting data about ancestors. Some were mainly interested in names and dates. Some traced people who had a specific last name. Others loved to fill in ancestor/pedigree charts. Since I had been a history teacher for some 35 years and later spent nine years in intensive historical research about the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, a congregation to which I belong, I wanted my family to know much more about their ancestors than a collection of names and dates. Therefore, I set down some specific rules and criteria: A) the selected information had to be of primary interest to those receiving the gift; B) divide the material into two sections - one relating to my father and the other to my mother; C) establish an outline of questions to answer for each person I would write about. Once I had established my mode of procedure, I began to write in earnest.

Each section was divided into segments and the first segment was titled "Recollections about my Father, James Jacob Sampson, Sr." by Sister Ann Thomasine Sampson. I described in a succinct form everything I could about his parents, where/when he was born, names of his 12 brothers and sisters and whom they married, places where he moved, grew up, worked, education, work, marriages, death, etc.

I also xeroxed copies of pictures I had of him and was careful to type up information about each. There were many questions I could not answer; therefore, in my description, I suggested that my brothers and sisters could be of help since they lived with my father longer than I did (I entered the convent at the age of 19.) I was careful to see that the same title was used at the top of each typewritten page and each was numbered in correct numerical progression. I had seen too many loose-leaf notebooks come apart and pages mixed up because they were not marked correctly. At the end of my recollections, I listed all of my father's direct descendants and whom they married: children, grandchildren, great grandchildren - so the reader could know exactly where he/she fit into the picture.

Then I did the same for his father: "Zepherin Samson, Father of James Jacob Sampson, Sr.", again being sure that this title was used on each succeeding page - but numbering each page all over again. This would allow for expansion of the first segment by the reader who might want to add data, etc. Again I used the same pattern and ended with the direct descendants. This time, the list was much longer since Zepherin was the father of 13 children. Then I did the third segment on his wife: Ellen LaVallee Sampson, Mother of James Jacob Sampson, Sr."

Since I had very little information about Zepherin's parents, other than what I wrote in his segment, I turned my attention to "Daniel Louis LaVallee, Grandfather of James Jacob Sampson, Sr." The information plus the pictures of this man who became the father of 12 daughters and step-father of his niece whose mother had died at childbirth, became more and more interesting and the list of direct descendants more exciting. Ten of his daughters grew to adulthood on a farm near French Lake and married men of French-Canadian descent, in St. Vincent's Church, Osseo, MN. Some of the names included: Zepherin Samson, Medard Arseneau, Francis Xavier LeClair, Moses Des Lauriers, Daniel Bottineau, Alexander Pouliot, Peter Dupuis, Felix Dansereau, Pierre Joly, Cyprien Gorham, Narcisse Counoyer, Sidney Potvin and Emile LeFebre. I will not attempt to give you the numerous ways these names were spelled. I also gave names and addresses of people who might be able to give more information about each of these families. I did the same for Daniel's wife: "Basiles

Baudreau Graveline LaVallee, Grandmother of James Jacob Sampson, Sr.” I had a picture of her with 10 of her daughters and another where she was the oldest of five living generations - so I incorporated these into her segment - and listed the descendants again.

The last two segments had to do with “Joseph Baudreau Graveline, Great grandfather of James Jacob Sampson, Sr.” And “Joseph Fortier Baudreau Graveline, Great grandmother of James Jacob Sampson, Sr.” These two with a number of their children had come to St. Paul from Sorel, Quebec, about 1847. They were the only ones for whom I had no pictures; however, I had ancestor charts back to France and included a direct listing. I had the location about where they lived on Robert Street, St. Paul, and copies of marriage records of some of their children in the St. Paul log cabin Cathedral which later became St. Joseph’s Academy where our Sisters taught. Other French names were added to my list - people whom their children had married: Michael Auger, Eleanor Donais, Emmanuel Dube, Edward Boisvert (Greenwood) and Pierre Turgeon. I again gave names and addresses of people who might aid the reader to know more about these people so that I would not be writing down information that would confuse the ones for whom I was essentially writing. At this point, I felt I had fulfilled my goal of one half of the project, and I turned my attention to my mother’s side of the family.

My mother, “Frances Blankenhorn, Wife of Thomas J. Shanahan; Wife of James Jacob Sampson, Sr.” was married twice and her list of descendants was a bit different than those of my father because she had a son by her first marriage. I wrote a long recollection of her, then went on to her parents: “Richard Blankenhorn, Father of Frances Blankenhorn Sampson” and “Mary Barbara Surges Blankenhorn, Mother of Frances Blankenhorn Sampson”. A different set of names began to emerge as I listed people who were married: Boughton, Kartak, Brombach, Egesberger, Hammer, Hauck, Hamack, Avery, etc. Then onto “Johann Christian Blankenhorn, Grandfather of Frances Blankenhorn”, and “Katherine Schreiner Blankenhorn, Grandmother of Frances Blankenhorn Sampson”. This whole section was much shorter due to the fact that A) the family relationship was much smaller; B) records were not that available; C)

much of the information was gotten through the oral history method from my mother’s sisters before they died.

What did I personally learn from this Family History Project? A) outstanding characteristics, talents, physical traits I seem to have inherited from each side of my family; B) vast variety of ways of spelling names, particularly the French ones. This was due to the fact that when my ancestors came to Minnesota, they could speak little or no English. Those taking the census, wrote the names down as they heard them pronounced. As years went by, some went by nicknames and some changed their names to an English equivalent. My mother’s side remained consistent because they were better educated and there were fewer names to change; C) the very small amount of documented information given about the women. They are usually referred to as mother, wife, daughter, and once in a while, they are mentioned in relationship to wills and dowries. Since a woman who marries, changes her name, I can see why so many genealogical enthusiasts track down people with a consistent last name. A number of interesting biographical sketches are now being written and published about the earliest settlers from France to new France. I have found three of my ancestors among them and had a cousin, Florence Sampson Fredricksen, professor of French for 40 years at Gustavus Adolphus College, MN, translate them into English for me. The paucity of information about women is very much in evidence. D) Learn how to separate myth from fact. Each family has stories that have been handed down. There seems to be an element of truth in them so I put them down and gave my sources. E) Dates vary. I have found people baptized before they were born! Put the various dates down; however, do not get an ulcer over which one is absolutely correct. F) Be sure to put down the names of direct descendants down after each person. I ran into the problem of second marriages, divorces, change of names, one parent families, etc. The listing of descendants for each person written about, helps to clarify the relationships.

What was the reaction of my family who received the three ring notebooks as a present? Absolutely delightful! A niece in Montana wrote to say that she spent three hours on Christmas Eve reading it and wished that a whole book of

Fete du St. Jean-Baptiste

by LeRoy DuBois



LeRoy DuBois, at right, waits his turn as Lauri Bernard twirls. Jane Peck, center, led.

recollections could be written about my mother. Her son has been asking her questions about the family and he can now make use of it for school projects as well as for his own knowledge. Another niece wanted to know what a milliner is. My mother had made her living as a widow by that profession. One brother who had worked for the telephone company became intrigued with the initials and numbers on a calling card I had xeroxed about my father's business. He did some research and found that at one time our area in Minneapolis had two telephone companies T.S. (Tri State) and E. (Bell). A man in business had to have two phone numbers. My sister in New York called to say that the present had generated much conversation and discussion between her and her children. Now the latter wanted to learn about their father's side of the family. All of the readers were amazed at the number of names that were listed and were interested to know more about them. Hopefully, some will take the time to jot down the information and add it to their family history.

Another whole group of relatives was interested in the project. A family reunion of the Potvin/Podvin relations was and I was invited to come and show the fruits of my labor. Many wanted to purchase copies. This is where the idea of the segments comes in very handily. Since all of this research involved much time, money, etc., I had to work out an equitable amount of money to be charged - and I hoped they would have other information, pictures, documents, etc., to share with me. This is an unending project filled with surprises, fun, newly found relatives as well as many unanswered questions....

One last footnote. When I gave my present, I enclosed a letter to each recipient to explain what it was all about. I listed the people whom I had researched and advised them to read the contents slowly and at different times; otherwise they would get a good case of genealogical indigestion. Thus, the first page really has a table of contents so that other readers know in a few short paragraphs what the project is all about, and for whom it was essentially written. As other more distant relatives ask for copies, this letter will be revised to show what the essential relationship between them and the contents is all about."

Tuesday, 24 June, saw a reenactment of an 1840s French-Canadian Fete du St. Jean-Baptiste at the Sibley House in Mendota MN. This was a premier event at this new Minnesota Historical Society site.

When we arrived, a merry bonfire was already blazing in a spot behind the Sibley House. Couples in period costumes sat on benches and logs, clapping to jig music played by a slightly built young lad on an ancient fiddle.

Hey, I see Dick Bernard and his daughter, Lauri. And here come Ralph and Diane Germain and George and Bonnie LaBrosse. Looks like we'll have some fun after all. Hey, mon Vieux, Jane Peck is coming. She's an expert at native and period dances. I hear that she even studied in France.

Before I know what, Jane signals to the fiddler, two young damoiselles grab me by the arms, and I'm twirling around about a hundred miles an hour. Then come schottisches, more jigs, some American Indian dances, a Greek one, and maybe a Scotch and Irish one. Mon Dieu, these old 75-year old legs finally collapsed, but not before I had outdanced all of the kids. Quel fete! Quelle musique! Quel fun!

Prospective member? Checks for membership dues should be made to LSCF and sent to John England, 2002 Palace Ave St Paul 55105. Dues: \$10 (\$8 senior); Family \$15 (\$10 senior). Membership includes subscription to Chez Nous.



Nouvelles Villes Jumelles

Newsletter of La Société Canadienne Française Du Minnesota

NEWS FROM LASOCIETE

We bid adieu to **MEL THERRIEN**, who passed away recently. Mel was one of the stalwarts of LaSociete. A eulogy will be printed in the next issue of *Chez Nous*.

The annual summer picnic of LaSociete, July 27, attracted thirty visitors. The new pavilion at Little Canada's Spooner Park was an excellent location.

The first fall meeting of LaSociete will be **Monday, October 6, 7:30 p.m.** at the International Institute, across from the State Fairgrounds in St. Paul. The meeting place is easy to get to and the parking is very good.

The Christmas Party will be held **December 6, 1997, 6 p.m.** at the International Institute on Como Avenue in St. Paul. This will be a potluck. Let's enjoy a melange of our culinary arts, and camaraderie. *Raconteurs* are invited to perform. Musical contributions from "les Errants" and other groups will be enjoyed.

Come, smile a while, enjoy and be entertained.

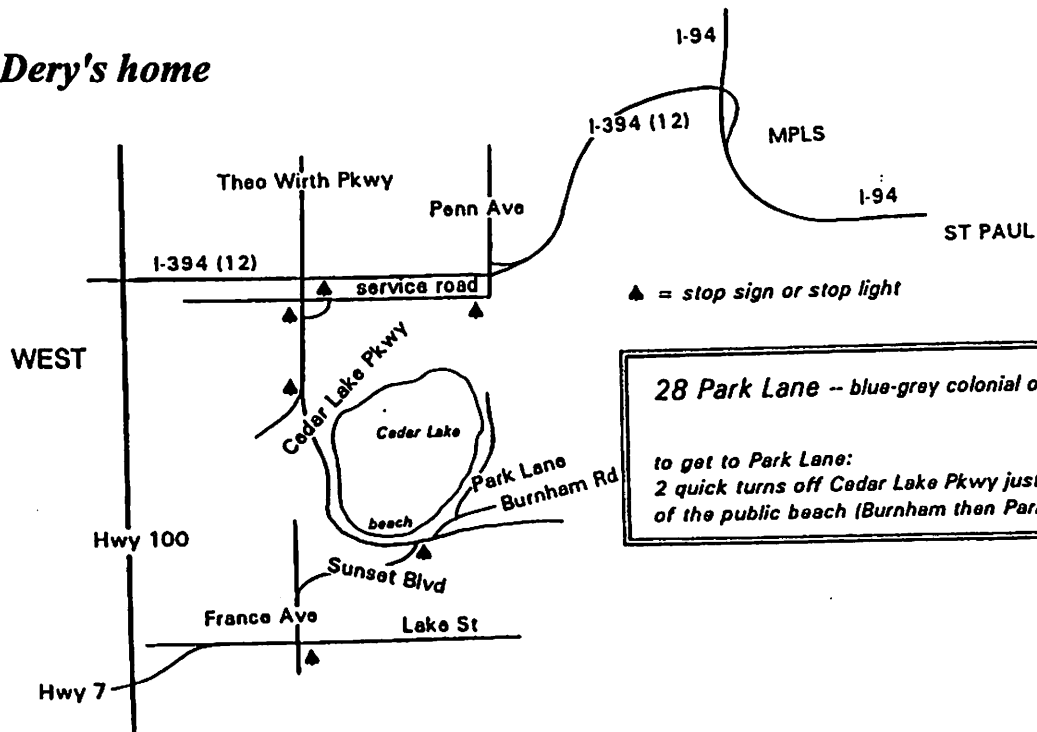
Linda Sutherland of the Consul General of Canada writes: "I've spoken several times with Dorothy Willard of Staywell Health Management Systems who is looking locally for a bilingual French Canadian nurse. Her number is 800-926-5455. She and the company are located in the Twin Cities." Readers?

MARK  LABINE

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Map to Dery's home



28 Park Lane -- blue-grey colonial on left

to get to Park Lane:
2 quick turns off Cedar Lake Pkwy just east
of the public beach (Burnham then Park Lane)



chez nous

NEWSLETTER OF Mai-Juin, 1998 VOL. 19 NO. 6

La société canadienne-française

Editor: Dick Bernard

#107

GOING TO WAR – SPRING, 1898

By Dick Bernard

Editors note: Most of us know of the sinking of the Battleship Maine in Havana harbor in February, 1898. We know about Teddy Roosevelt leading the charge up San Juan Hill, and perhaps even about the Spanish-American War 100 years ago, and the fact that it not only related to Cuba, but to Puerto Rico, the Philippines and Guam, and that the war officially ended with the Treaty of Paris December 10, 1898.

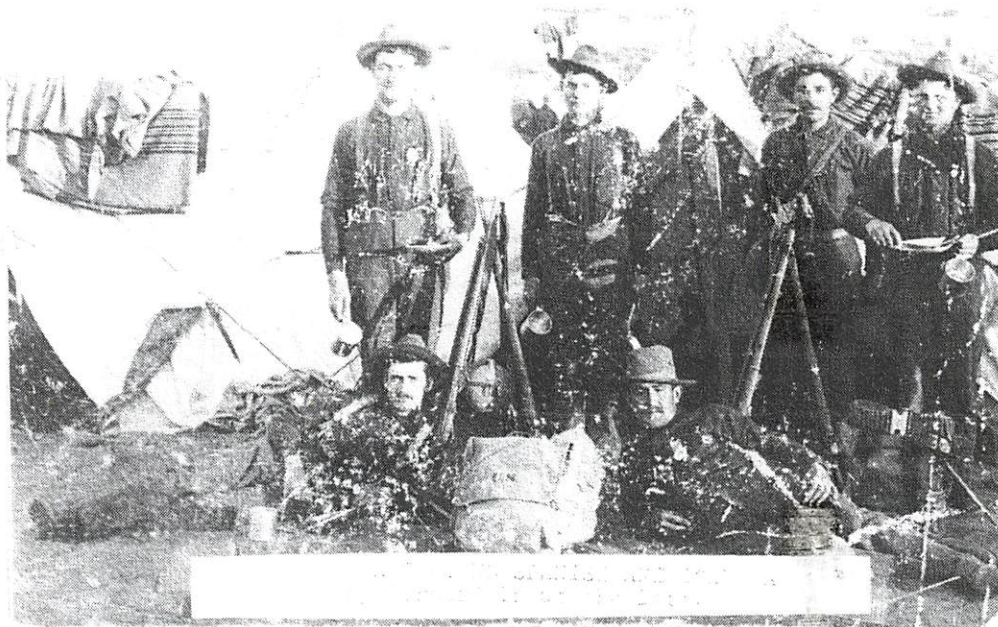
Few know that the war didn't end with Spain's cession of its territories, and the following story, about my Grandfather Henry Bernard Sr, gives another dimension to this story.

When the Battleship Maine sank in Havana harbor February 15, 1898, Henry Bernard was nearing his 26th birthday in Grafton ND. He had

migrated from Quebec perhaps six years earlier, and was certainly not yet fluent in English, having come from a completely French background. He was probably a U.S. citizen by the time "Remember the Maine" resonated throughout the U.S. of A.

The passions of the time led to an outpouring, most likely, of patriotic zeal against Spain, even in landlocked North Dakota. It seems to have taken little effort for the National Guard to build a full company of troops in Grafton. One was my grandfather, another was his future cousin-in-law Alfred Collette, then an 18 year old in the nearby farming community of Oakwood.

Their company – Company C of the First North Dakota – began basic training at Fargo on



Grafton ND resident Henry Bernard, standing at left, with some of his fellow soldiers in 1898. We are uncertain where the photo was taken, but it most likely was in Manila or San Francisco. Reclining on the ground, at right, is Henry's future "cousin-in-law" Alfred Collette, 18, of nearby Oakwood. (In 1901 Henry married Josephine Collette of Oakwood.)

May 2, 1898. This was the day after the Spaniards had effectively been defeated at Manila! Nonetheless the company took the train to San Francisco for more preparations for the Philippine campaign. Before they embarked to Manila via Honolulu on June 27, 1898, the need for an American campaign against the Spaniards was essentially past. And Philippine leaders had declared their country's independence much like our founding fathers in 1776. In fact, the country of the Philippines celebrates its centennial on June 12, 1998!

That made no apparent difference to our countries leaders. "The boys" sailed on, arriving in Manila on July 30, 1898. They stayed on Luzon (the island on which Manila is located) until July 7, 1899, when they returned for the states via Yokahama, arriving again in San Francisco on August 29, 1899.

(Some American units did, to be sure, some "mopping up" of the Spaniards after May 1, 1898. In fact, the Filipino freedom fighters led by Aguinaldo helped the Americans force the final capitulation of the Spanish commander in Manila in August, 1898. But the Filipinos had different ideas about what this defeat of the Spanish meant. To them, they felt the Philippines was now a sovereign nation and the Americans would recognize this and leave. Much to their chagrin, the Americans did not see it similarly, and the war continued – now, American vs Filipino. (Other troops from other states came later, and the "war" was really not over until about 1904. At times it was a rather dirty guerilla war, even as wars go.)

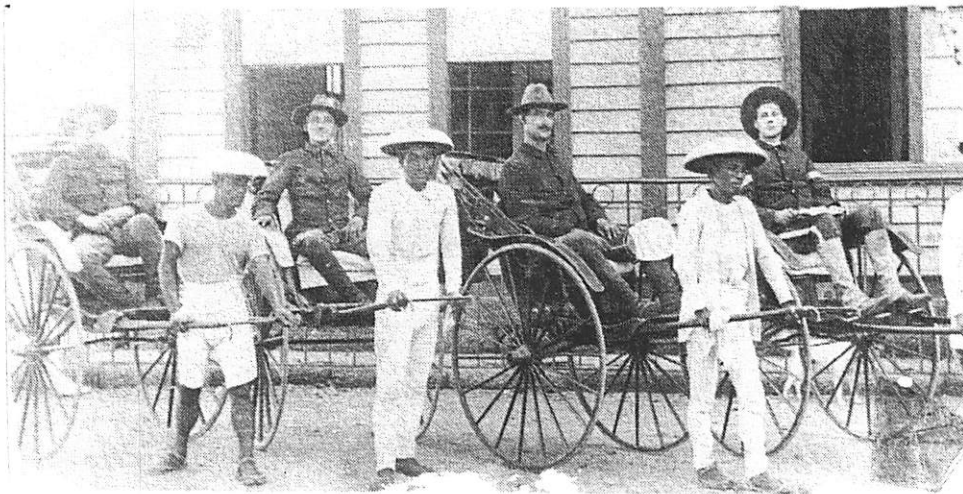
Henry and Alfred, as foot soldiers in

Company C, spent their one year fighting not against the Spaniards, but against native Filipinos led by Aguinaldo. Soldiers do what they are told, and that was likely true for Henry and Alfred as well. It made no difference who the enemy was; the enemy was the enemy, and they slogged through the territory between Manila and Paete, including Pagsanjan, defending new-found American interests against Filipino patriots. They likely never saw a Spaniard.

The "American interests" they were defending were very unclear – I read somewhere that then-president McKinley initially didn't even know where the Philippines were; and then Secretary of War Teddy Roosevelt was most interested in a war against somebody to both help the economy and his own political ambitions. If so, it worked very well for Teddy.

There were other factors, such as the advent of yellow journalism, about which "the Boys" from North Dakota could not possibly have been aware, and which helped fan the flames of patriotism in the U.S. They had their day to day duties, suffered from tropical diseases, were ambushed, and lost a few men in skirmishes now and then. A few years after they returned home to Grafton, a monument was erected there to the veterans. On it is a plaque that says "You can't stampede the First North Dakota."

Grandpa was exceedingly proud of that monument, which was just down the street from his home. Until he died in 1957, he and an ever dwindling group of soldiers from 1898-99 would gather each summer at that monument to commemorate the past.



Henry Bernard (third soldier from left) and buddies on shore leave in Yokahama, Japan, in late summer, 1899. They were returning to the U.S. after over a years service in the Philippines in the Spanish-American War.

Company C mustered out in San Francisco on September 25, 1899. Grandpa bought a gold watch in San Francisco, which I still retain, and my brother and I still have some other artifacts from that year in the Philippines. These artifacts include Grandpa's leggings and bayonet, his eating utensils in a leather case, his straight razor case labeled "raza Pilipinas"; some chunks of shrapnel and some medals.

Years later, my Dad told me that their service was apparently not well rewarded. "The Boys" apparently had to pay their own way home from San Francisco, which raised their ire, and redress of that grievance, and pensions, were apparently not to be forthcoming until an act of Congress many years later.

Grandma Bernard's cousin, Alfred, after a number of years back in the states, re-enlisted and went back to Philippines during World War I, and lived the rest of his life there. He became a highly successful businessman in the Philippines, married Mimi Dime at the old Manila Church at Malate, and, it is said, became a member of Manila's prestigious Polo Club.

The family fortunes changed drastically when the Japanese occupied the Philippines in early 1942. For a time period Alfred was a prisoner in the notorious Santo Tomas POW camp in Manila. One of his young children – named Marie Josephine after my grandmother (who was Alfred's cousin) – was killed in her mother's arms by shrapnel from, probably, an American plane during the liberation of Manila in 1945. Along with many others, the family was fleeing to hoped for safety of a church, when the death occurred. After the war, Alfred and Mimi and family resettled with his family in Bacolod, on the Philippine island of Negros and Alfred lived the rest of his life there, owner and operator of movie theatres. He died in the early 1960s, about the time of death of one of his teenage children. He is buried in Manila. His wife, Mimi, who I met a few years ago, was a charming woman. She lived in the Bay area of California until her death a few years ago.

The two surviving Collette children, Alfred and Julie, moved to the states 30 years or more ago. They live in the south bay area of California. I keep in close touch with them to this day.

I wonder how my grandfather would view the Philippines centennial of independence this year, June 12, 1998. Doubtless, he knew little or nothing about what was really going on at the time

he went to Manila, and even if he had, he still would have acted as loyal soldiers have always acted....

Happy Independence Day.

ROBIDOU'S IN THE MIDDLE WEST

By Eugenie Fellow
29042 Lindenhurst Drive
Zephyrhills FL 33544

Some members of La Societe Canadienne-Francaise may have Robidou ancestors as I have. The immigrant ancestor was Andre, son of Emmanuel Robidou and Catherine Alvez who were married ca 1640 at Ste Marie de Galice (Santa Maria de Galicia) in the northwest of Spain. Andre was baptized there about 1640. All persons in America bearing the name ROBIDOU are probably descended from Andre.

This article deals with a branch of the family that came to the Middle West for the fur trade, which was important in the 18th and 19th centuries. Furs were a valuable commodity, much wanted by persons in the eastern part of our country and in Europe.

Joseph Robidou (son of Joseph and Marie-Anne Leblanc, married 3 Feb 1749, Sault-au-Recollet, Quebec) was born in 1750. As a young man, in 1770, he went to St. Louis, then the headquarters for fur traders who bought furs from the Indians up the Missouri River. Joseph engaged in that business until his death in 1809. Joseph also acquired some land in Florissant, now a suburb of St. Louis. On September 23, 1782, Joseph married Catherine Rolet dit Laderoute of Cahokia (daughter of Michel Rolet and Jeanne-Marguerite Legrain, married in June, 1765, Kaskaskia). Joseph and Catherine had several children. Of the boys, several also were in the fur trade following the example of their father. Sons whose records have been found were: Joseph, born 1 August 1784, married (2) 3 August 1814, St. Louis, to Angelique Vaudry; Francois, born 24 September 1788, married in 1807, St. Louis, to Therese Delisle-Bienvenu; Pierre-Isidore, born 2 November 1791, married 14 October 1815, Cahokia, to Julie Desjerlais; Toussaint, born ca January 1793, married 14 October 1815, Cahokia, Marie Rapieux; Antoine, born 22 September 1794, married in 1828 at Santa Fe (now in New Mexico, then a part of the colonies of Spain) to a young Spanish woman, Carmel

Benevides; Louis, born 7 July 1796, apparently went with Antoine to the Spanish area; Michel, born 3 August 1798, married 22 June 1825, Susanne Vaudry, St. Louis. Joseph, the first son, married (1) Julie Eugenie Delisle-Bienvenu in 1806 in St. Louis. With her he had three children: Therese Caroline, born 7 June 1807, St. Louis; Eugenie, born 29 July 1808; and Joseph, who may have been born near the time of his mother's death 22 May 1810, St. Louis. I also have data on children of Joseph with his second wife (several) and on the many children of Francois.

Antoine Robidou spent quite a lot of time in the Santa Fe area in the Spanish territory. There is record of an application for citizenship for "Antonio and Luis" Robidoux in Santa Fe 16 July 1823 and other records there of 1824 and 1825. Antoine's activities in the Spanish territory, including Taos, were for the fur business. Antoine was also involved in the construction of forts, including one on the Gunnison River. He was active in that area during the 1830s and 1840s. Either in 1844 or 1845 Antoine left his activities in the Spanish area and moved to St. Joseph, Missouri. Quoting from Wallace (op.cit.) "In 1846 he joined General Stephen Watts Kearny as an interpreter... in the war with Mexico. After the occupation of New Mexico he remained with Kearny in the advance on California. On December 6, 1846, Antoine received a lance wound in the back during the battle of San Pascual. The St. Joseph Gazette's obituary of Antoine presumed that he had lived in California for several years. His brother, Louis, by this time had become a major landowner in Southern California having acquired control of large portions of what are now San Bernardino, Orange, and Riverside Counties." Wallace states that the last five years of Antoine's life were spent in St. Joseph where he died on 29 August 1860. No records apparently exist of children born to Antoine and Carmel, but Wallace reports that they adopted a little girl and when she died, after being married and having a girl child, Antoine's widow returned to Santa Fe to live with her granddaughter and died in 1888 at Durango, Colorado.

Besides Antoine, three other sons of Joseph were engaged in the fur trade in the Middle West. Joseph, the oldest; Francois; and Louis. Thwaites, in his edition of the LEWIS AND CLARK JOURNALS, page 386, footnote, state that the first territorial legislature of Missouri was held in 1812 in the house of Joseph the father. Also reported is

that his son Joseph had already erected a trading post by 1800 upon the site of present-day St. Joseph, and later was its first permanent settler, maintaining a store and trading post for the American Fur Company from 1826 to 1830. He died there in 1868. Joseph and Francois, in 1818, are listed among those receiving licenses to trade with the Indians. (Carter, op. cit.)

The following Robidou men (various spellings) are listed in the Index of the Missouri 1850 census: Felix, Mitchel, Francis B., A., Francis, George, Joseph, Julius C., and M.J. All but Felix and Francis B. are listed for Buchanan County, in which is located St. Joseph.

SOURCES

Carter, Clarence Edwin, TERRITORIAL PAPERS OF THE U.S. Vols. XIII and XIV
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Missouri Census Index 1850
NORTHWEST TERRITORY CANADIAN AND FRENCH HERITAGE CENTER, Brooklyn Center MN

St. Louis MO Probate Records
Tanguay, DICTIONNAIRE GENEALOGIQUE DES FAMILLES CANADIENNES

Thwaites, Reuben Gold, ORIGINAL JOURNALS OF LEWIS AND CLARK, Vol. I, 1969

Wallace, William S., "Antoine Robidou" in THE MOUNTAIN MEN, Vol. VIII, Ed LeRoy R. Hafen, 1971

SOME FRENCH-CANADIAN FOLK TALES

(As gathered by Treffle Daniels at the University of Minnesota Wilson Library.)

From the Journal of American Folklore, Vol XVII, No. LXVII, Oct-Dec, 1904

"The following tales were kindly communicated to me by Mr. John C. Day, of Toronto. These tales were related by Mr. Day's mother, a French-Canadian.

TRANSFORMATION INTO ANIMALS

"Once upon a time (about the year 1850) a man refused to pay his church fees, so he was put out of the church by one of the officers. This church officer was taking a load of hay to market next day, when he saw a colt come up and stop the horses, and also bite and annoy them. The man took his whip, and getting down from the load, he

tried to drive the animal away, but the colt ran with full force against him and tried to stamp him to the ground. He then thought of his long knife, which he opened and stabbed the colt. As soon as blood appeared the colt turned into a man, and it was the man that had been put out of the church. The officer then tied his horses and led the evil man to a priest, but the priest only banished him to an island to be heard of no more."

"Once upon a time, an old woman was so possessed with an evil spirit that she could turn herself into several different animals. She lived on the cream of milk stolen from her neighbors while turned into a frog. But one day, after disturbing the pans of milk for days, she was caught hopping around in a neighbor's cellar. Her neighbor took her and put her upon a red-hot iron over the fireplace. She hopped off and out through the door to her home. When she came over the next day to see her neighbor, her hands were seen to be burned and blistered, and she wasn't able to work for days."

THE EVIL EYE

The events narrated in the following story are said to have occurred in 1850, near Coteau Landing, in the county of Soulanges, Quebec: -

"My uncle and wife went to Glengarry one day, and left their only daughter, about eighteen years of age, to take care of the house. About three o'clock in the afternoon an old tramp passed by the door, then stopped and, seeing the door open, asked for something to eat. The girl, being afraid of the tramp, closed the door on him and told him to go on, for she would not give him anything or let him in. The old tramp became mad, and with oaths and threats he pounded on the door until he became tired; then, seeing the girl through the window, through madness he bewitched her and went away.

When the parents returned the girl was going through all sorts of manoeuvres, such as crawling through the rounds of chairs and trying to climb the walls, so the folks had to tie her. The next day a quack doctor passed up the road and stopped at the house as usual. Upon seeing the girl in such a way, he asked the cause of it. When told, he asked for the petticoat she wore, and two packages of new pins. Getting them, he put the girl in bed, sat in the old fireplace, with the door open, and taking the petticoat and pins, he put [stuck] all the pins into the petticoat, then pulled them out and put them in again until the old tramp arrived before the door and

asked, 'What are you doing there?' 'Go on!' said the doctor, 'why do you want to know?' 'But stop!' said the tramp, 'you are doing no good!' 'Oh!' said the doctor, 'you are the villain, are you, that put this poor girl in such a state? Now I want you to take that spell off the girl immediately!' 'I can't,' said the tramp, 'unless I have something to throw it on.' 'There's an old hen before the door,' said the doctor, 'throw it on her.' The tramp did so, the girl got out of the bed sensible, but the hen turned over and died. The doctor took the tramp at once in charge and went away, but the girl was for years silly at spells."

JACK WITH HIS LANTERN

"About the year 1837 the Lower Canada French were very superstitious, so much so that they believed the devil was about them in different forms. One form was 'Jack with his Lantern,' that would lead travellers into swamps and laugh at them afterwards. Upon one occasion, one Louis LaFontaine was driving home from Alexandria [Glengarry County, Ont.] with his grist, when he was attracted by a light in the road before him. He knew the road well, but as it was dark and the light seemed to make on to his house, he decided to follow it. In the course of about twenty minutes he plunged into a deep swamp and the light also disappeared and left him in the dark, to get out the best he knew how. Through his excitement he heard the light, or the devil as he called it, laugh at him until morning dawned. So afterwards the people would always keep clear of 'Jack with his Lantern.'"

"One Johnnie Saveau went fishing one dark and foggy night, about one hundred yards from his house, when he saw 'Jack with his Lantern' moving in his direction. He had a torch-light at the bow of the boat, so didn't feel timid until 'Jack' came pretty close to him; and then he became afraid and tied his boat to the shore as quickly as possible; and to make it more secure pinned the rope to a log with his jackknife and hammered it down as much as he could. Then he ran for the house and closed the door as quickly as possible on arriving there; but the 'old devil' (as he called the evil spirit in the light) pulled the knife out of the log and threw it after him, planting it in the door, just as he closed it, with such force that he could not at first pull it away. So, to be sure, the devil was working in many a form."

W.F. Wintemberg
Toronto, Canada



Nouvelles Villes Jumelles

Newsletter of La Société Canadienne Française Du Minnesota

SOME BRIEF NOTES FROM LSCF:

Officers for the Board of Directors will be elected at the Monday, June 1 meeting. Declared candidates thus far are Leroy Dubois and Leo Gouette. As usual, this meeting will be held at the International Institute of Minnesota, which is on Como Avenue, St. Paul, just west of Snelling Avenue, and just across the street from the State Fairgrounds. There is ample and well-lighted parking.

The Spring potluck, held April 6, was a success. The next social event will be the annual picnic of La Societe, scheduled for 1 p.m. Sunday, July 19, at Spooner Park in Little Canada. Please plan to attend. Spooner Park is just off 35E, just a few northeast of the Freeway at the Little Canada exit. Directions will show the way. This annual event is a potluck, and is always enjoyable. Plan to attend.

The second annual celebration of la fete du St. Jean-Baptiste, will be 7-9 p.m. Wednesday, June 24, at the Sibley house Historic Site in Mendota. Those at last years will attest that it will be very enjoyable. Follow the signs. It's at "the other side of the Mendota bridge from Ft. Snelling"!

NOTES: Please renew (OR BEGIN) your membership in LSCF, if you have not already done so. Please send dues – checks to LSCF - to John England, treasurer, 2002 Palace Avenue, St. Paul 55105.

DUES RATES:

Family:	\$15.00
Senior Couple (over 62):	\$10.00
Single:	\$10.00
Senior (over 62):	\$ 8.00

Advertising is available in Chez Nous – business card size. For rates, contact John England at 612-699-5178.

We are always seeking articles, photos, art, etc., for the Chez Nous. Send your contributions to Dick Bernard, editor
7632 157th St W #301
Apple Valley MN 55124
Phone 612-891-5791

SOME INTERESTING THINGS:

George LaBrosse sends along a couple of ideas which may be of interest to members: 1 – Concordia Language Village will be having a French Adult Week September 18-23. Cost is \$310. For more information contact Concordia Language Villages, 901 8th St S, Moorhead MN 56562. 2 – A new 2-volume set, Birchbark Canoes of the Fur Trade, is available from Silver Fox Enterprises, PO Box 176, 11504 US 23 South, Ossineke MI 49766. Cost is \$49.95 U.S. or \$65.95 Canadian, plus 5.00 for shipping. Send SASE to Dick Bernard, 7632 157th St W #301 if you wish more information about this book.

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NEWSLETTER OF Novembre-Décembre, 1998 VOL. 20 NO. 3

La société canadienne-française

Editor: Dick Bernard

#110

La Societe's annual Christmas Party begins at 6 p.m. Saturday, December 5, 1998, at the International Institute of Minnesota (on Como Ave St. Paul, directly across the street from the State Fairgrounds) As always, our party is potluck, informal and enjoyable. Come one, come all.

La Societe normally meets the first Monday of each month (January excepted) at 7:30 at the International Institute. Do plan to get involved.

**Will
you
miss
Chez Nous?**

(Read Page Two)

TOWARDS THE FUTURE...A LOOK AT THE PAST.

By Dick Bernard, Editor
7632 157th St W #301
Apple Valley MN 55124
612-891-5791

In my own opinion – only my own opinion – our organization is at risk of not surviving its 20th year in 1999. If the organization dies, so does Chez Nous, which I have edited for 13 years. I do not relish this prospect. Please read on, and please think of ways to help.

It was 17 years ago, October 24, 1981, that I first learned of LaSociete Canadienne-Francaise (LSCF). A neighbor had told me about a program to be held that night at Jeanne d'Arc Auditorium on the campus of the College of St. Catherine in St. Paul. It sounded interesting, and it turned out to be fantastic. It was the first production of LaSociete. Performers Louis Dube, Oliver LeFebvre, Martin LaVoie, and our own Francine Courtemanche Roche made wonderful music and brought joy to the house. I recall I joined LSCF either that night, or a short time thereafter.

In the Decembre, 1981, Chez Nous, our founder John Rivard said as follows about that concert: "Our first venture...was a huge success. Over 300 good people came to "An Evening in Old Montreal"...It was a jolly crowd that enjoyed the music and mixed well at the wine table. Our own Francine was the star of the concert. Her stage presence and lovely lilting voice enchanted everyone...." (This is the same Francine who is presently a very popular regular performer at the Loring Café and Sofitel Hotel and elsewhere in the Twin Cities).

Over the years since, if one thinks back, there have been many accomplishments of this society. Unfortunately, however, it is too often necessary these days to think back....– Too many of our accomplishments are in our past.

This is not the fault of the leaders still active. All of us are trying. But the active, and even dues paying, membership base is dwindling – most recently the loss of Justa Cardinal, an active member non pareil, caused much pain. And we are all getting older – one of those facts of life not to be ignored.

We of French-Canadian ancestry represent an incredibly rich heritage – a heritage which deserves to continue to be recorded and celebrated.

The unfortunate reality is that we will continue to dwindle, and sooner than later LSCF (and Chez Nous with it) will die, without a little of your time, money and/or talent. Even if you can't come to meetings, you can identify relatives, neighbors, or friends who might be good members – and ask them to join (a sheet with three membership blanks is enclosed for your use). And, of course, you can pay your small dues to keep us alive and well. Or contribute a story, or a photo, or tell us about an upcoming program of interest to our readers.

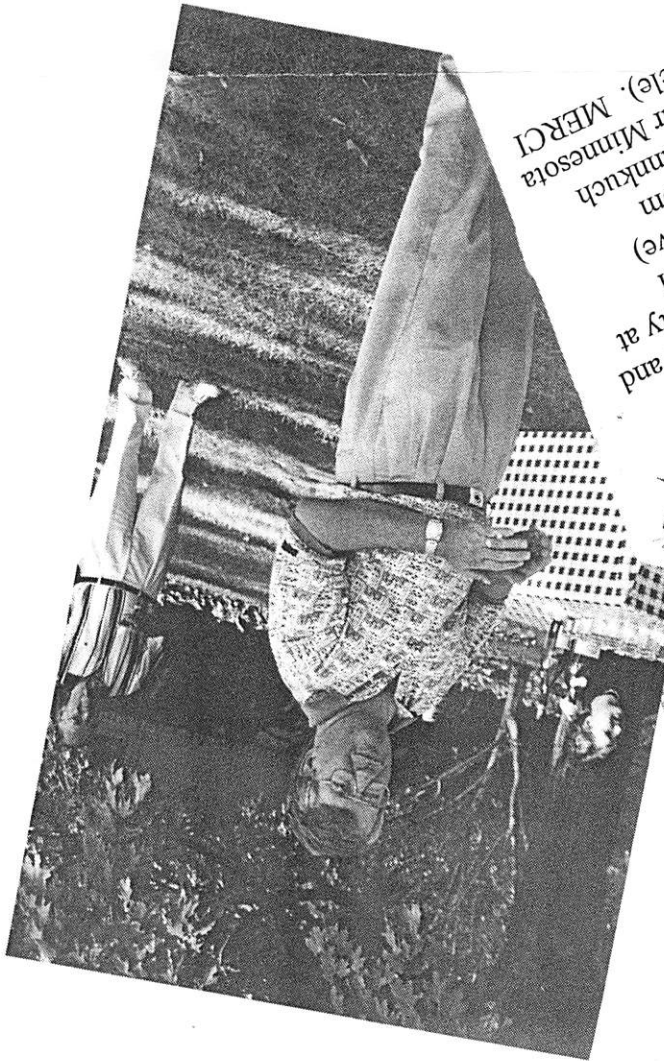
Especially we need your talent. Let us know that you'd like to help us. **Let me know who you are, and I'll pass the information along.**

Our ancestors lived through tough times, and came out even tougher. Perhaps we're at that rebirth stage, and when our 20th anniversary is celebrated on March 19, 1999, we may be set to march forward into a vibrant and successful third millenium. I invite you to join with us in making this success.

Dick Bernard.
October 6, 1998



Canada Consul-General Robert Dery (at right) and spouse Lorraine, hosted a delightful lawn party at their residence in Minneapolis on a beautiful afternoon September 13. Les Errants (above) performed. Among 50 or more guests from LaSociete and others, was Georgette Pfankuch (with the smile, below), host of Bonjour Minnesota on KFAL-FM (see accompanying article). MERCI to Dery's.



Tune in to Bonjour Minnesota

Chaque mercredi a 20:30 heures
Every Wednesday from 8:30 to 9:30 PM
On Fresh Air Radio, KFAI 90.3 or 106.7 FM
Host Georgette Pfannkuch and Caryl Minnetti

Bonjour Minnesota est un programme de radio bilingue (a bilingual program —French-English)

Francophone events occurring in the Twin Cities will be announced every session around 9:00 PM.

Bonjour Minnesota showcases music, songs and interviews from France and francophone countries. Requests from listeners are welcome during air time (612-341-0980)

Special upcoming feature will be some Grandes scenes d'amour du Theatre Francais:

- 28 Octobre - MERIMEE Le Carrosse du Saint Sacrement, extr.
4 Novembre VIGNY Chatterton, acte III, scene 8
11 Novembre HUGO Ruy Blas, acte V, scene 4
18 Novembre MUSSET Il ne faut jurer de rien, acte III scene 4
25 Novembre ROSTAND Cyrano de Bergerac, acte V, scene 5
2 Decembre CLAUDEL Partage de Midi, acte I, scene 6
9 Decembre MOLIERE Le Misanthrope, acte IV, scene 3

For pleasant listening, turn to Francine Roche's new CD of French ballads. These are the same ballads she sang at the La Societe concerts. These make a wonderful gift for all occasions. To order, call Francine at 571-7834.

From Evelyn Lund

Officers and Board members are:

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1999 CALENDAR

LES FRANÇAIS D'AMÉRIQUE/FRENCH IN AMERICA

Those who would like to learn or learn more about the contribution of the the French to the building of two nations: Canada and the United States, will find a unique and valuable resource in this bilingual calendar:

The 1999 edition (15th) celebrates among other events:
the tricentennial of Louisiana (1699),
the tricentennial of Cahokia in Illinois Country (1699),
the 475th anniversary of the voyage of discovery of Verrazano (1524)
--i.e. the beginning of the French presence in America--
the 175th anniversary of the triumphal return of Lafayette (1824) . . .

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